

ANNUAL GLOBAL STUDENT WELLBEING SURVEY **UK REPORT**



2025

Research
carried out by:

YouGov

Reported by:

Studiosity



Full report

Higher education worldwide is undergoing, or being forced to undergo, a period of tectonic change. This annual Student Wellbeing survey provides timely and pragmatic insights for sector leaders to celebrate unique strengths and acknowledge gaps, to ensure our critical social institutions of learning remain agile and responsive to providing the evolving capabilities required by graduates and communities.

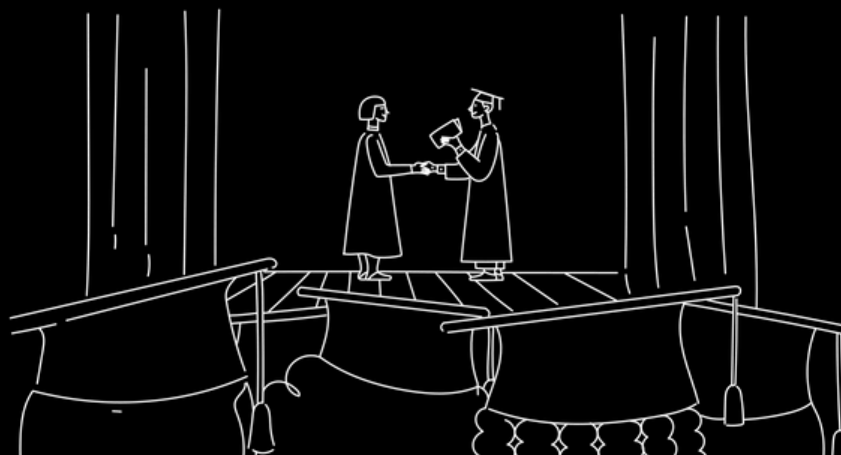
Michael Larsen
Chief Executive Officer, Studiosity



Table of Contents

Introductions:

YouGov	3
Vivienne Stern MBE, Chief Executive, Universities UK	4
Isabelle Bambury, MD, UK & Europe, Studiosity	5
1: AI and wellbeing	6
2: Student experience	14
3. Student stress	19
4. Peer connection	26
5. Employability	31
Survey background	36
Objectives and methodology	37
Appendices	38



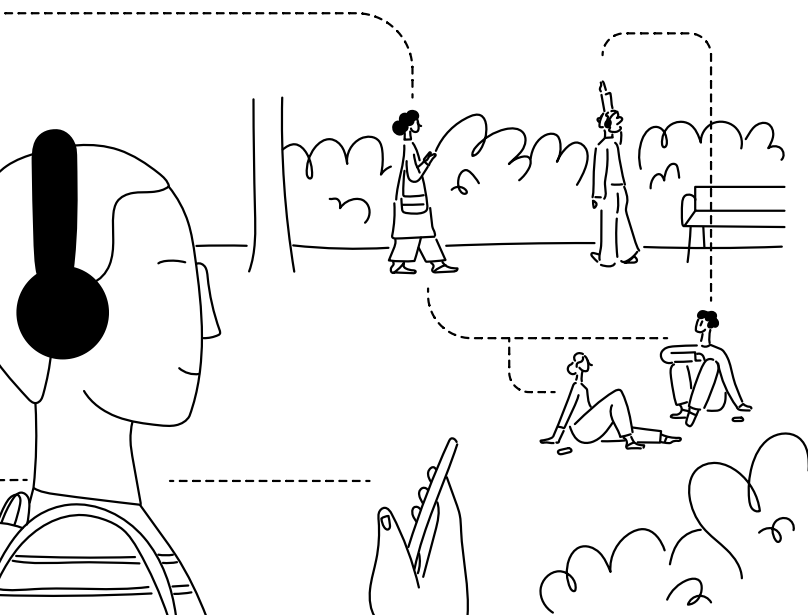


From YouGov®

The education sector has the greatest potential to change the world - students become future researchers, teachers, business owners, leaders, carers, and more, contributing to the rich societal fabric that the world needs. To protect and grow the education sector, listening and responding to the feedback, concerns, and recommendations of university students is a necessary challenge.

It is evident that students are navigating a changing academic terrain. Personalised support, a heightened sense of belonging, and rapid adaptation to AI supports are paramount.

This survey captures the voices of students, to support education leaders in their ongoing efforts to offer students an educational experience that aligns with both their study expectations and aspirations for the future.





From Universities UK



Vivienne Stern MBE

Chief Executive, Universities UK

Dear colleagues

To meet the changing needs of students and their eventual employers, universities themselves are constantly changing. Reports like this will help universities think through how they need to adapt what they do and how they work to make sure students are well supported to succeed, and well prepared for the world of work.

Universities in the UK are remarkably responsive to the feedback they get from their students. Student feedback is baked into the way they work at every level, from individual courses to the way they are regulated. It is one of the reasons why the UK is world-famous for the quality of its teaching and student experience, and partly explains why student satisfaction is consistently high.

Right now, as technology changes workplaces, daily lives and society, universities are under particular pressure to evolve and adapt. It is essential that the university system adapts to make good use of AI in education; to prepare students for careers in which AI will be increasingly ubiquitous; and to build confidence in its appropriate and effective use. There are also huge opportunities for universities to provide much more personalised approach to education; and a level of individualised academic support which would have been previously impossible to offer at scale. Alongside this, our universities must clearly define and build awareness of the misuse of AI and its consequences, and to make sure that it enhances rather than displaces genuine learning.

Vivienne Stern MBE



From Studiosity



Isabelle Bambury

Managing Director UK and Europe, Studiosity

To our partners in education:

This survey investigates key areas of student wellbeing in 2025. We carry out the survey in order to better understand and discuss the motivations, emotions, and demands of UK university students. We hope that you will find the data and findings supportive of your own initiatives and solutions.

Higher Education in the UK and across the globe is in the midst of significant transformation, driven by technology, shifting student needs, and evolving societal expectations. In response, this year's survey has a strong focus on AI and student wellbeing.

In partnership with many UK institutions, the Studiosity team continues our core mission of increasing life chances for all students. In this spirit we are committed to making this contribution to the sector and putting the spotlight on student wellbeing again this year.

Isabelle Bambury

In the 2025 UK report:

47%

of students believe their university is adapting to AI fast enough. Significantly up from last year by 11%.

51%

are confident they will have a job within six months of graduation.

37%

are stressed daily or constantly.



ANNUAL GLOBAL STUDENT WELLBEING SURVEY

1: AI and wellbeing



2025

Research
carried out by:

YouGov[®]

Reported by:

Studiosity

Why:

As AI becomes the norm (64% of university students report using genAI to complete their degree), education leaders are looking at behaviour and impact of AI use amongst students to proactively protect and shape positive degree experiences and protect the quality of credentials.

Takeaways:

- Provide university-supported AI tools backed by **clear policy**, addressing student expectations and confidence.
- GenAI can often remove student agency, and students are aware of this; institutional leadership can ensure **student autonomy and voice** is protected in university-approved tools.
- Address students' AI-related stress with access to **human interaction**.



Chapter 1: AI and wellbeing

64%

have used AI tools to help with assignments or study tasks.

88% of international students report use of AI to help with study tasks compared with domestic students at 60%.

60%

have experienced stress whilst using AI tools as part of their studies.

Female students experience 6% higher amount of stress (63%) than their male counterparts (57%).

47%

of students think their university is adapting fast enough to provide AI study support tools.

This is up by 11% from last year, however this is after a year of global generative AI development and opportunity for institutions to adapt.

95%

of students have some level of confidence that they are learning as well as improving their own skills whilst using generative AI tools.

45% of male students say they are 'very' or 'extremely' confident compared to female students at 35%.

39%

of all students expect their university to give them access to generative AI tools to support their studies.

This increases by 12% for male students (51%), and by 19% for students studying business (58%). International students exceptions are 25% higher than domestic students.

69%

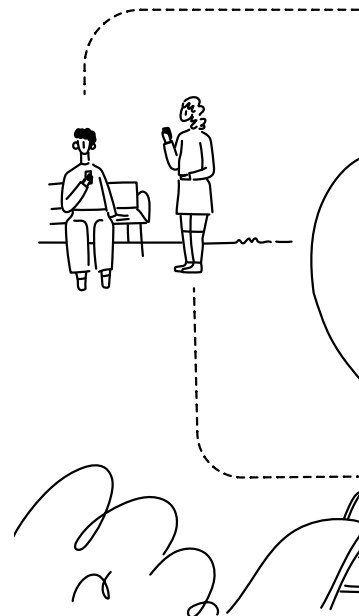
of students who feel like they belong in their university community have used AI tools.

This compares with 29% who feel like they belong that have never used AI tools.

25%

of students said 'confidence' is the main reason for using university's AI support or feedback.

This year 'confidence' (25%) overtook 'speed' (16%) as the main reason students want to use the university's AI service for support or feedback. Female respondents in particular at 29% compared to 20% for male students.





Trends for 'AI and wellbeing'

Have you used any AI tools to help with your assignments or study tasks?

64% of all students have used AI tools to help with their assignment or study tasks. However, singling out 18-25 year old students, their use at 70% is significantly higher than all other age categories combined at 55%. International students that have used AI tools for assignment or study (87%) is 27% higher than their domestic student counterparts (60%).

There is also a huge difference (21%) between female students who said they have never used AI tools for study tasks at 42%, compared to their male counterparts at 21%. Looking at subject areas, only 17% of students studying business said they have never used, compared with 46% of those studying humanities and social sciences.

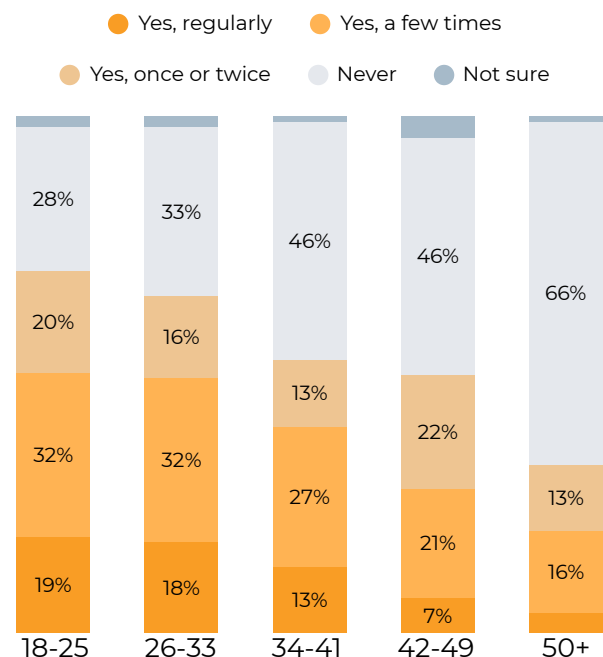
When asked, 78% of students from London have used AI tools to help with assignments or study tasks which is far more than any other region. At the other end of the scale, the highest percentage of students that have never used it are from the Wider UK - Scotland (44%).

39% students expect their university to provide the AI tools to support their studies.

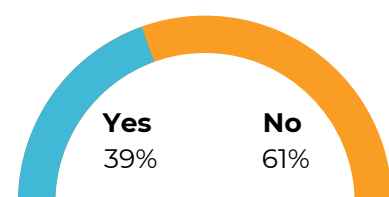
This was significantly higher for male students (51%, Yes) and for international students (61%, Yes).

Students in business (58%), medicine (53%), nursing (48%), and STEM (46%) were more likely to respond 'Yes' over other subjects.

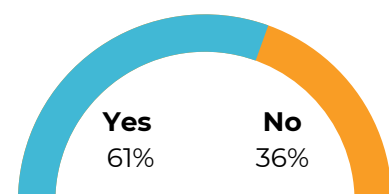
FREQUENCY OF AI USE BY AGE AMONGST UNIVERSITY STUDENTS



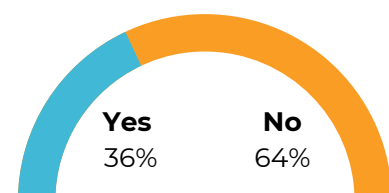
EXPECT MY UNIVERSITY TO OFFER AI SUPPORT TOOLS



INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS



DOMESTIC STUDENTS





Do you expect your university to give you access to generative AI (artificial intelligence) tools to support your studies?

YES

“Because AI can be of great help in many positive ways and not just doing ones work, such as self teaching something”

“It helps me structure my essays.”

“Because AI is here to stay so we need to learn how to use it well and responsibly. Having no experience of AI will put us at a disadvantage in the workplace.”

“To get quick access to answers and sources because it’s harder to contact a teacher when distant learning.”

“Because it make learning faster and less stressful for both the teachers and the learners.”

NO

“I don't think unis support its use because it helps students plagiarise and cheat.”

“This shouldn't be supported, but if students can find a way to use AI to aid them in a subtle way, then not much can be done. For example, I have used AI before to help to suggest arguments and points for an essay.”

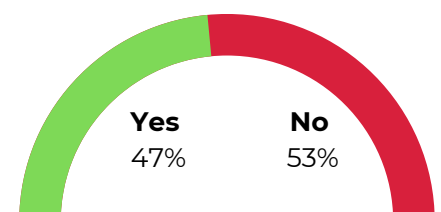
“I think AI beats the whole idea of a degree, but it can be used for grammar correction and general fluidity.”

“Because it would be unfair and result in the student not really learning or thinking for themselves.”

An increase of 11% from last year on students thinking that their university is adapting fast enough to provide AI study support tools.

After a year of global generative AI development and another year for institutions to adapt, despite being up from 2024 (36%), students that think their university is adapting fast enough are still slightly in the minority this year at 47%. The remaining 53% of student respondents believe there is more to be done.

UNIVERSITY ADAPTING FAST ENOUGH TO INCLUDE AI SUPPORT TOOLS FOR STUDY

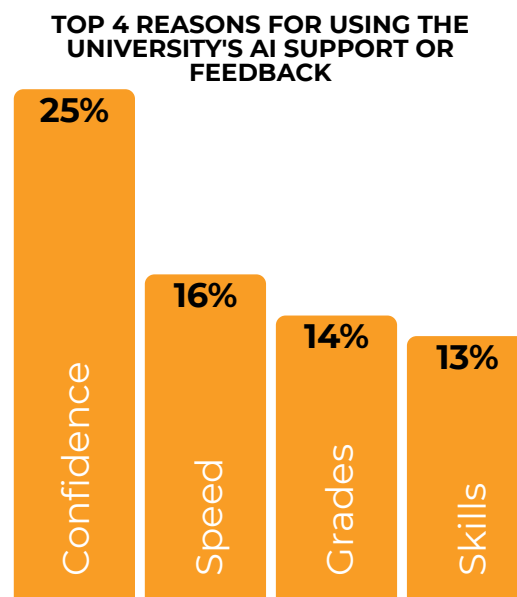




This year, “Confidence” (25%) overtook “Speed” (16%) as the main reason for wanting to use the university’s own, provided AI service for feedback.

Confidence was the most popular main reason, but female respondents were significantly higher at 29% than males at 20%. Males (19%) were more likely to value speed of feedback than female respondents (14%) were. ‘Grades’ was also valued higher by males at 16% vs 12% for females.

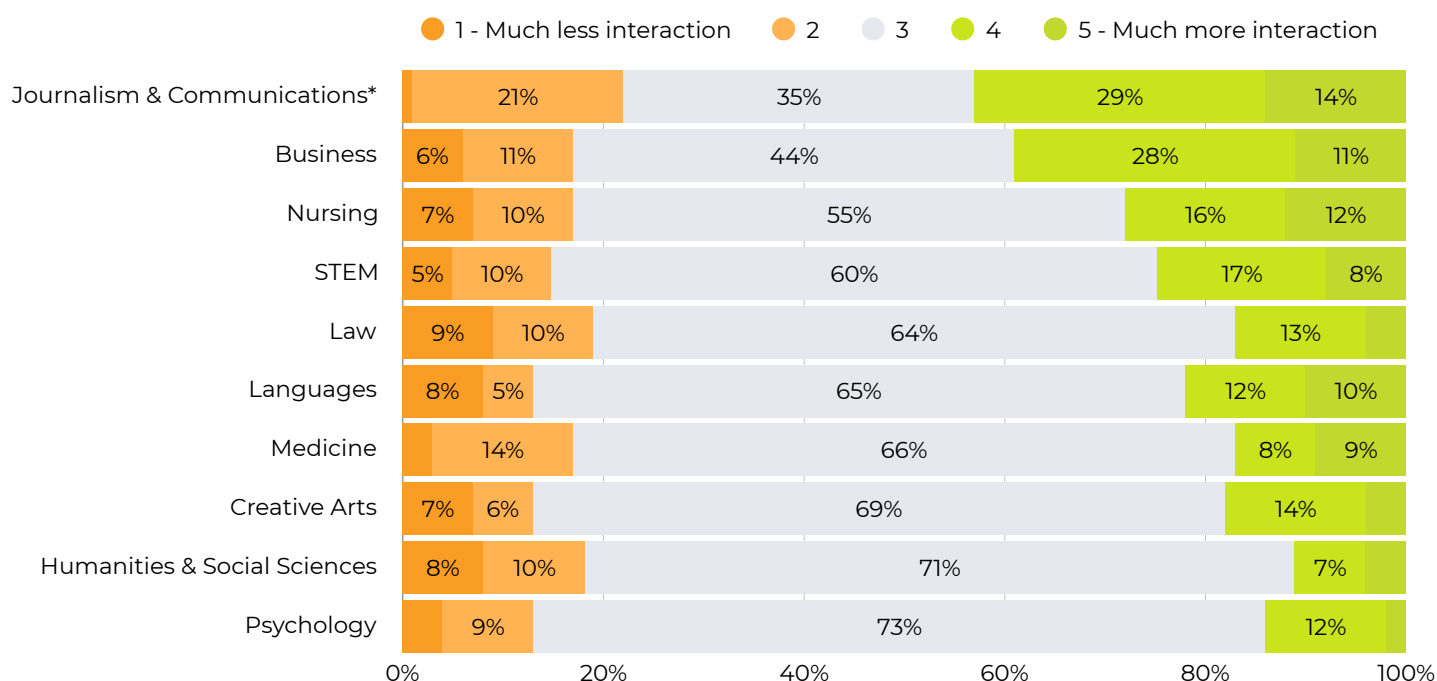
International students valued ‘Skills - learn to use AI tools’ the most at 20%, significantly higher than domestic students at 11%.



Impact of AI on peer and teacher interaction

Overall, students are not sure if generative AI use has impacted peer and teacher interaction levels, with a large group of students staying neutral (63% neither less nor more). Interestingly, whilst male and female students had the same response for “Less” interaction (16%), male students were significantly higher for “More” interaction at 31%, compared with female students at 15%.

Journalism and Communications saw the overall highest impact - with more net “More” responses from students sharing that AI had increased interaction with peers and teachers.



*n=45



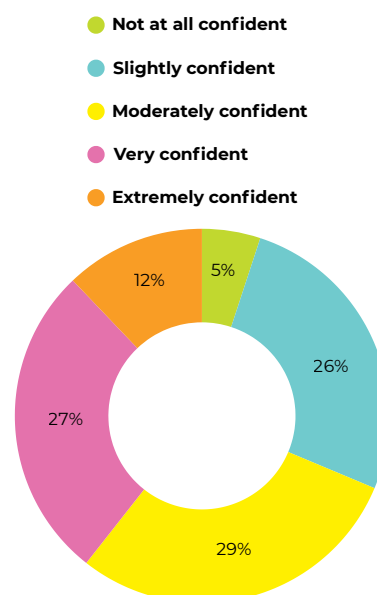
How confident are you that you are learning as well as improving your own skills while using generative AI tools?

The overwhelming majority of UK students who were surveyed said they are confident that they are learning as well as improving their own skills when using generative AI tools, as only 5% of all students said they were 'Not at all confident'.

26% said they were 'Slightly confident', 29% 'Moderately confident', 27% 'Very confident', and 12% 'Extremely confident'.

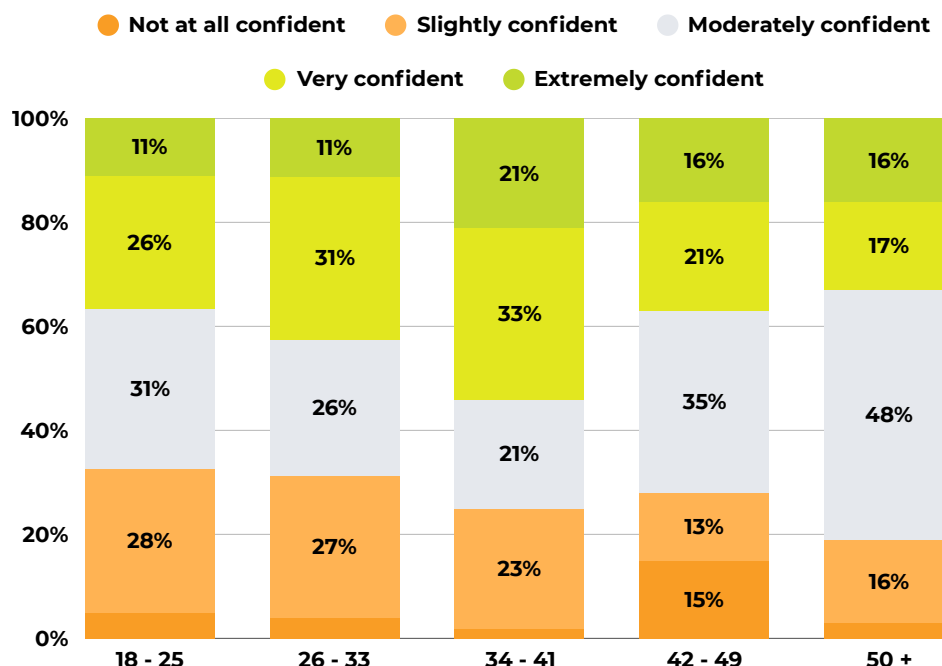
A significantly higher percentage of male students said they were 'Very confident' (31%) compared with female students (24%).

Interestingly students aged 34-41 report the most amount of confidence 'Extremely' at 21%, compared to 18-25 year olds at just 11%.



CONCERN ABOUT COGNITIVE OFFLOADING, BY AGE.

HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU THAT YOU ARE LEARNING AS WELL AS IMPROVING YOUR OWN SKILLS WHILE USING GENERATIVE AI TOOLS?



"I expect the university to teach me the skills instead of AI"

- Student aged 18 - 25



Higher belonging and higher use of AI for study help.

Correlation can be examined between students' sense of belonging in their university community, and the amount they use AI tools to help with assignments or study tasks.

For students that feel like they belong, 67% said they have used AI tools to help with assignments or study tasks, compared with 32% that have never used AI tools. Conversely, for students that do not feel like they belong the picture is more balanced, 47% of students have used AI tools, compared with 49% who have never used them.

HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE AI TOOLS FOR STUDY HELP?

DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOU 'BELONG' IN YOUR UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY? →

	Not much at all	Not much	Neutral	Somewhat	Very much	Net: Likely to feel like they belong	Net: Unlikely to feel like they belong	All
Yes, regularly	14%	12%	13%	14%	27%	17%	13%	16%
Yes, a few times	11%	21%	27%	33%	33%	32%	17%	30%
Yes, once or twice	18%	17%	20%	18%	15%	18%	17%	18%
Never	53%	47%	37%	33%	23%	32%	49%	34%
Not sure	4%	3%	3%	1%	2%	2%	3%	2%



Half of all students who use AI tools regularly to help with assignments or study tasks are more likely to rank 'Fear of failing' among their top 3 stressors

61% of UK students ranked 'Fear of failing' in their top 3 reasons for feeling stressed about studying. Time related reasons follow this with 52% 'balancing other commitments' and 41% for 'preparing for exams and assessments'.

When comparing this data with students that use AI tools to help with assignments or study tasks, fear of failing is still the highest ranked study stress. However, the amount whilst high, significantly decreases with more use: Students that state their AI tools use as 'Never' 69%; 'Yes, once or twice' 62%; Yes, a few times' 58%; and 'Yes, regularly' 50%.





Stress experienced by students while using AI tools as part of studies

For all areas of study, 60% of all students report some level of stress about using AI as part of their higher education workload.

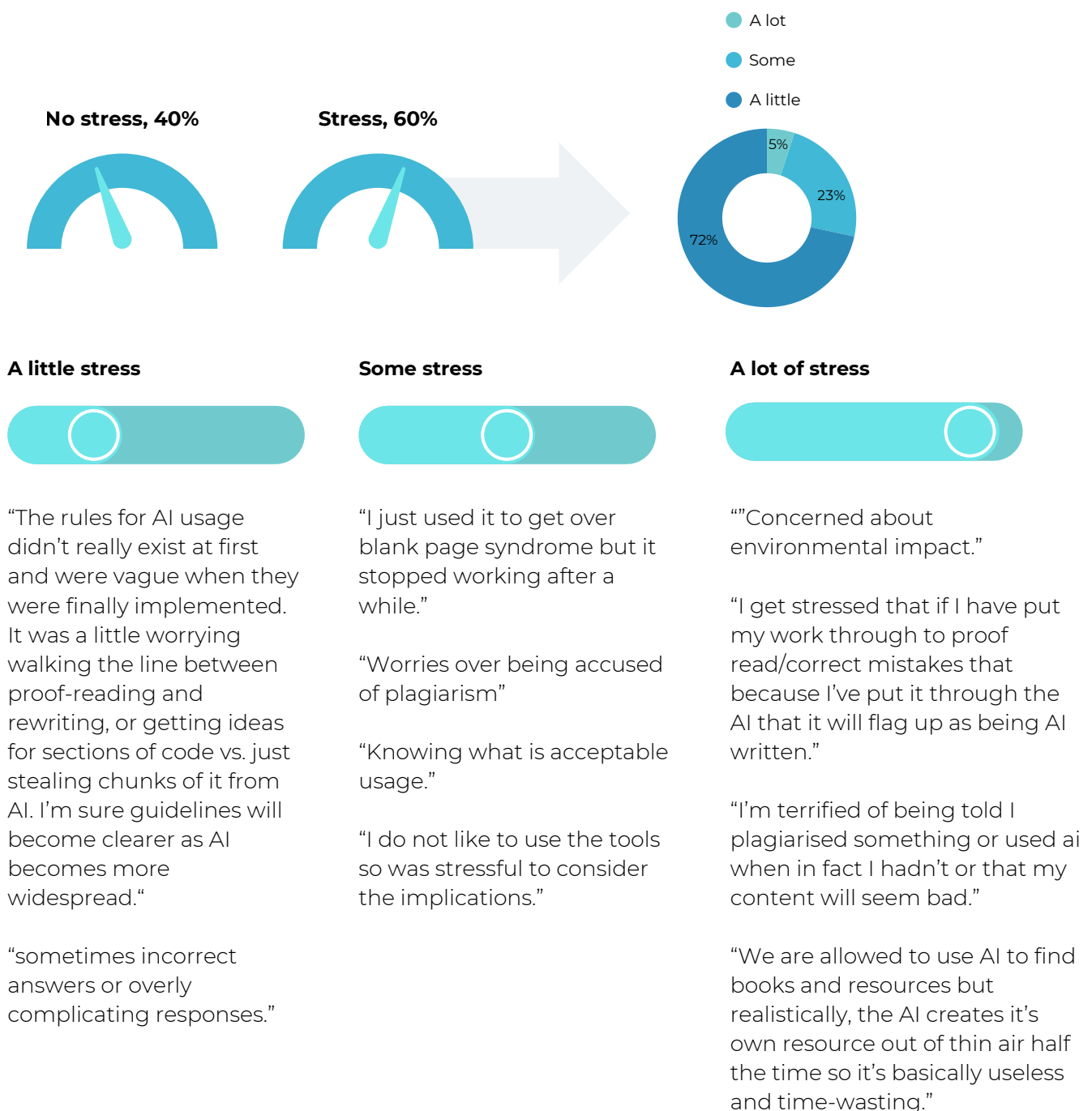
For passing students, the higher the grade, the less stress about using AI as part of completing a degree. But even 53% of the highest-performing respondents feel stressed about it.

For 'Pass' students, 66% reported feeling some level of stress.

For 'High Distinction', this falls to 53% who feel any amount of AI-related stress.

Female students report more stress (63%) than male respondents (57%).

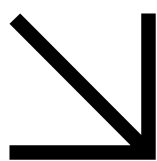
Students studying Psychology were the most stressed overall about using AI as part of their study workload - only 31% report 'no stress' at all, compared to 52% of Creative Arts students.





ANNUAL GLOBAL STUDENT WELLBEING SURVEY

2: Student experience



2025

Research
carried out by:

YouGov[®]

Reported by:

Studiosity

Why:

Better understanding “belonging” (for example, the feeling you are included and supported on a campus) as part of student experience is vital because it is widely known to impact student retention, academic success, and overall wellbeing.

Takeouts for leadership:

- Implement systemic support for faculty and student referral and interaction, to address an **increasingly “Neutral” sense of belonging year on year**, including improved connections between faculty and students, and students and peers.
- Consider the requests of traditionally-underrepresented groups like parent-students and first in family - while recognising the need to implement supports systematically, to account for the **highly-varied needs of the holistic student population beyond just standardised groups or labels**.



Chapter 2: Student experience

50% of UK university students value a good student experience - 15% higher than last year.

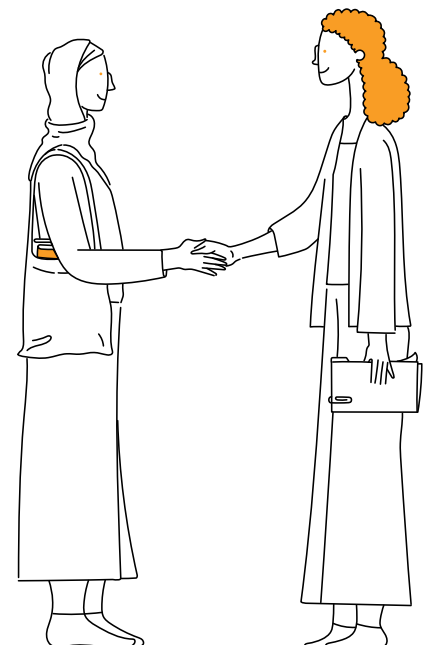
51% of EAL students value university global ranking - 17% higher than students with English as their first language.

84% of UK university students have a positive sense of belonging - up 4% from last year.

57% of students aged 18-25 ranked "Giving me the confidence to reach out to my teachers" in their top three belonging improvement suggestions.

2025 showed an overall improvement in sense of belonging, but a mixed response for improvement suggestions.

57% of students ranked "A flexible schedule that lets me balance work and study" in their top 3 choices for improving their belonging, yet a substantial 40% opted for "other," pointing to broader needs around inclusion, social connection, and campus culture.





Trends for 'Student experience'

In 2025 'university ranking' matters more to EAL students, but overall 'student experience' rated significantly more important compared with last year.

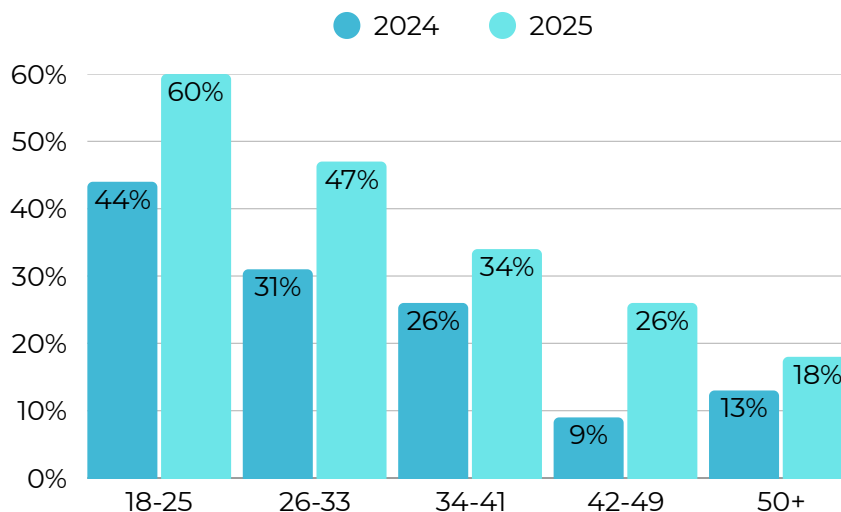


Global ranking held more significance for students whose first language is not English (51%) compared with students with English as their first language (35%), students studying full-time (44%) compared to part-time (31%), and law students (49%)



For half (50%) of all students, having a good student experience held greater influence than the university's ranking (35%) - a significant 15% increase from 2024. Student experience mattered more to 18-25 year olds (60%▲), male students (55%) compared to female students (46%), as well as second-year and third-year students (57% and 55%, respectively). Medicine students valued the experience the highest of all subject areas (59%), closely followed by Business students (56%).

THE IMPORTANCE OF LOTS OF ACTIVITIES, WAYS TO MAKE FRIENDS, AND SUPPORT (A GOOD STUDENT EXPERIENCE)

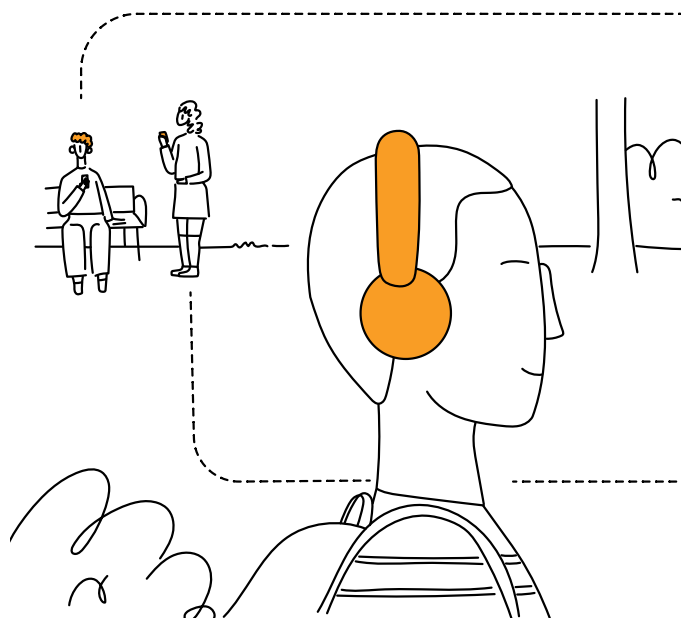




“The students union really does a lot to make people feel included as well as the clubs and societies” - Full-time, domestic student

“Having a strong disability support service to empower me to be fully a part of my course as a disabled student.” - Full-time, domestic student

“My programme is fully remote, but there are a variety of online events and discussion groups that we can participate in, so there is a sense of community.” - Part-time, domestic student

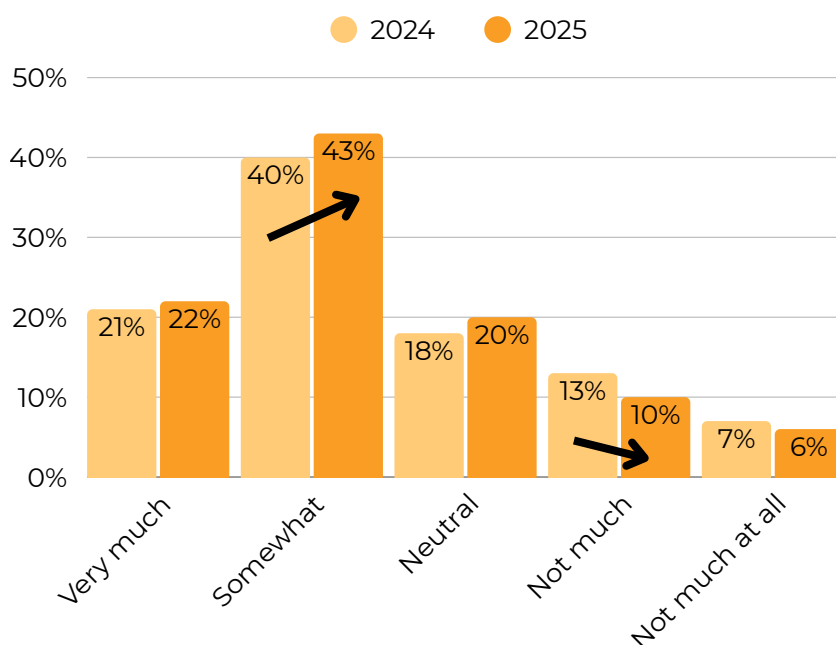




Do you feel like you 'belong' in your university community? (for example, do you feel supported and included?)

The majority of UK university student respondents have a positive sense of belonging in 2025 - the net "likely to feel like they belong" being at 84%, with a slight difference (2%) between male students (86%) and female students (84%). Comparing subject areas there is 16% difference between medical students who are the most positive (93%) and psychology students the least (77%). The perfect balance of study mode amongst the surveyed students is a mix of both on and off campus (88%) with on campus slightly behind (87%), and possibly not too surprisingly - away from campus/distance only, at the lowest (75%).

In comparison to last year, there has been a minimal change (1% increase) amongst the most positive group who feel "very much" like they belong (22%). Further positives can be found by the 3% increase in 2025 from students that said they feel "somewhat" like they belong, compared with the decrease (also by 3%) amongst students that said they do "not much" feel like they belong in 2025 (10%).



"Very inclusive of my disability" - Scotland, mixed on/off campus

"My programme is fully remote, but there are a variety of online events and discussion groups that we can participate in, so there is a sense of community." - North West, fully remote

"My personal tutor took care to learn about what I was interested in specifically, and asked my opinions on texts within my field and beyond." - Wales, on campus

"22 year olds have nothing much to say to a 39 year old, so they struggled with me. I connected better with online students because they were much more likely to be mature students." - Scotland, mixed on/off campus

The first choice suggestion for improving their sense of belonging was a mixed response, with **"A flexible schedule that lets me balance work and study"** just scoring highest (18%) followed by **"Giving me personal, 24/7 study and assignment support"** (15%) and then both **"Giving me the confidence to reach out to my teachers"** and **"Letting me easily connect with a student mentor"** equal at 14%.

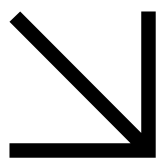
Over half (57%) of aged 18-25 students ranked in their top three **"Giving me the confidence to reach out to my teachers"** as a suggestion for improving their belonging.

However four in ten students (40%) chose 'other' for their choice of belonging improvements, with the main reasons falling into three categories: i. Better inclusion and support for non-traditional/distance learners (mature, part-time, remote, apprentices); ii. Improved social connection and peer interaction; iii. Addressing discrimination, exclusion, and unwelcoming campus culture.



ANNUAL GLOBAL STUDENT WELLBEING SURVEY

3: Student stress



2025

Research
carried out by:

YouGov®

Reported by:

Studiosity

Why:

High stress levels, especially among younger, female, and medicine students, and the need to better care for and retain university students makes this a crucial area of study. Understanding evolving stressors, like AI uncertainty seen in Chapter 1, and addressing **widespread issues like time related issues or fear of failing**, is vital for both student wellbeing and academic success.

Takeouts:

- Increase access to counseling and create safe spaces for **open dialogue**.
- **Enhance awareness of financial aid** and hardship funds to relieve monetary pressures.
- Offer **universal tutoring, flexible learning options**, with clear communication.
- Encourage and facilitate **peer support** groups, mentorship programs, and create opportunities for interaction with faculty.



Chapter 3: Student stress

74% of UK university students feel stressed 'monthly or more'.

42% of 18-25 year old students are stressed 'constantly/daily'.

74% of UK medicine students are stressed 'weekly or more' compared with nursing students the lowest at 57%.

32% of students aged 18-25 ranked 'fear of failing' as their biggest cause of stress.

Financial support was the most prominent theme of suggested improvements to institutional leaders.

"Due to the workload of the research degree I cannot work more which means money is tight for bills etc. with the cost of living ridiculous, it's been a careful 5 years in terms of finance."

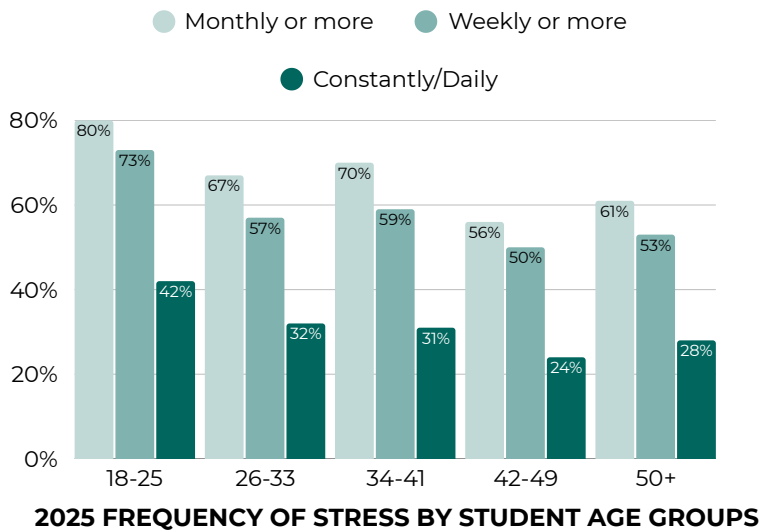




Trends for ‘Student stress’

Three quarters (74%) of all UK students feel stressed ‘monthly or more’

A large proportion of students report feeling stress more frequently, with 66% of all students saying they are feeling stressed ‘weekly or more’. However, both of these stress frequency are down by 6% from last year.



- Female students are feeling more stressed generally, with the gap the most pronounced in ‘constantly/daily’ frequency levels (39%) in comparison to male students (32%).
- Part-time students are considerably less stressed than their full-time student counterparts, with the largest difference in the ‘weekly or more’ frequency levels (70% full-time vs 54% part-time).
- Looking at subject areas, the biggest percentile difference is between medicine students who are the most stressed ‘weekly or more’ (74%) and nursing students (56%).
- Students at the pass mark are stressed ‘constantly/daily’ (51%) by a significant 23% more than higher performing distinction/high distinction students (both 28%).
- Students in full-time work report less stress levels than students who are either not in paid employment, or in casual or part-time work. Further triangulation with data on financial stresses and non-paid work commitments e.g. caring, could be looked at for greater understanding.

QA1 How often felt stressed by studying		QS12 Employment status					
		Casual	Part-time	Full-time	Not in paid employment		
Constantly (more than twice a day)	15%	21%	13%	14%	16%	p<001	p<10
Daily	21%	24%	22%	20%	21%	p<01	p<05
Weekly	29%	26%	32%	25%	29%	p<05	p<01
Monthly	8%	8%	9%	8%	8%	p<10	p<001
A few times per term / semester	18%	17%	16%	21%	18%		
A few times a year	3%	1%	4%	5%	3%		
Less often than a few times a year	2%	1%	2%	3%	2%		
Never	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%		

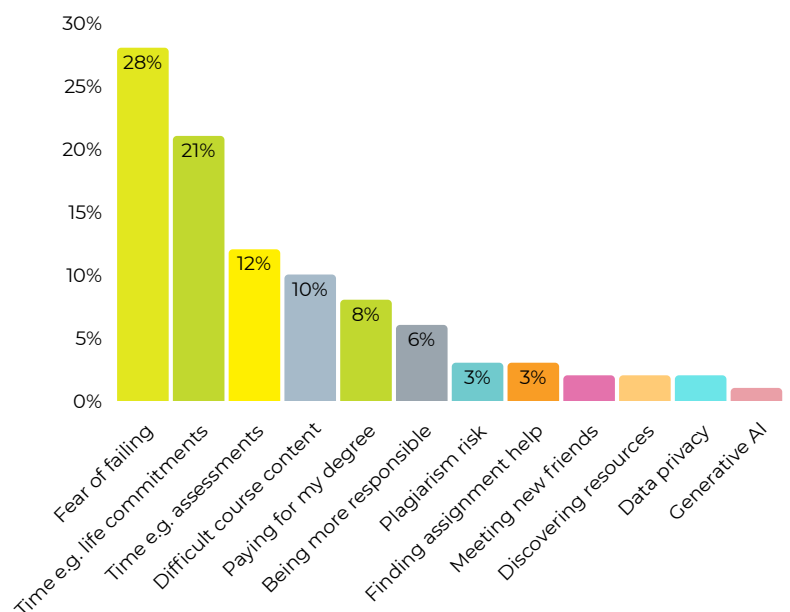


UK students feel stressed due to either time related issues, or fear of failing, with 61% of students putting these as their top reasons.

In 2025, stress due to time related issues is 18% lower than last year (51%). However, fear of failing has increased this year by a staggering 26%. However these numbers are looking at all students. A better understanding can be found by further examining the different student demographics.

- Time relevant to life commitments was significantly higher for students from the age 34 and above categories (66%) compared with younger students between the ages of 18-33 (48%).
- Fear of failing was significantly different between the age categories 18-25 (32%) and age 42-49 (15%). This was more relevant for female students of all ages (30%) than male students (24%).
- Other statistically significant differences in causes of stress can be found between:
 - full-time vs part-time students - as relevant to life commitments (17% vs 27%) and fear of failing (30% vs 22%)
 - international vs domestic students - as relevant to life commitments (13% vs 22%) and fear of failing (20% vs 29%)
- Other significantly noticeable differences in causes of stress between international and domestic students are for paying for their degree (12% vs 8%) and managing more responsibility (10% vs 6%).

TOP RANKED REASONS FOR STRESS DURING DEGREE COMPLETION





Students comments on what causes stress

Financial stress and the sheer academic workload are the most pervasive themes, followed closely by concerns about mental health and future career prospects. Group work issues and a perceived lack of appropriate institutional support also feature prominently.

"Due to the workload of the research degree I cannot work more which means money is tight for bills etc. with the cost of living ridiculous, it's been a careful 5 years in terms of finance" - Part-time, post graduate student

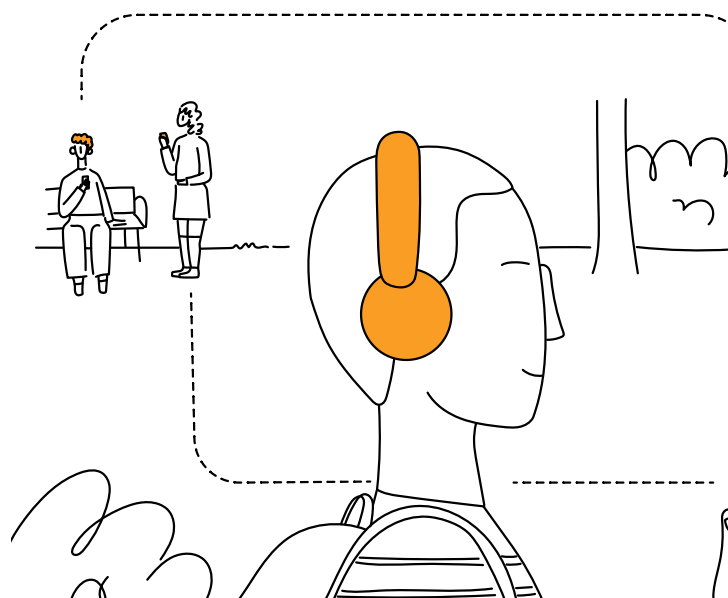
"Managing my degree around my disability and mental health. Staying well enough to continue studying, trying to not miss lectures, and always having to push through my barriers to keep up with and socialise with all the other students." - Full-time, 1st year student

"Group project work is so stressful as different individuals have different expectations and can't meet the objectives" - Full-time, recently completed student

"Due to the workload of the research degree I cannot work more which means money is tight for bills etc. with the cost of living ridiculous, it's been a careful 5 years in terms of finance" - Part-time, post graduate student

"As a mature student, the university machine is not really geared to support me. It's aimed at traditional student types. I want support on making a career change, to see employment stats for graduates of my course, to engage with alumni and industry more." - Full-time, post graduate student

"The sheer workload - not difficult course content, just lots of it" - Part-time, 3rd year student



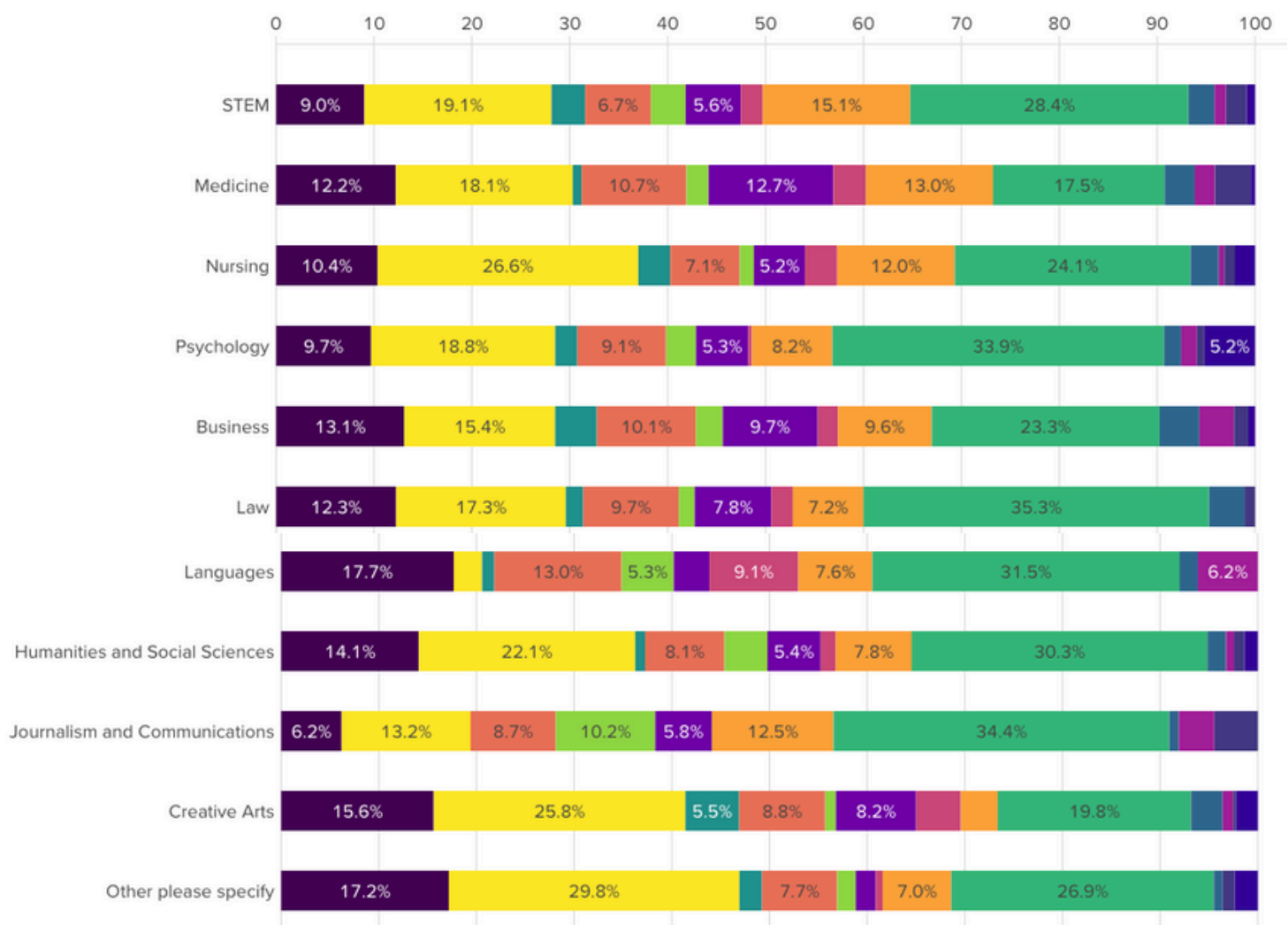


HOW STUDENTS ACROSS EACH AREA OF STUDY RATED EACH REASON FOR FEELING STRESSED ABOUT STUDYING - RANKED FIRST PERCENTAGES

QA2_Rank_First

Top 3 Important Reasons felt most stressed about studying

- Not having enough time to prepare for exams and assessments
- Not having enough time to balance other commitments in my life
- Finding assignment help
- Paying for my degree
- Sticking to the rules around integrity and plagiarism (e.g., referencing and use of artificial intelligence)
- Managing more responsibility on my own
- Meeting new friends
- Difficult course content
- Fear of failing (for e.g., exam, assessment, or other)
- Discovering school resources (e.g. using the library, services, policies)





Feedback to institutional leaders

Students were given the opportunity to pass on feedback to their institutional leaders, with recurring areas emerging: financial wellbeing, academic design and delivery, holistic support systems, and operational & environmental improvements.

WHAT CHANGES OR SUPPORTS WOULD HELP REDUCE YOUR STUDY-RELATED STRESS?



Financial stress is by far the most prominent theme. Students frequently mention: more support with the cost of living; lower fees/free education; being paid more by their employers in order to work less; student grants; lower price of rent; paid placements or higher loans for unpaid placements; more scholarship opportunities; less tax by the government for students.

"better funding to allow me to focus on studying, rather than squeezing in work around university and family"



Academic design and delivery - Students want clearer, more flexible, and manageable academic demands. This includes transparent assessment criteria, higher quality teaching with practical resources, varied assessment methods (including fewer high-stakes exams), and a workload that allows sufficient time for study and preparation, with deadlines spread out more evenly.

"More guidance, more time, less work."



Study support - Students seek smoother university operations and improved study environments. This includes easier-to-navigate online platforms, reliable basic facilities like printing, more responsive staff, accessible planning tools, and ample quiet study spaces. Streamlined administration and better campus amenities are vital for reducing daily stressors.

"Moodle could be made easier to navigate, issues with basics such as printing fixed"



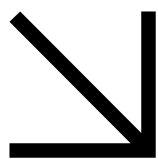
Holistic support systems - Students consistently highlight the need for holistic support systems to reduce stress. Key areas include better access to mental health services like counselling, more opportunities for social connection and peer support, increased emphasis on personal well-being and breaks, and improved pastoral care from university staff.

"Having enough time for my mental health relaxing without having any to worry about only focus on my studies that will help a lot."



ANNUAL GLOBAL STUDENT WELLBEING SURVEY

4. Peer connection



2025

Research
carried out by:

YouGov®

Reported by:

Studiosity

Why:

Researching peer connection and mentoring in 2025 helps educators and leaders address the noticeable “mentor gap” in practical ways, and create environments that **prioritise a social student experience, to support learning and mental health benefits, and ultimately for degree satisfaction and completion.**

Takeouts for leadership:

- **Increase the availability of peer mentors, with a focus on reaching underserved groups or target faculties.**
- Reduce barriers to accessing mentors by integrating peer connection into shared systems, **to overcome students’ self-reported barriers of social anxiety, uncertainty, lack of time, and lack of awareness.**



Findings

50% of UK university students who didn't have a mentor in their first year said they would have liked one.

48% of students who do not feel like they belong in their university/university community find it hard to ask other students questions.

69% of medicine students have access to a peer mentor in their first year.

28% of students at non-pass rate (i.e. below 50%) find it hard to ask their peers questions.

Students report varying barriers to accessing peer support - from social and personal anxiety, to lack of connection and communication, to lack of awareness and accessibility of support.

These three themes collectively represent the most prevalent challenges students face in building supportive peer networks at the beginning of their degrees.





Summary of findings

Just over half of all UK students (52%) do have a peer mentor available to them - up by 21% from last year (31%)



Whilst the number of students that now have access to a peer mentor in 2025 has increased generally, students aged 42-49 are the least likely to have a mentor (26%), yet within those 39% still feel they have a need for one.



Around one in six (17%) of all students find it hard to ask questions to other students. This rises significantly for students who feel stressed 'constantly (more than twice a day)' (30%) or who do not feel like they belong (48%).



STEM students find it the easiest to ask other students questions (53%) compared with all other students, along with high performing students at 60% - in sharp contrast to 'pass' level students at only 38% who find it easy to ask questions.

Did you need a peer mentor in your first year?	2024	2025
Yes	40%	50%
No	60%	50%

"It was difficult to know where to look for it as it wasn't well signposted."

- 18-25 year old STEM student

"When I started my degree, one of the main barriers to accessing peer support was not knowing anyone well enough to ask for help or advice. It took time to build connections and feel comfortable reaching out."

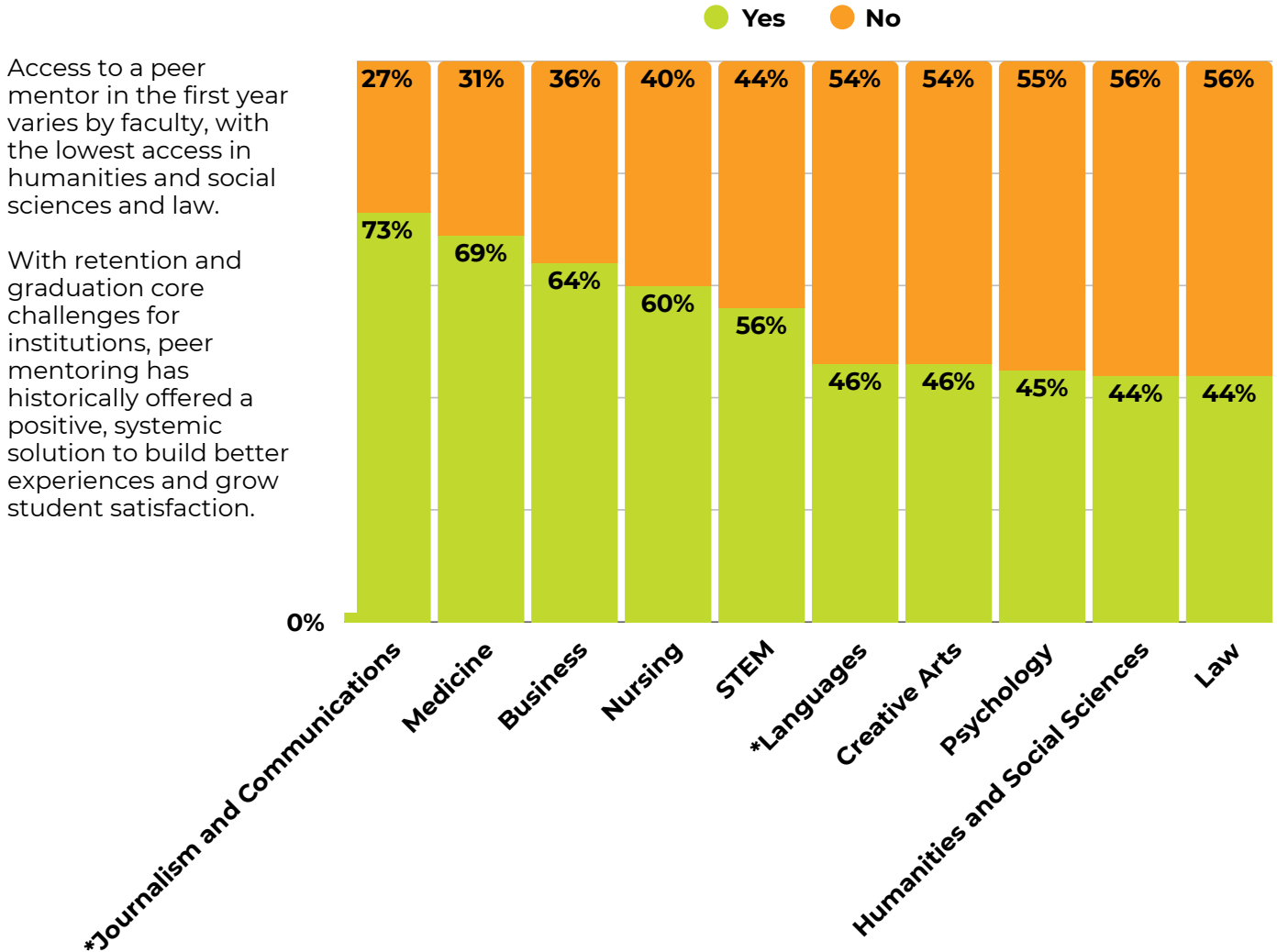
- 18-25 year old Medicine student



Summary of findings (cont.)

DID YOUR INSTITUTION PROVIDE YOU WITH A STUDENT MENTOR IN YOUR FIRST YEAR OF COLLEGE / UNIVERSITY?

BY AREA OF STUDY



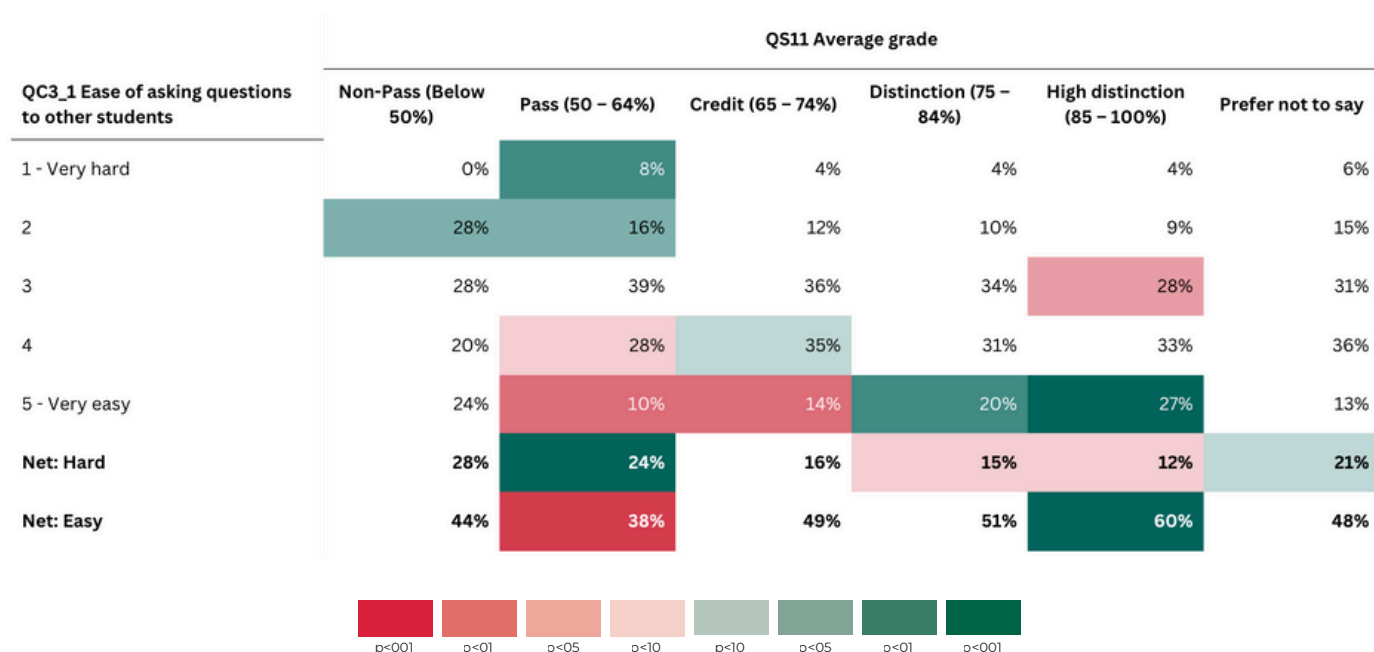
*Note smaller sample size for Languages n=48 and Journalism and Communications n=45



Summary of findings (cont.)

EASE OF ASKING QUESTIONS TO OTHER STUDENTS

BY AVERAGE GRADE



Barriers faced in accessing peer support when starting a degree - most mentioned themes

Social and personal anxiety:

Many responses highlighted social anxiety, shyness, lack of confidence, and nervousness as significant barriers. Students often felt uncomfortable initiating conversations, joining groups, or asking for help from new people.

Lack of connection and communication:

A recurring theme was the difficulty in connecting with peers due to a lack of opportunities to meet, not knowing anyone, or poor communication channels. This was often exacerbated by online learning, busy schedules, or small cohort sizes.

Awareness and accessibility of support:

Many students expressed a lack of awareness about where to find peer support, what resources were available, or how to access them. This also included issues with the availability of formal support programs or clear signposting.

"Was difficult to know where to look for it as it wasn't well signposted."

"As it is all online, there is very little direct contact with other students."

"Not knowing anyone"

"I'm very shy when meeting new people"

"Anxiety about meeting new people."



ANNUAL GLOBAL STUDENT WELLBEING SURVEY

5. Employability



2025

Research
carried out by:

YouGov[®]

Reported by:

Studiosity

Why:

In this section we asked students to rank their confidence with **three key statements about skills for employment, communication skills, and getting a job after graduation**, with the intent to learn more about students' perceptions of how their university and degree is preparing them for the workforce and identify areas of further research or improvement.

Takeouts for leadership:

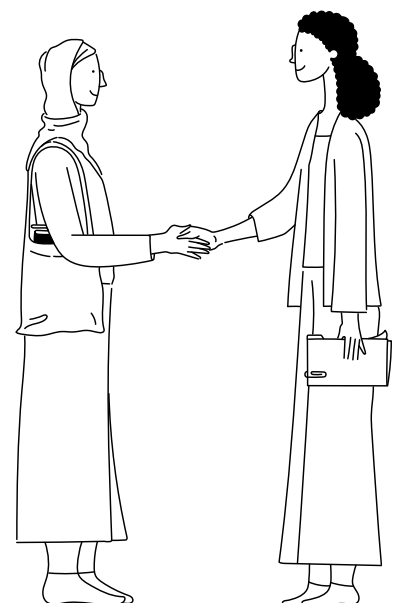
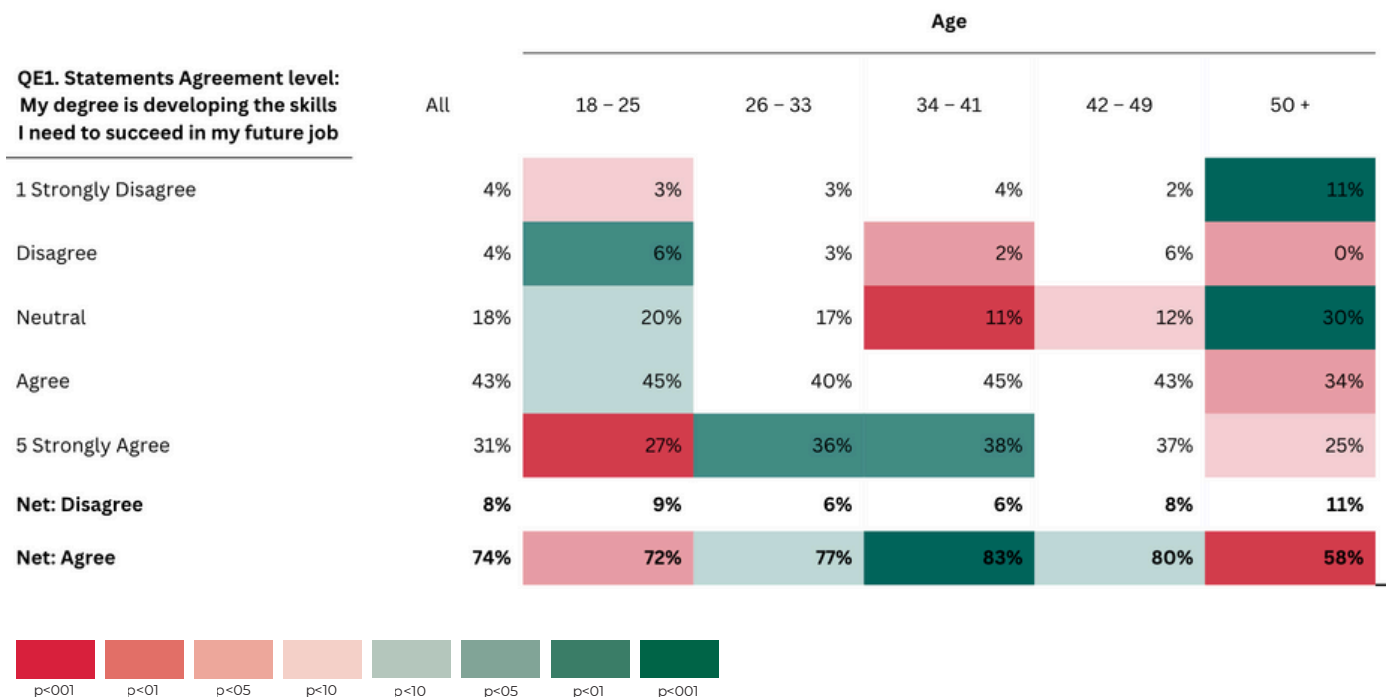
- While students generally felt their communication skills improved during their degree, there was a recurring request for more **industry-specific training**.
- Students frequently asked for more **hands-on experience, internships, and real-world opportunities** to apply their new degree skills.
- **All students are less certain about getting a job after graduation, adding weight to holistic initiatives from the college**, including stronger career services, industry connections, and guidance on navigating the job market.



Summary of findings

“My degree is helping me develop the skills I need to succeed in my future job.”

Three quarters of all students (74%) agree that their degree is developing the skills they need to succeed in a future job, a significant 11% increase from last year (63%). 8% disagree with this, and 18% remain neutral. While the overall feedback is positive, there is a noticeable disparity between age groups, subject area, attainment levels, and region.





Summary of findings (cont.)

"My degree is helping me develop the skills I need to succeed in my future job."

POSITIVE



NEUTRAL



NEGATIVE

"My degree shows me many different career paths I can take and puts us in contact with people from these fields." - Creative arts student, Scotland

"My degree teaches critical thinking and communication skills - vital for any job." - Humanities and social sciences student, London

"I am using the skills learnt in my degree in my everyday job - I can link the theory that I learnt (and am currently learning) to my job." - Subject 'other', Northern Ireland

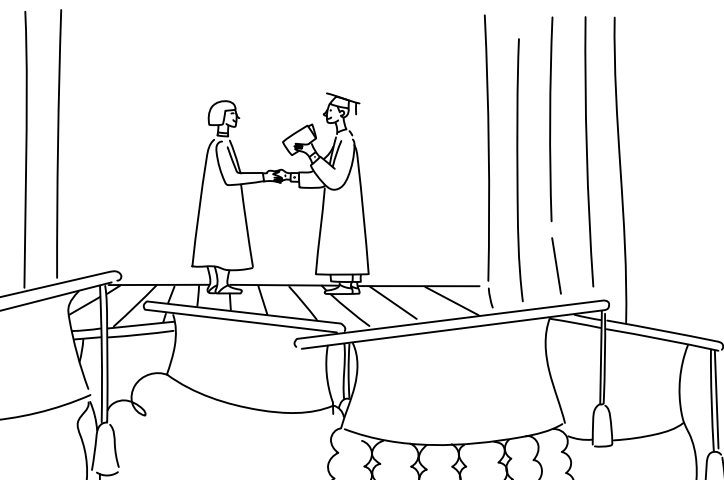
"Applying data analysis to my degree is helping me in an extraordinary way." - Subject 'other', Scotland

"The law course is ensuring we have a good sound foundation of basic legal concepts and there is a strong focus on writing essays. Although this is helpful in terms of being able to show you can put a string of sentences together, have good grammar and spelling, and can present your thoughts and responses in an intelligent, logical way, **I do question how helpful this will be in the long run, as I would not be writing essays to clients!**" - Law student, North West

"I am currently 4 months post grading from university and have only just secured a job after applying since March. I think the university could have better prepared our skillset for applying and in being more accessible for us to receive more detailed and tailored support of our skillset." - Psychology student, North East

"I can't find a job more than 7 months. The companies want work experience, not a degree." - Subject 'other', North West

"I don't think my degree has necessarily taught me any skills. It was just a pre-requisite to me getting a job in my chosen field." - Law student, London





Summary of findings (cont.)

"My degree is helping me develop the skills I need to succeed in my future job."

POSITIVE

"I am learning new skills to improve my ability as a writer. The course is very good and there are many online conferences with potential employers as speakers." - STEM student, London

"My degree taught me not only problem-solving skills, knowledge relating to my field and supporting skills that would benefit me within it, but also skills in communication and writing that would help in any job. We even had a small module solely dedicated to job-related skills including application writing and interview skills. It was a very well-rounded course" - STEM student, Scotland

"My degree is an apprenticeship, so the skills I develop to succeed are developed away from the university and in conjunction with my mentors" - Subject 'other', Midlands

NEUTRAL

"I think it is helping me to develop my confidence and there are certain elements of the course that support future employment goals, but some of the course seems to be contradictory to progress in other areas in my opinion. The careers support team seem very helpful though." - Creative arts student, Yorkshire and the Humber

"Alongside knowledge that is relevant and necessary in my job, I am learning skills including research skills, communication skills, and time management skills through the practicals and coursework, however I did not say definitely agree because it is only the first year, meaning the learning has been very broad, so maybe in future years where I can choose my modules I will develop the specific skills I need more." - STEM student, Scotland

NEGATIVE

"We do not learn anything practical. Teaching is purely theoretical and has no bearing on what is needed to succeed in a workplace" - Business student, Yorkshire and the Humber

"I didn't feel my degree prepared me for the actual work I would be carrying out in the job I desired. The degree provides a theoretical grounding but no practical knowledge of what you'd actually be doing meaning even as a post-grad you end up applying for graduate jobs on far lower pay" - Subject 'other', South East

"The current curriculum is far behind the labour market requirements." - STEM student, Midlands

"There is a huge nursing shortage, so there will be no difficulty in getting a job. I am an apprentice, so have a guaranteed job offer when I graduate."
- Yorkshire and the Humber

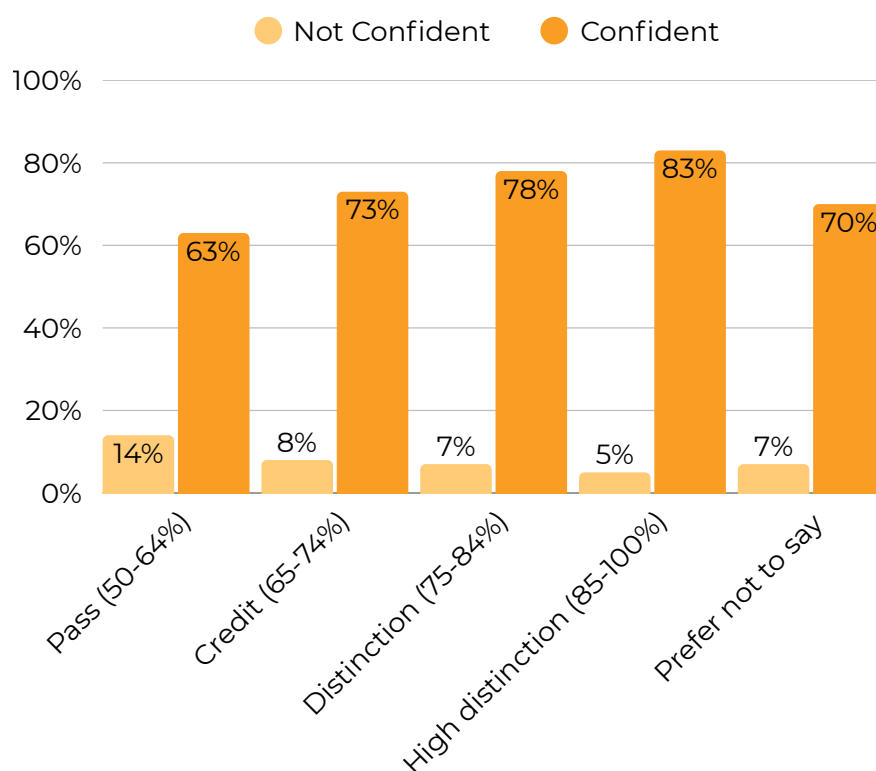
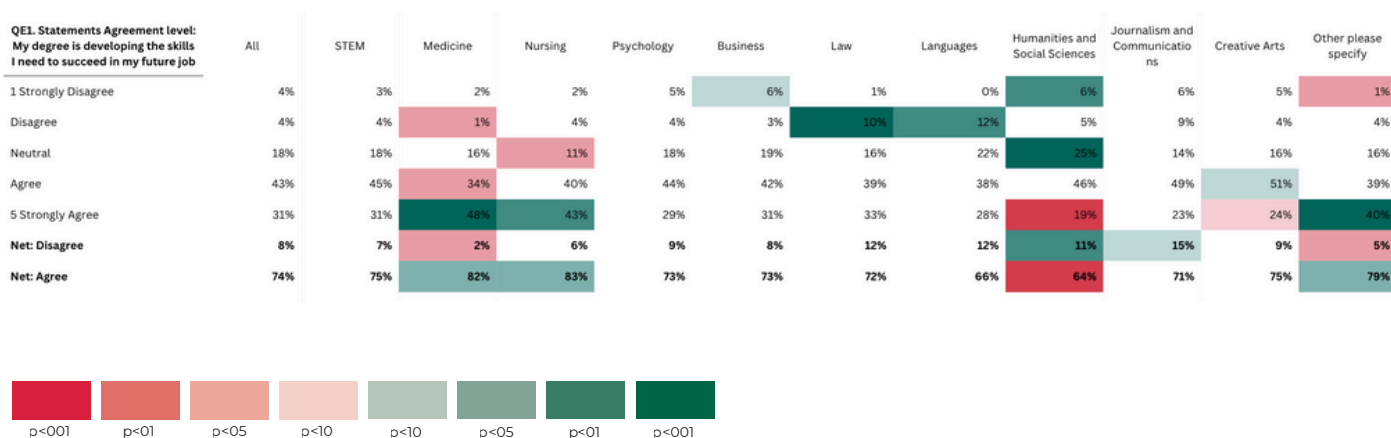


Summary of findings (cont.)

“My degree is helping me develop the skills I need to succeed in my future job.”

The higher the attainment level, the more likely students are to agree that they are developing the skills they need to succeed in their future job. For the highest achievers (high distinction, 85-100%) 43% 'strongly agree' with this statement.

From a regional perspective, students from Yorkshire and the Humber had the highest levels of net agreement at 84%, in comparison to Scottish students at 66%.



Survey background

YouGov

YouGov is a global public opinion and data company, international market research and data analytics firm headquartered in the UK with operations in Europe, North America, the Middle East, and Asia-Pacific.

Studiosity

Studiosity's AI-for-Learning is a critical component of the modern university, ensuring all students can engage in ethical generative AI to receive feedback, for successful, credible, graduate outcomes with visible learning outcomes for teachers. Universities around the world partner with Studiosity to grow student success at scale, via 24/7 formative writing feedback, discussion about core skills, and peer-to-peer connection.

Studiosity has run Student Wellbeing Surveys with UK university students since 2019. In October 2024, YouGov was commissioned by Studiosity to conduct a global wave of this research.

Objectives and methodology

Objectives

The survey investigates students' own responses to key areas of their wellbeing during study. This annual survey seeks to better understand and discuss the motivations, emotions, and demands of university students, to provide the data and findings to higher education leadership, to support initiatives and solutions. This year, the survey focused on topics such as experiences of artificial intelligence, connection to other students, stress, importance of grades, experiences of cheating, optimism for the future, and institutional belonging.

Methodology

Sample & Target Group:

Studiosity produced the questions for this survey with advice from YouGov to ensure robust data collection. YouGov gathered the responses from students in the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, United States, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates via an online survey.

The survey was conducted by the YouGov analysis institute. The survey ran from 15th November to 12th December 2024 and gained 10,224 responses, with 2,291 from students in the UK (slightly lower than the UK sample size of 2,422 in 2023).

This survey was collected on the YouGov and partner panels, where each member has accepted to participate in online interviews and has received an E-mail invitation with a link to the survey. The sample definition is created in order to provide a representative cross-section of the UK population, based on the target group and the purpose of the survey.



Weighting

The figures have been weighted and are representative of all adults aged 18+. Data was weighted according to the dimensions of gender, level of university studies finished, and geography based on an ideal weighting from the various statistic institutions of each country. This ensures the results are representative of each of the countries' population in relation to the aforementioned target group.

to determine statistically significant differences in results, either within a question or between sub-groups of interest (see the sample profile section for the sub-groups analysed).

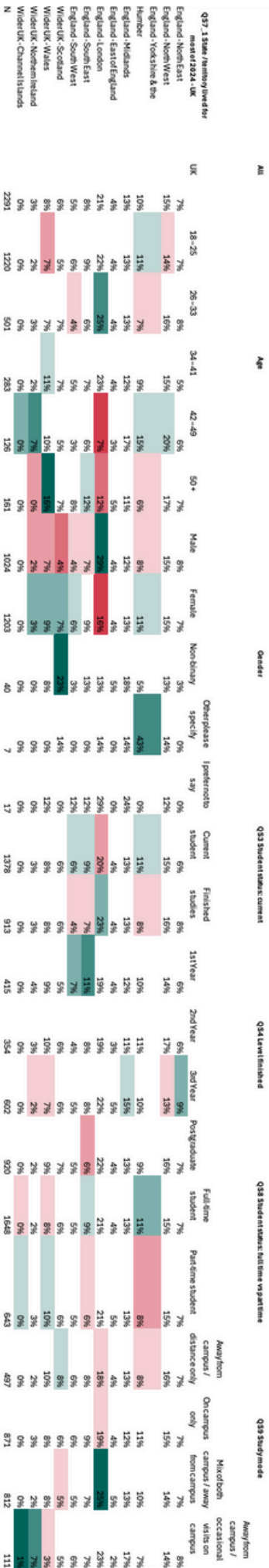
Only differences that are statistically significant are noted in the commentary and are identified with arrows as follows:

▲ denotes figure is significantly higher or lower than total



Notes on how to read this report
Tests for statistical significance at a 95% confidence interval have been conducted

In tables, the cells are coloured based on their difference from the column marginal value (row average) if the difference is statistically significant.



Q37: 18 Year, Nursing/healthcare students in the UK

Q38: 18 Year, Nursing/healthcare students in the UK

Q39: Student status: current

Q40: Level finished

Q41: Student status: full time vs part time

Q42: Study mode

Q43: English not language

Q44: Career

Q45: English not language



ANNUAL GLOBAL STUDENT WELLBEING SURVEY **UK REPORT**



2025

Research
carried out by:

YouGov[®]

Reported by:

Studiosity

For other chapters and countries, visit:
studiosity.com/surveys-and-evidence

Other reports:

Australia
Canada
Global
New Zealand
Saudi Arabia
Singapore
United Arab Emirates
USA

