

REDBRICK
RESEARCH

UCL Union

Market Research
2010

Evidence Summary

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1 Introduction

This document is a summary of the findings of the UCLU 2010 market research programme. It presents evidence and analysis from a number of other reports in a structure to suit the working themes that UCLU has defined.

Each working theme is addressed in turn, a list of relevant evidence (and sources) is provided along with ‘crossovers’ indicating where collaboration or co-operation may be required across working themes. The evidence is then presented concisely under that theme heading so that all evidence from all sources relevant to a theme can be found in a single section of this document. Where charts and tables are included, the numbering from the original (source) report is maintained to allow easy reference if additional detail / context is required.

The primary sources from which evidence is drawn are:

- Focus group and telephone interview report – published in February 2010
- Membership survey report – published in May 2010
- Errata to Membership survey report – published in June 2010
- Ideas Cafe report – published in June 2010

In addition, references are made to a number of electronic resources which contain further analysis as requested by UCLU. These include:

- Survey Report Appendix A – Demographic breakdown of respondents
- Survey Report Appendix B – Frequency of Use of Services by demographic
- Survey Report Appendix C – Survey comments
- Addendum.xlsx – published in May 2010
 - Demographic profile of VSU users (any freq)
 - VSU freq of us vs Club/soc involvement
 - VSU users' most desired UCLU actions
 - Most important actions WITH combined volunteering/community option
 - Freq of use of services for UG, PG, Intl
 - Knowledge of membership vs Club/soc involvement
 - Knowledge of membership vs Positive impact
 - Importance of services for UG, PG, Intl
 - Impact by Faculty
 - Voting by Faculty
 - Reasons for not voting by Faculty
 - Encouragements to vote by Faculty
 - Knowledge of membership by Faculty
 - Important actions by Faculty
 - Space features by Faculty
 - Built Environment demographics
 - KPIs by faculty (postgraduates only - to test impact of high PG in Built Environment)
- KarenBarnard.xlsx – published in July 2010
 - Demographic of those who are “very concerned” about career prospects
 - Demographic of those who want UCLU to “provide career opportunities” as one of the most important things it should do

2 Democracy

The primary sources of evidence relating to this theme are listed in the table below which also indicates where there may be crossover in use of evidence with other work themes and therefore where collaborative effort or co-ordination may be required in the use and interpretation of evidence.

Source	Evidence	Crossover
Focus Group Report	Importance of democracy	
	Attitudes to voting	
Survey Report	Understanding decision making	Representation & Campaigning
	Voting history	
	Reasons for not voting	
	Encouragements to vote	
	Importance of consultation	Communication
	Decision making preference	
Ideas Cafe Report	How students should be consulted	Communication

2.1 Importance of democracy

Focus Groups

When it came to the subject of voting, Red Brick deliberately challenged the students by asking them whether democracy was important or not. Are there better ways to ensure that a student organisation stays on-track and is meeting the needs of new students? The majority of students felt that a democratic election was important. However, it was described by one student as “*the least, worst way of doing it*”. Many students from various groups seemed to reiterate this idea that there was no way of achieving 100% democracy and effective representation, and that the current system was the best.

The postgraduate research students were generally negative about the union, felt under-represented and failed to see what the union could ever do for them.

2.2 Attitudes to voting

Focus Groups

Another recurring problem was that many students did not take advantage of the election process because they felt that their vote would simply “*dilute*” the outcome. They felt that they did not know the candidates or the system and therefore their vote was not really relevant or helpful in any way. Many felt disengaged and disconnected. Some of those only at the university for a year, such as some internationals and postgraduates, didn’t think they really had any right to interfere in the union as it was mainly for undergraduates.

2.3 Understanding decision making

Survey

Respondents were presented with a set of statements and asked to indicate which they believed to be true. Statement order was randomised.

Charts show the proportion of respondents who believed each statement and the proportion of respondents who believed NONE of the statements.

It is important to understand that respondents were free to select as many or as few options as desired, even when they may seem to be mutually exclusive.

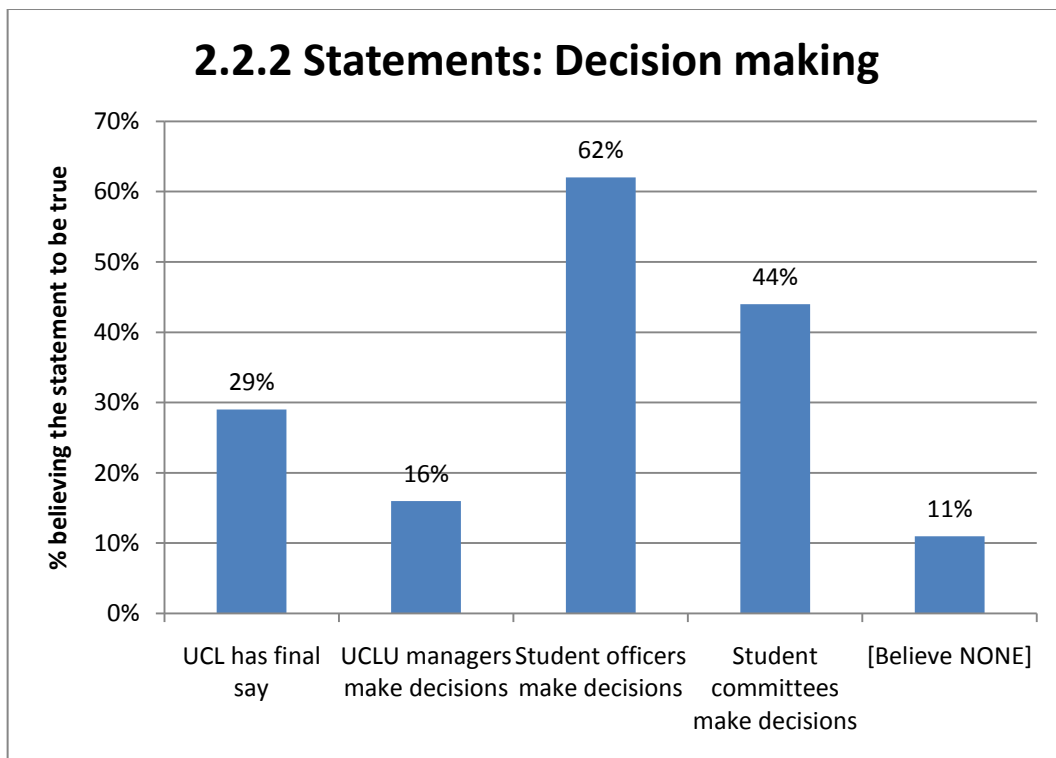
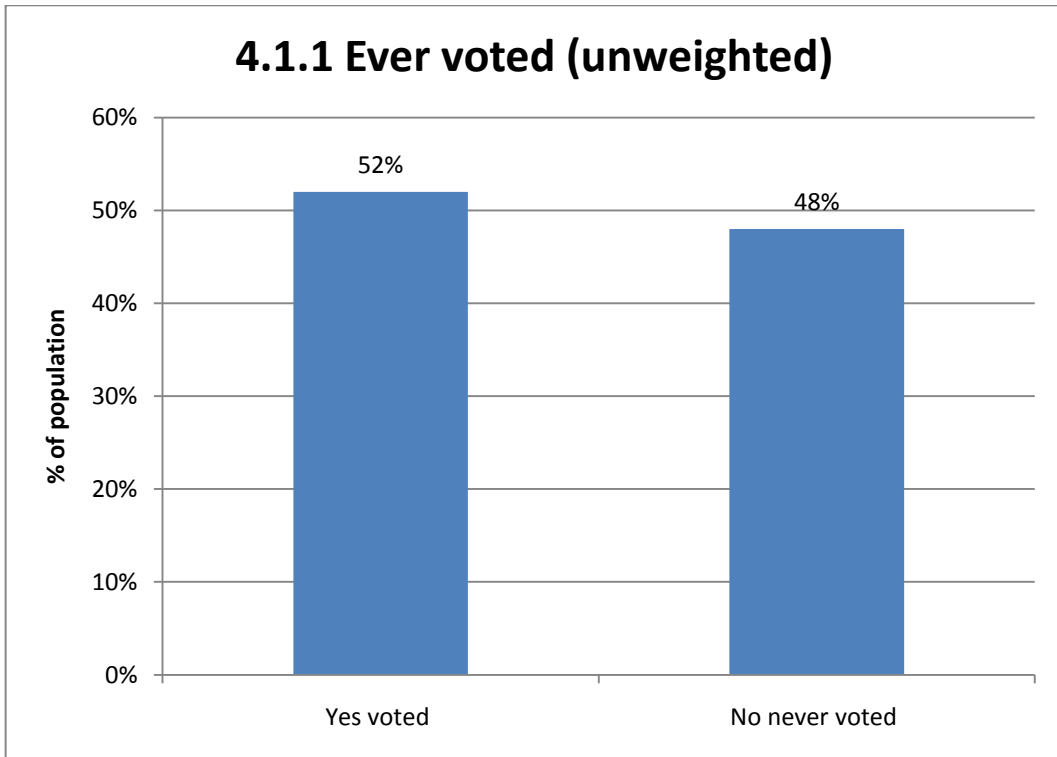


Chart 2.2.2 from the survey report shows a significant degree of multi-selection. Clearly there is a strong belief that students are making most of the important decisions within UCLU but 29% believe that UCL has the final say on what UCLU does.

2.4 Voting history

Survey

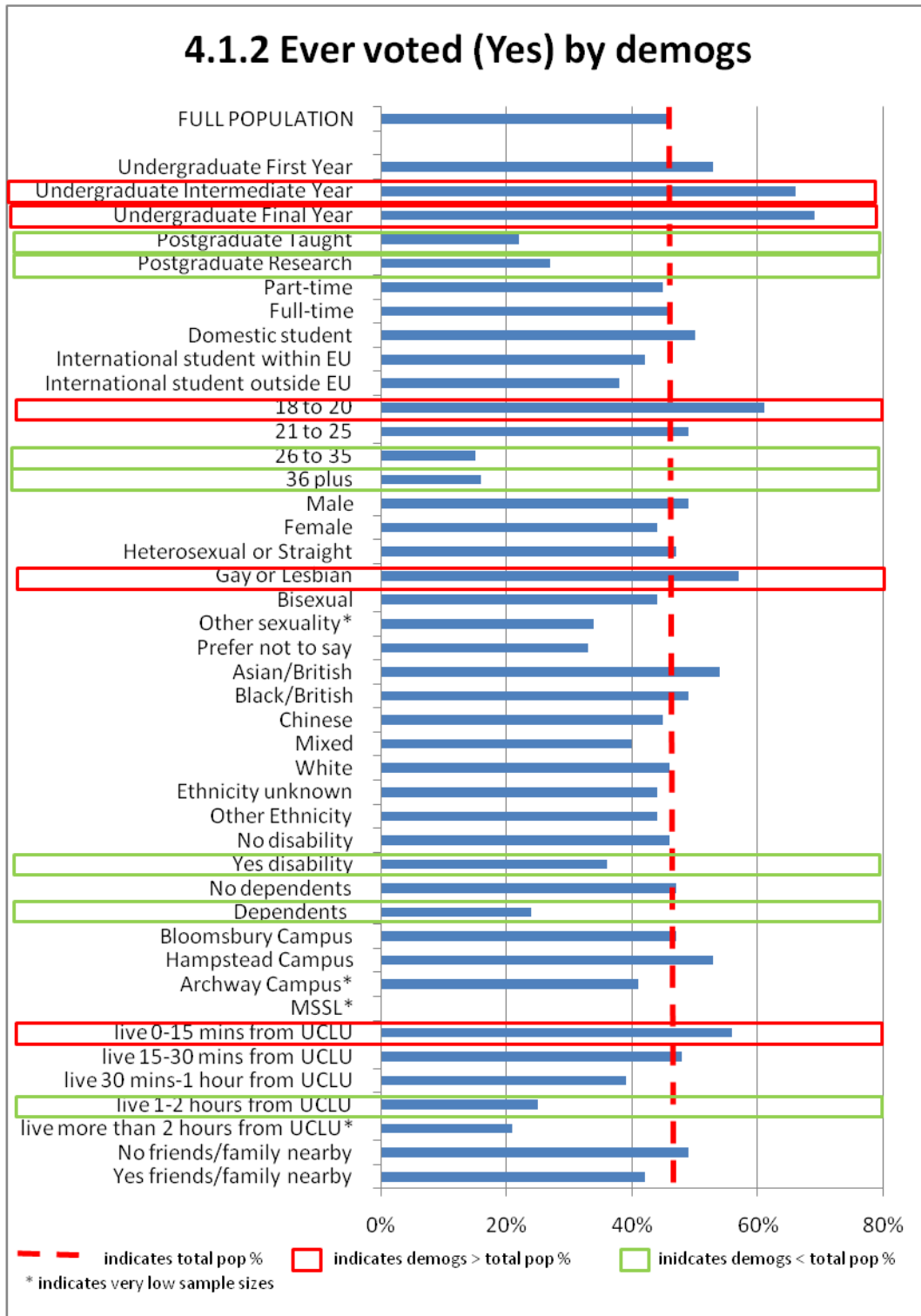
Chart 4.1.1 from the survey report illustrates the *unweighted* response to this question therefore the percentages shown precisely represent the actual respondents to the survey and do not attempt to represent the full population



Clearly this is a remarkable result which bears little resemblance to actual known voting figures even considering the question is ‘ever’ voted. This would seem to indicate a significant level of confusion, mis-understanding or mis-remembering of voting habits – this could be exacerbated by the number of different elections. Should it be desirable it may be possible to investigate this further by comparing survey responses for anonymised individuals with their actual voting record help by UCLU.

Chart 4.1.2 from the survey report (below) looks at the proportion of those who have ever voted for a range of different demographics and highlights those with significantly higher or lower results. The “FULL POPULATION” result is shown first for ease of comparison.

Note that chart 4.1.2 is weighted unlike 4.1.1. This is because here we’re interested in variance between demographic groups and weighting helps to neutralise inherent biases.



A far greater proportion of undergraduates than postgraduates are voters with 53% of first year, 66% of intermediate year and 69% of final year undergraduates claiming to have voted.



This question asks whether respondents have 'ever' voted so it is natural that those who have been members for a longer time are more likely to have ever voted.

At 55%, over three times as many 18-25 years have ever voted as over 25 year olds (16%). A slightly higher proportion of males are voting compared to females (49% versus 44%). There is a higher proportion of gay/lesbian voters than any other sexuality group - again perhaps because they are a minority group and therefore motivated to become more actively involved with UCLU. It is interesting that disabled students are not motivated in this way. Only 36% of disabled students have voted compared to 46% of non-disabled.



It is also interesting here that a higher proportion of Hampstead campus students (53%) compared to Bloomsbury campus students (47%) have 'ever voted'. Previous demographic analysis on the engagement questions consistently shows a higher proportion of Bloomsbury campus students demonstrating engagement than students in any other campus. Could there be a reason why there are more voters amongst students in the Hampstead campus?

Voting is inversely proportional to travel time from UCLU.



It is interesting that 49% of students who do not have family or friends based near them permanently have voted, compared to only 42% of students who do have family or friends based near them permanently. Perhaps the latter group is less motivated to get involved with UCLU?



Additional analysis on Voting history is available in Addendum.xlsx as Voting by Faculty

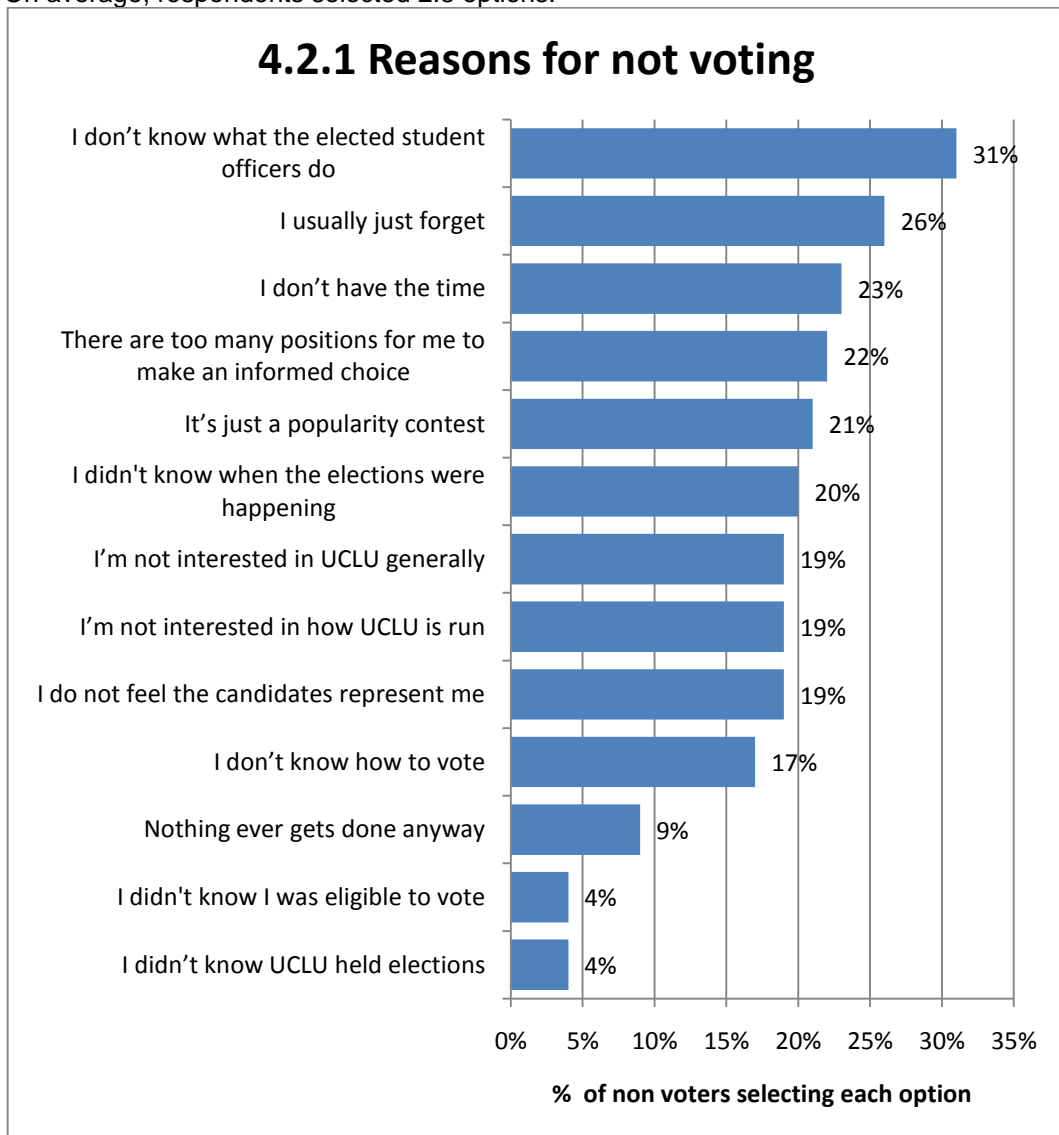
2.5 Reasons for not voting

Survey

Respondents who answered “No” to “Have you ever voted in UCLU elections?” (i.e. non-voters) were asked their main reasons for not voting.

Chart 4.2.1 from the survey report shows the proportion of the non-voting population selecting each of the options. Respondents could select as many or as few as desired.

On average, respondents selected 2.5 options.



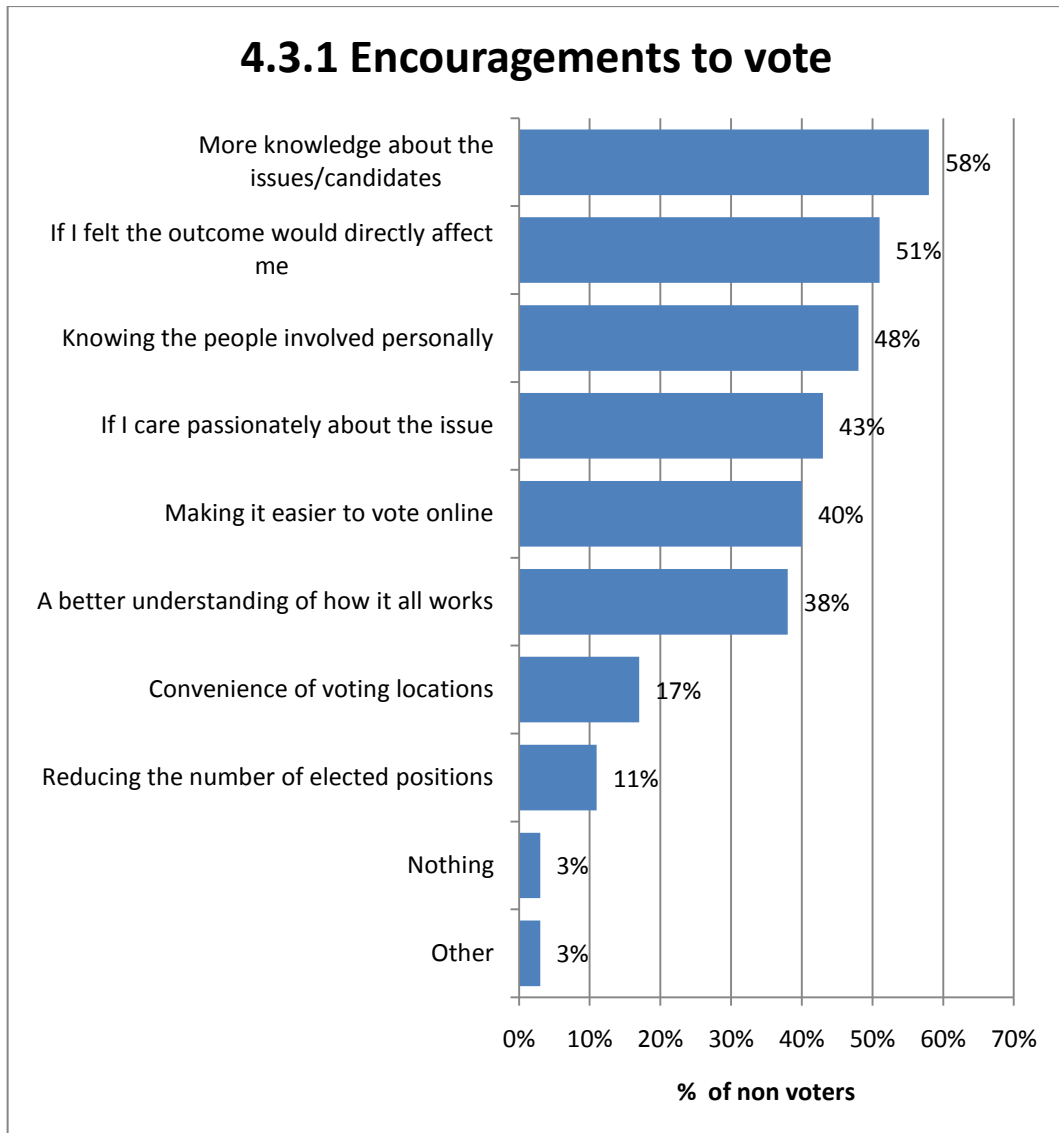
Additional analysis on Reasons for not voting is available in Addendum.xlsx as Reasons for not voting by Faculty.

2.6 Encouragements to vote

Respondents who answered “No” to “Have you ever voted in UCLU elections?” (i.e. non-voters) were also asked what would encourage them to vote.

Respondents were allowed to check as many or as few as they desired. Chart 4.3.1 from the survey report shows the proportion of the non-voting population selecting each of the options.

On average, respondents selected 3.2 options.

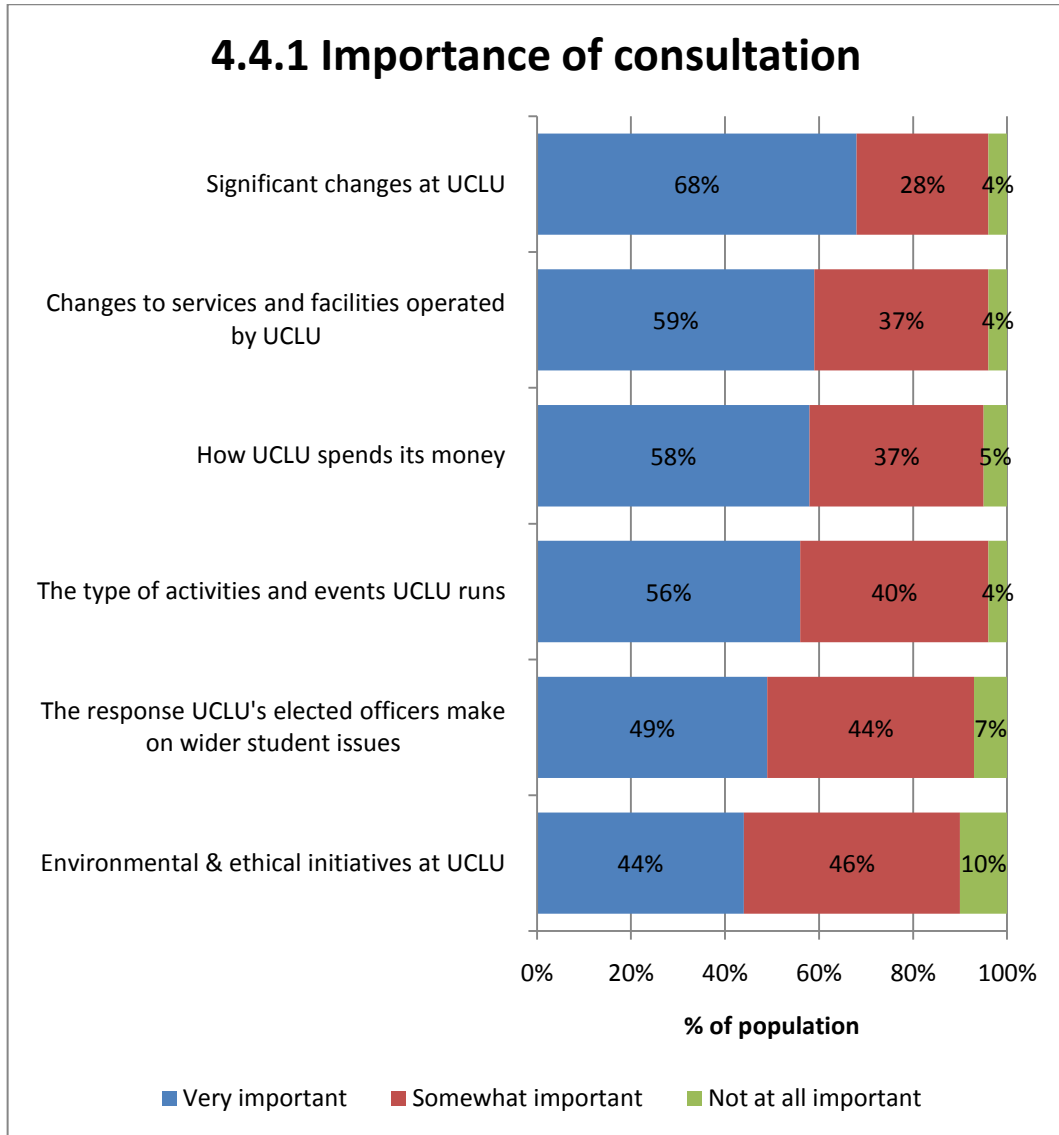


Additional analysis on Encouragements to vote is available in Addendum.xlsx as Encouragements to vote by Faculty.

2.7 Importance of consultation

Survey

Respondents were asked how important it was for them to be consulted on different issues.

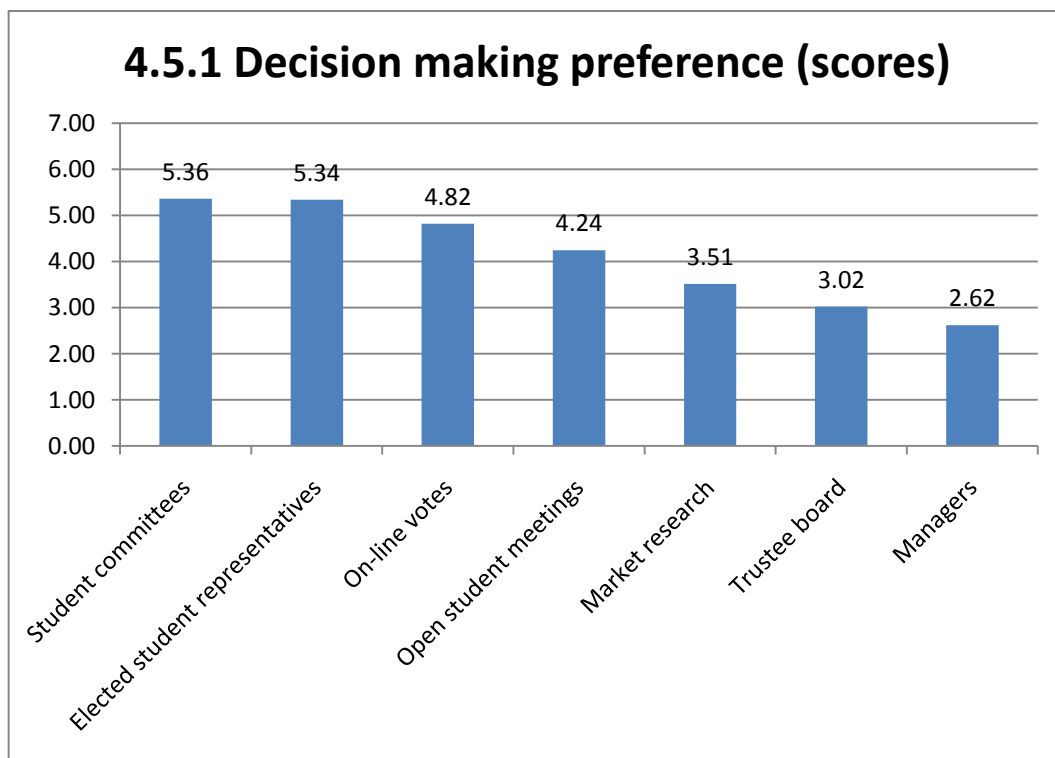


2.8 Decision making preference

Survey

Respondents were asked to rank preferred means of decision making at UCLU in order of preference.

Chart 4.5.1 from the survey report shows the average score between 0 and 7 for each decision making option. Higher scores equate to more preferable options.



2.9 How students should be consulted

Ideas Cafe

- 108 comments or suggestions were contributed
- A strong desire for more face to face contact, events and “stuff like this”
- Other frequently mentioned communication mechanisms were Online, Email, Facebook and Posters, though there were also some negative comments on these
- Opinion polls, surveys and referenda were each mentioned several times as preferred means of consultation

A full transcription of all the comments made on this subject is available in the appendix of the Ideas Cafe Report.

3 Development (Skills & Experience)

The primary sources of evidence relating to this theme are listed in the table below which also indicates where there may be crossover in use of evidence with other work themes and therefore where collaborative effort or co-ordination may be required in the use and interpretation of evidence.

Source	Evidence	Crossover
Focus Group Report	Clubs and societies	Fun, Excitement & Activities
	Careers advice	Meeting a Support Need
	Alumni	Meeting a Support Need
	Part-time work	Creating a Quality Environment
	Academic needs	Making Best Use of Space
	Volunteering	
Survey Report	Concern about issues	Meeting a Support Need
	Most important UCLU actions	Fun, Excitement & Activities
	Strategic focus	
Ideas Cafe Report	Help into careers	Meeting a Support Need

3.1 Clubs and societies

Focus Groups

Clubs and societies were ranked as one of the top priorities for students. Many considered them to be a key CV building opportunity, as well as facilitating social interaction. Out of an entire international group, only two students felt that they were at university for any other reason other than improving their CV.

Across all groups, there was unanimous agreement that clubs and societies should be UCLU run.

When asked for the reason behind this choice the broad consensus was that the union should be responsible for non-academic university life. There was general feeling that the university would not offer the variety of clubs that the union would. Students also felt that they would be more in touch with the non-academic needs of other students than anyone else would.

3.2 Careers advice

Focus Groups

There is a broad consensus amongst students that careers advice is the responsibility of the university, although not necessarily a departmental responsibility as many subjects do not automatically lead on to specific careers.

A few groups commented on the type of companies that the Careers Service invites to the university. Some students would like to see a wider variety of companies – not just obvious, big corporations but smaller firms from a more interesting mixture of fields. A student from the postgraduate research group said that the careers service:

“needs to offer a broader variety of partnerships”

Variation – Final year undergraduates

There was a consensus amongst the final year undergraduates that they needed more help when it came to career preparation. They expressed the view that job seminars would be useful - covering CV writing tips, application timelines and interview practice.

One medic also expressed a need for more graduate advice. They emphasised that there is vital information that medics need to be aware of when they graduate, such as registering with the General Medical Council. Without doing this graduates are not able to practice medicine.

3.3 Alumni

Focus Groups

Final year and postgraduate students

Final year students, masters students and postgraduate research students all expressed a need for a better Alumni. They were really keen for more support and guidance when it came to life after university, especially as the advice they would be looking for might be quite specialised.

3.4 Part-time work

Focus Groups

The broad consensus is that the union should be providing a good part-time jobs website for students. This site should be updated regularly, be as comprehensive as possible and very student specific. After the focus groups, Red Brick actually went onto the UCLU website and explored the Job Shop which appears to tick all of these boxes. Perhaps this indicates that there needs to be better communication of this site?

A few students mentioned the need for more on-site jobs whilst international students spoke about having more language/translation jobs available. Some also mentioned that part-time work could also be a university and union collaboration when it comes to subject related jobs.

3.5 Academic needs

Focus Groups

Many students expressed a need for more academic space, or at least easier access to existing study and seminar rooms.

Variation – Postgraduate research students

There was a general consensus amongst the postgraduate research students that, considering their academic level and the amount of work they were required to do, they should be allowed to access labs, computers and libraries 24 hours a day. A couple of students suggested that a fob or key system would be successful. A number of them felt time restricted when it came to carrying out particular experiments as departmental rooms and computer facilities closed early.

They also felt that their accommodation should be fitted with computer rooms so that they could work from home.

Approximately half of the group also complained about not having their own desks. They felt that this facility was fundamental at this stage in their academic career as they had so many research resources, reference books and equipment that they needed to use.

Variation – MSSL postgraduates

There was a broad consensus amongst MSSL students that extra-curricular courses offering points towards their PHD were very difficult to attend due to the travel distance. A couple of students suggested that particularly popular courses could be held at MSSL. Alternatively more of them should be available as intense 1 or 2 day courses in London so that they did not have to travel in and out of London several times. One student argued that there was a small “pot” of money used to fund travel so several trips to London instead of one could jeopardise students’ ability to go to more important conferences.

Variation – International students

In one of the mixed groups there was a clear difference in priorities between the international students and the domestic. Whilst the domestic students spoke first about food and shops before any other need, some of the international students began the session with a list of more academic needs such as books, computer labs and wireless.

3.6 Volunteering

Focus Groups

Volunteering was only really considered important by those directly involved. However, not many people seemed that aware of the volunteering options at UCL / UCLU.



Additional analysis specifically on the ‘users’ of the VSU identified in the survey has been conducted and is available in Addendum.xlsx. This includes the following tabulations:

- ***Demographic profile of VSU users (any freq)***
- ***VSU freq of us vs Club/soc involvement***
- ***VSU users' most desired UCLU actions***
- ***Most important actions WITH combined volunteering/community option***

3.7 Concern about issues

Survey

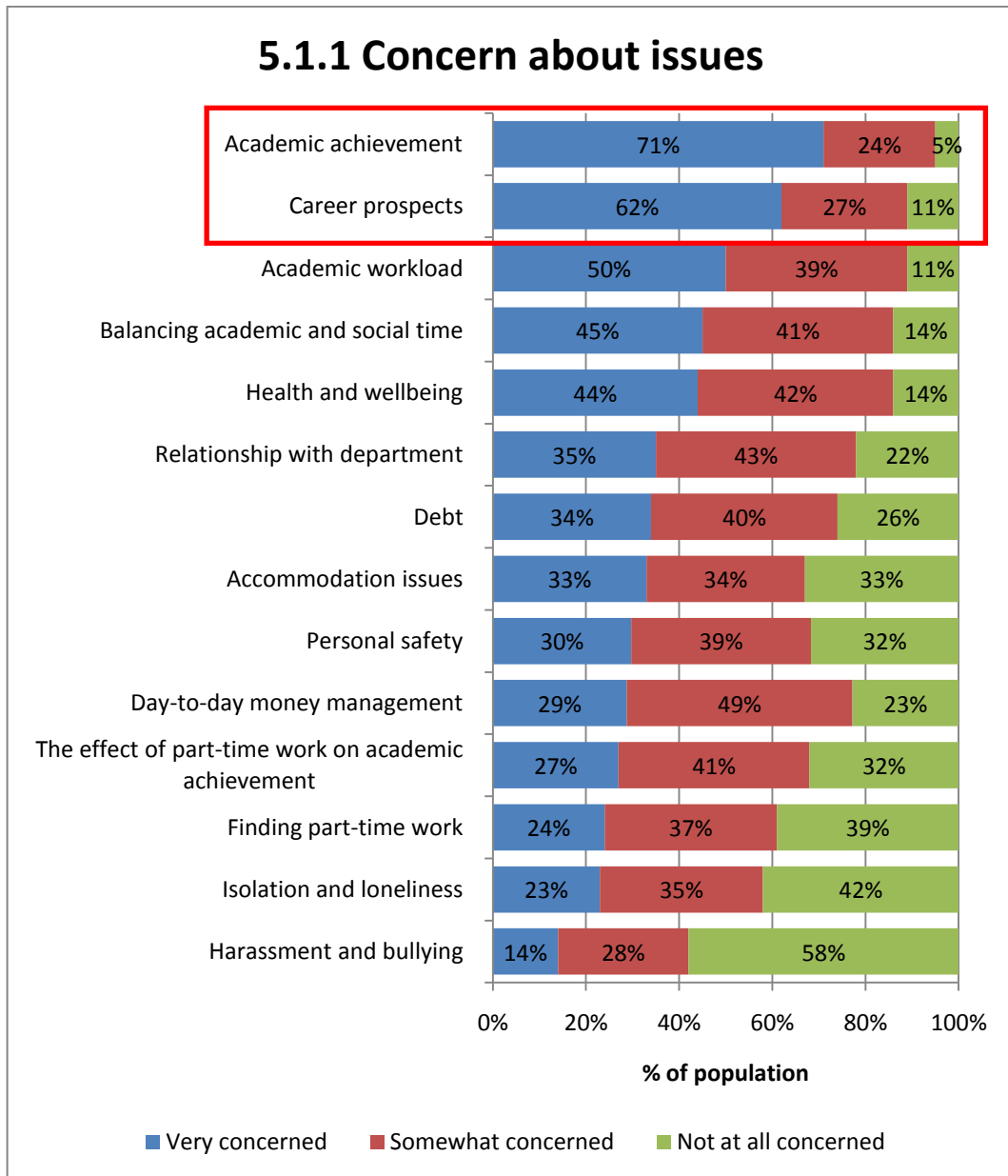


Chart 5.1.1 from the survey report clearly identifies Academic achievement and Career prospects as the primary concerns of students at UCL.



Additional analysis is available in Addendum.xlsx on the demographics of those who are “very concerned” about career prospects.

3.8 Most important UCLU actions

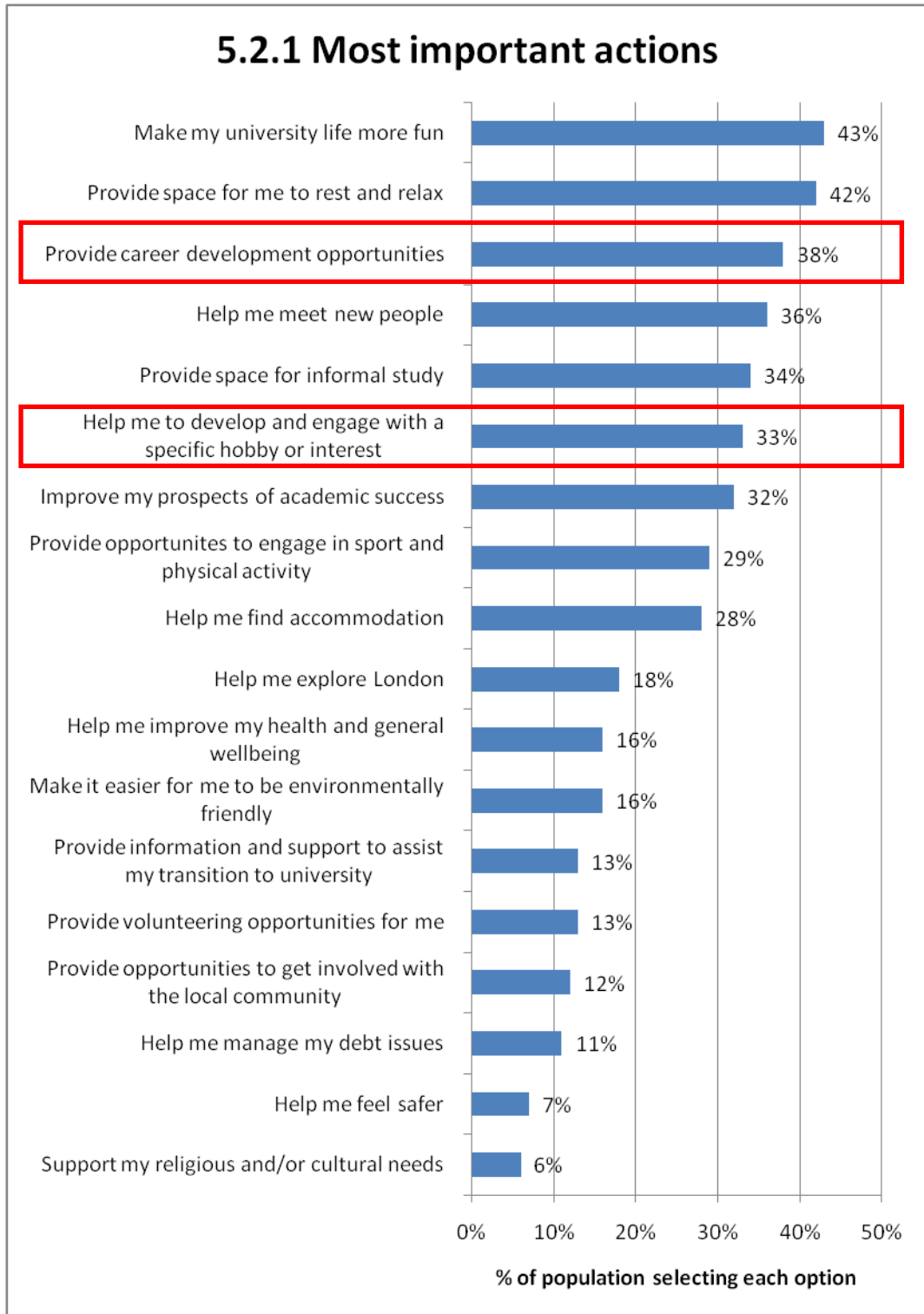
Survey

In addition to asking student about their concerns, they were also asked what are the most important things that UCLU could do.

Students could select up to 5 items from the list. The chart below shows the proportion of students who checked each option as one of their 5.

Providing career development opportunities is the third most important action with over a third of students selecting it.

Helping students develop and engage with a specific hobby or interest is 6th on the list.

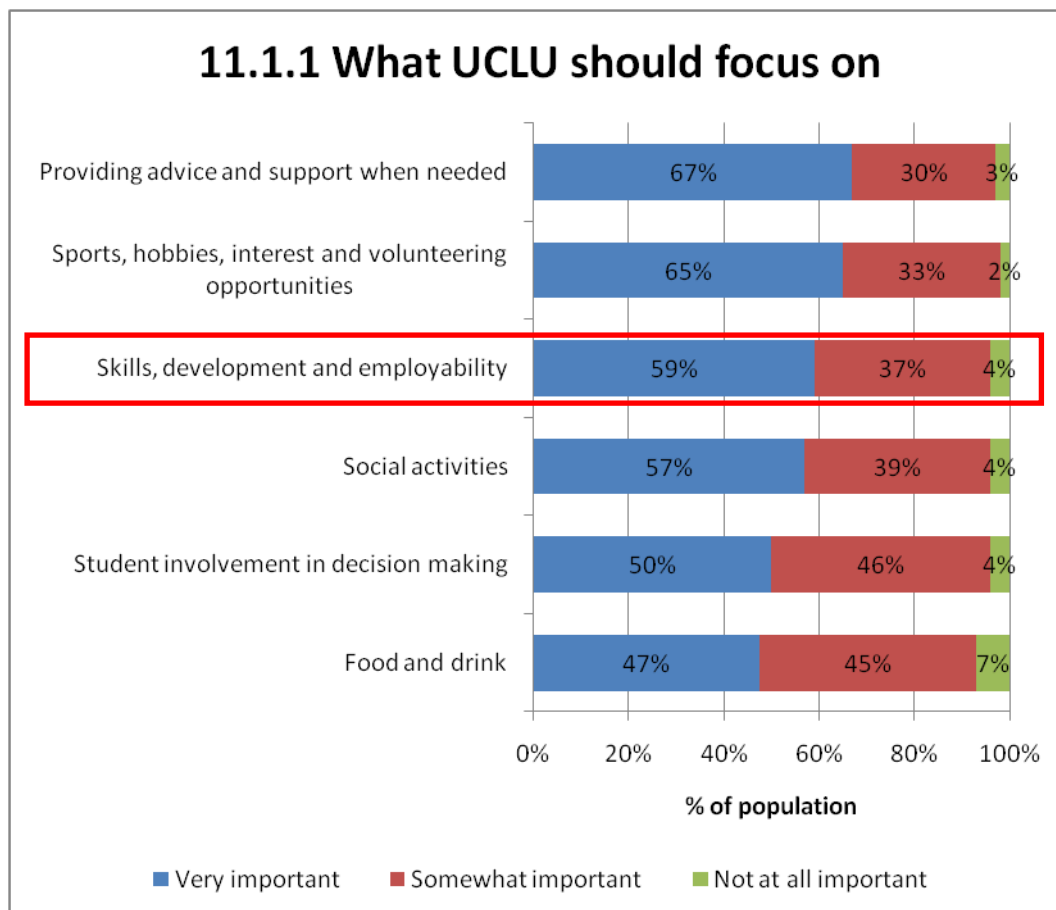




Additional analysis on Most important actions is available in Addendum.xlsx as Important actions by Faculty. The Addendum also contains a demographic breakdown of those who want UCLU to “provide career opportunities” as one of the most important things it should do.

3.9 Strategic focus

Survey



3.10 Help into careers

Ideas Cafe

- 105 comments or suggestions were contributed, including some objection to this as a core function of UCLU
- Many mentions of alumni and “networking” as well as requests for more of what’s already available
- Several mentions of services such as careers fairs specifically for postgraduates
- Desire to connect with and learn from industry experts - suggestions this should be part of courses
- Several comments expressed a desire for UCLU to provide clearer links between careers and clubs/societies

A full transcription of all the comments made on this subject is available in the appendix of the Ideas Cafe Report.

4 Fun, Excitement & Activities

The primary sources of evidence relating to this theme are listed in the table below which also indicates where there may be crossover in use of evidence with other work themes and therefore where collaborative effort or co-ordination may be required in the use and interpretation of evidence.

Source	Evidence	Crossover
Focus Group Report	Entertainments	The Case For/Against Commercial Operations
	Needs for Space	Making Best Use of Space
	Bars	The Case For/Against Commercial Operations
	Freshers and Welcome back events	
Survey Report	Clubs & societies involvement	Development (Skills & Experience)
	Most important UCLU actions	Development (Skills & Experience)
	Social events ideas	
	Non-competitive sports	
	Space for fun	Making Best Use of Space
Ideas Cafe Report	Making uni life more fun	

4.1 *Entertainments*

Focus Groups

Entertainment is an umbrella term that covers a number of extra-curricular needs, such as night time events, music and cultural experiences.

The majority of groups agreed that entertainment provision was a vital part of UCLU. However, a couple of students did express that they would also like more social events organised by their departments.

When the students were asked what mattered when it came to entertainment, several things came up:

Variety

A variety of entertainment was something that was repeatedly emphasised. Students felt that entertainment should represent the diverse student population. Individuals came up with suggestions such as comedy nights, quizzes, bands, one off dance nights and cocktail nights. One student from the final year undergraduate group said that

“A lot more all year round could come from the union”

They then added:

“There is not enough going on in the evenings”

This sentiment was shared by others in the group. They felt that entertainment tailed off as students went through the academic year. One student from the Activists group also felt that

entertainment took a nose dive after Freshers Week. They suggested a “*refreshers theme*” event that could happen later on in the year. A couple of council members felt that union events were all very similar and assumed that students were all the same. They gave the example of “*club neon*”.

Interestingly, the 1st year undergraduate group felt that freshers week was too alcohol focused and that there should be a broader spectrum of activities available. One individual suggested a “*garden party*” as a possible summer event. A student in the Activists group also spoke about hoping to get the “*non-alcohol thing happening*”; that too many events were currently club or pub focused.

A number of internationals requested more “*traditional*” English events that, again, were not alcohol driven. They were given “*cream teas*” as an example and responded enthusiastically to this suggestion.

Price

The price of entertainment is important for students. Students believed that having events in the UCLU building would keep the price of tickets and drinks to a minimum and thereby promote cohesion because all student could afford to participate.

Student identity

Student organised entertainment really keeps the student identity strong. They need to be separate from the rest of the London night life. One student in the final year undergraduate group said:

“If you have nights in clubs you lose that sense of place”

Space

Several students mentioned the importance of having space to facilitate special events and live bands. Without the correct space the entertainment cannot happen. Particularly variety of entertainment cannot exist if there aren’t enough rooms/spaces.

A couple of students in one of the mixed groups felt quite negatively about the club nights organised by UCLU. They felt that the advertising was “*corny*” and that they “*would rather go somewhere else*”

Variation – MSSL Postgraduates

A number of the MSSL students felt ignored when it came to UCLU activities. However they were generally quite pragmatic and acknowledged that it was impractical to join in with events as they were situated so far away from the union building. In the words of one student, if you wanted to join in you would have to “*write your day off*” because of all the travel involved.

There was a general consensus that UCLU should try to organise specific events that brought remote students in. The idea of transport funding came up, so that they could join in with clubs and societies. A mini bus was suggested a number of times.

Red Brick prompted one student by referring to the Give it a Go programme. They had not heard of Give it a Go but seemed very keen that the MSSL campus should offer something similar – providing that a minimum level of participation could be met.

Students seemed generally happy with the entertainment facilities they already have at MSSL in terms of canteen, social spaces, pool, gardens etc. However, one did mention

that a better “*social hut*” (the hub for the social club) would be nice. Red Brick and students are uncertain whether this social hut is a UCLU responsibility or not.

4.2 Needs for space

Focus Groups

All students from all groups repeatedly expressed their need for space.

Not only did the majority of students share this same core need but there was also an astonishingly broad consensus when we discussed both background motivations and particular features.

Motivations for requiring Space (broad consensus)

- A physical space that allows for student interaction is fundamental – there was a very negative response to the idea of a ‘virtual’ union.
- Space is needed for social facilitation – one final year undergraduate student spoke about “*social cohesion*”
- Every student space creates a sense of unity and student identity; of ownership
- Social space facilitates personal development

Features (broad consensus)

- Social space should be provided by UCLU
- “*Common room*” was the most frequent way of describing the ideal student space
- “*Lounge*” was a word that one student used. Another used “*Hub*” whilst a third individual thought it should be “*gravitational*”
- The aesthetics of this space were generally considered important – one student from the Activists group said of the current UCLU building:

“It is currently a building that no one wants to be in”

He added-

“It doesn’t really facilitate socialising which is its main job”

- The space should be non-bookable
- Somewhere relaxed and chilled
- An individual suggested “*sofas*” and another that it should be “*light*”
- Somewhere you can chat but not as noisy as a bar – a third year undergraduate described the imagined space as “*fairly quiet but not like a library*”. Similarly a student from one of the mixed groups described it as “*not like a library – this would be too restricted*”
- Another student described it as a “*space in between lectures*”
- There was a repeated emphasis on this space having a non-commercial focus i.e. there would be the option to eat and drink but you should not feel obligated to.
- It would be multi-functional – the students were generally very keen for a space where you could eat, chat, work, discuss essays, discuss yesterday’s night out, use laptops etc.
- Sockets for laptops

- WIFI
- Workstations were mentioned several times as many students do not carry laptops around

Several society members mentioned a problem with all the bookable rooms being the same size so there was a lot of wasted space and it was difficult to find venues for different numbers of people to meet. One society leader also estimated that if suitable 'open' space were available it would reduce their requirement for room bookings by about 75%.

The Activist group spent some time talking about this issue of space. There was a broad consensus amongst this group that space was, as one student put it, "*a major thing*". One individual advocated having "*a single community space with stalls*". The individual felt that there needed to be more "*free reign*" space so that students could put their stamp on it; where "*student creativity could create a unique community feel*" and suggested the Slade School of Fine Art come and decorate the union. They linked space directly to community. One student actually claimed that, for them:

"all other needs are fulfilled other than the community feel"

There was a general feeling in the group that a community space would help create a UCLU identity that wasn't currently there. One student divided the ULU population into three categories:

- Medics
- Postgraduates
- The rest

They felt that the union was a fall-back for "*the rest*" i.e. nothing more than a collection of fragmented identities. They felt that the union did not have an identity of its own.

Red Brick asked the group:

"So is UCLU just a wrapper that encompasses other sub groups?"

The unanimous response was "yes"

The council members group were equally emphatic about the importance of space. When Red Brick suggested the concept of a union without a building there was an audible gasp and one student said "*what a shame!*". Red Brick then asked "*So a physical space is important then?*" and everyone answered "yes" very firmly. One student summarised the feeling of the room by saying "*a very passionate yes!*".

An individual in one of the mixed groups expressed a desire for "*outside space*" – something that looked "*green*" and "*oldy*" rather than having "*just steel and glass everywhere*". This desire was also shared by a few other students in other groups, though they appreciated it was a difficult need to meet.

4.3 Bars

Focus Groups

There is unanimous agreement amongst students that the bars should be union controlled for the following reasons:

- They will be unique
- Jobs will be created for students
- Sense of community
- Lower price

A mature undergraduate student suggested that “*there should be Sky Sports available in the Bars*”. Students are currently going to other unions to watch matches and UCLU is missing out on revenue.

There is a general consensus that the bars need to feel cleaner and fresher. It is imperative that the environment feels pleasant to be in. Individual students described the current UCLU bars as “*sticky*” and “*dodgy*”. The neon Chris Akabussi Pleasure Lounge sign didn’t win many votes either, and most students were unaware of the name, referring to it instead as “*the upstairs bar*”.

An individual in the Activists group suggested that there is not enough union branding in bars. They felt that a stronger sense of identity needs to be created as people don’t even know that Huntley Street, for example, is even UCLU owned. Another student in this same group asked the question:

“UCL bars are relatively empty considering that there are 20,000 students milling around. Why is that?”

She answered her own question by suggesting that:

“The student body hasn’t really had a chance to personalise the union”.

She felt that the bars lacked a sense of unique identity and community.

4.4 Freshers and Welcome back events

Focus Groups

First year undergraduates

There was unanimous agreement that the Freshers fair was generally far too expensive – particularly the entry tickets.

A few of the students felt that the system was unfair in that you had to buy your tickets quite early otherwise you would miss the opportunity, which they did. Considering that the focus of Freshers week is forming friendships and meeting other students, the students that missed out felt ostracised. They were asked...

“Was it a bit like missing the prom?”

They agreed that it felt like this, although some admitted that it didn’t feel so bad when they realised so many others were in the same boat.

One student mentioned that the graduation ceremony was also very expensive. They had heard through a friend that there were no free tickets allocated to each student so poorer families were prevented from going to watch their child graduate, which seemed wrong considering how much money their education had cost them.

New students

The majority of new students, both international and domestic, agreed that a welcome pack, seminars, and even a union welcome desk were needed to help introduce students to London, UCL and the union. International students needed guidance on anything from English culture and etiquette to how to post a letter. All new students felt that parking, transport information, maps and discount information would be really useful.

MSSL Postgraduates

One student at MSSL felt that students should be made more aware of the “*What you need to know about MSSL*” web page when they first arrive, or preferably even before arrival.

4.5 Sports and Gym

Focus Groups

The majority of students across all groups considered sports and exercise to be an important part of non-academic university life.

Sports and gym facilities were unanimously considered to be a UCLU responsibility – again because students are more in touch with students needs. One final year undergraduate said:

“If you have done it you are better at organising it”

Wherever possible the facilities should be provided but there was a general understanding that this is not always easy for a city university. Wherever it is not possible to provide facilities there should be information about where they can be accessed and good transport links to these locations.

There was mixed opinion over the gym. Some considered it to be too expensive whilst others recognised it to be cheaper than other alternatives and mentioned it being too busy which implies that it was popular with some students.

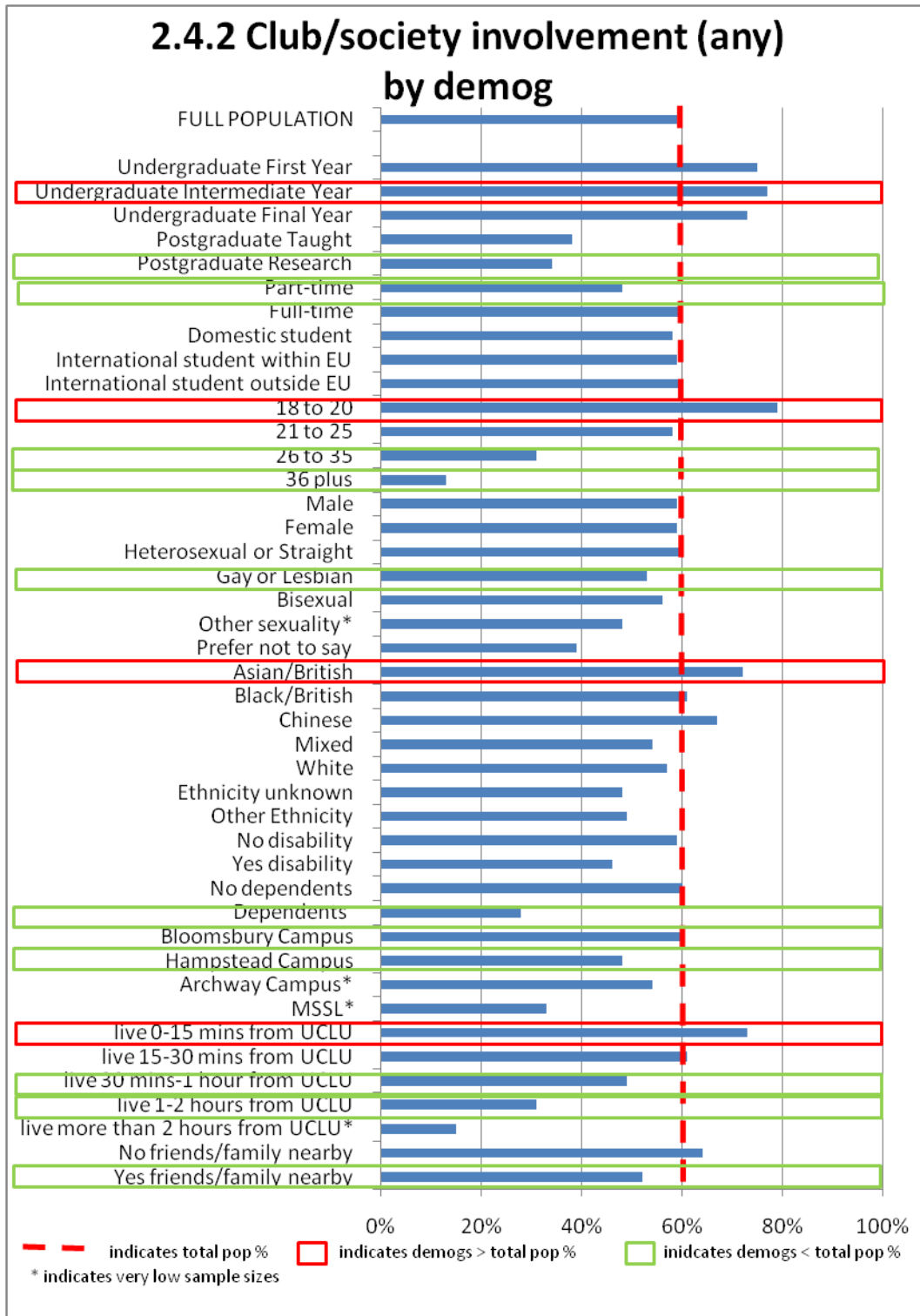
Variation - Postgraduate researchers

A few students from the postgraduate research group spoke about how they would like to be able to play sport in a non-competitive capacity. They felt that they would like to enjoy sport in an entirely social way and did not want to participate in the competitive leagues that the undergraduates were involved in.

4.6 Clubs & societies involvement

Survey

Chart 2.4.2 from the survey report (below) looks at the proportion of members with any level of club/society involvement for a range of different demographics and highlights those with significantly higher or lower results. The “FULL POPULATION” result is shown first for ease of comparison.



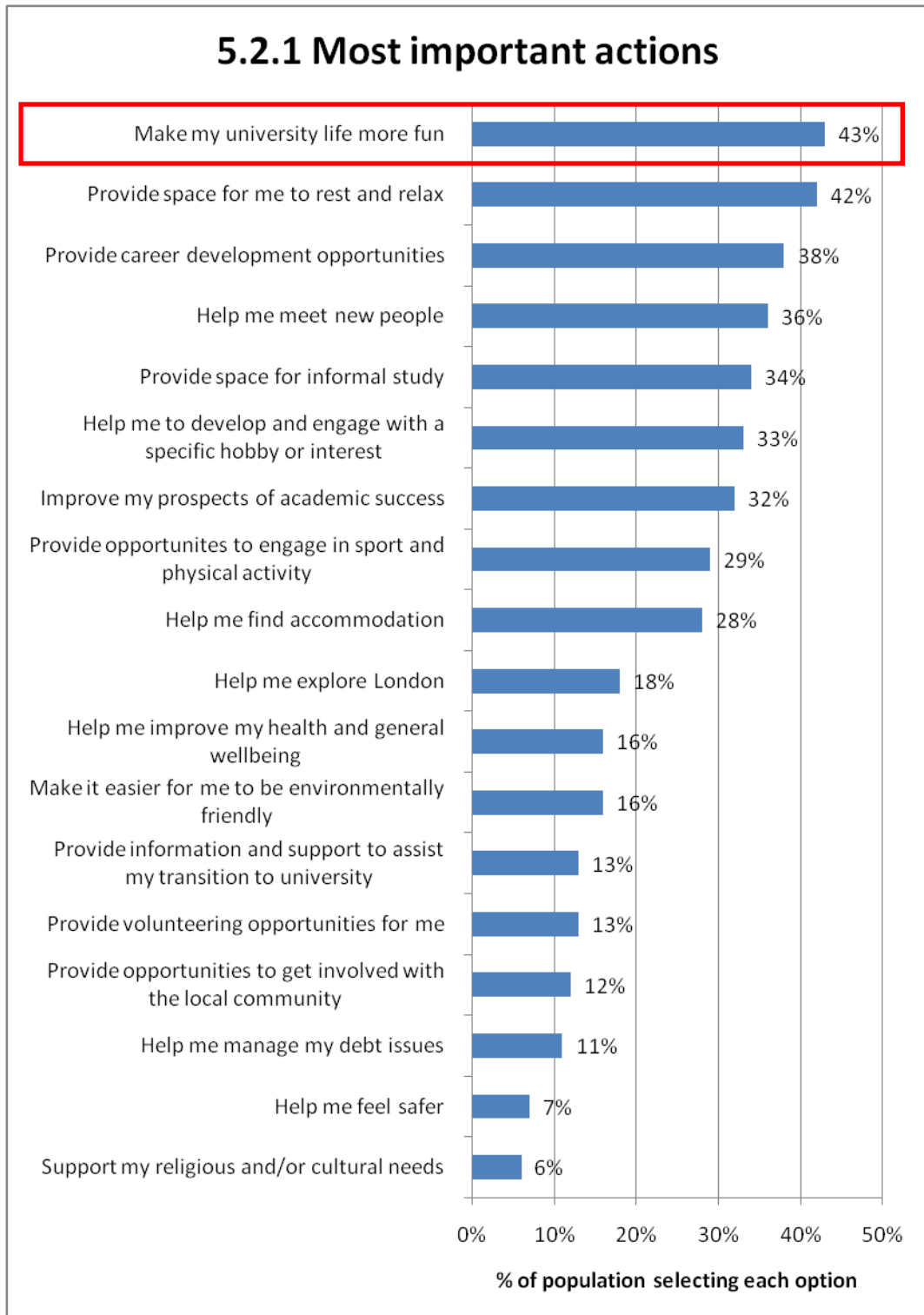
At 75%, undergraduate involvement is more than double postgraduate involvement (36%). Of all age groups the 18-20 group contains the highest proportion of involved students compared with other age groups. 79% of 18-20 year olds are involved with clubs and societies at some level. The Asian/British ethnic group contains the highest proportion of involved students (72%), followed by Chinese (67%) and then Black/British (61%). At 57% there is a lower proportion of white students than average who are involved in clubs and societies. Male and female involvement is exactly equal - 59% of both genders are involved. There is a slightly higher proportion of gay/lesbian involvement, perhaps due to their being a minority and therefore motivated to be actively involved with UCLU. Involvement drops considerably for those students living more than an hour away from UCLU.

4.7 Most important UCLU actions

Survey

Students could select up to 5 items from a list to indicate what they thought it was most important for UCLU to do for them. The chart below shows the proportion of students who checked each option as one of their 5.

Making university life more fun is top of the list with 43% selecting it among their choices.



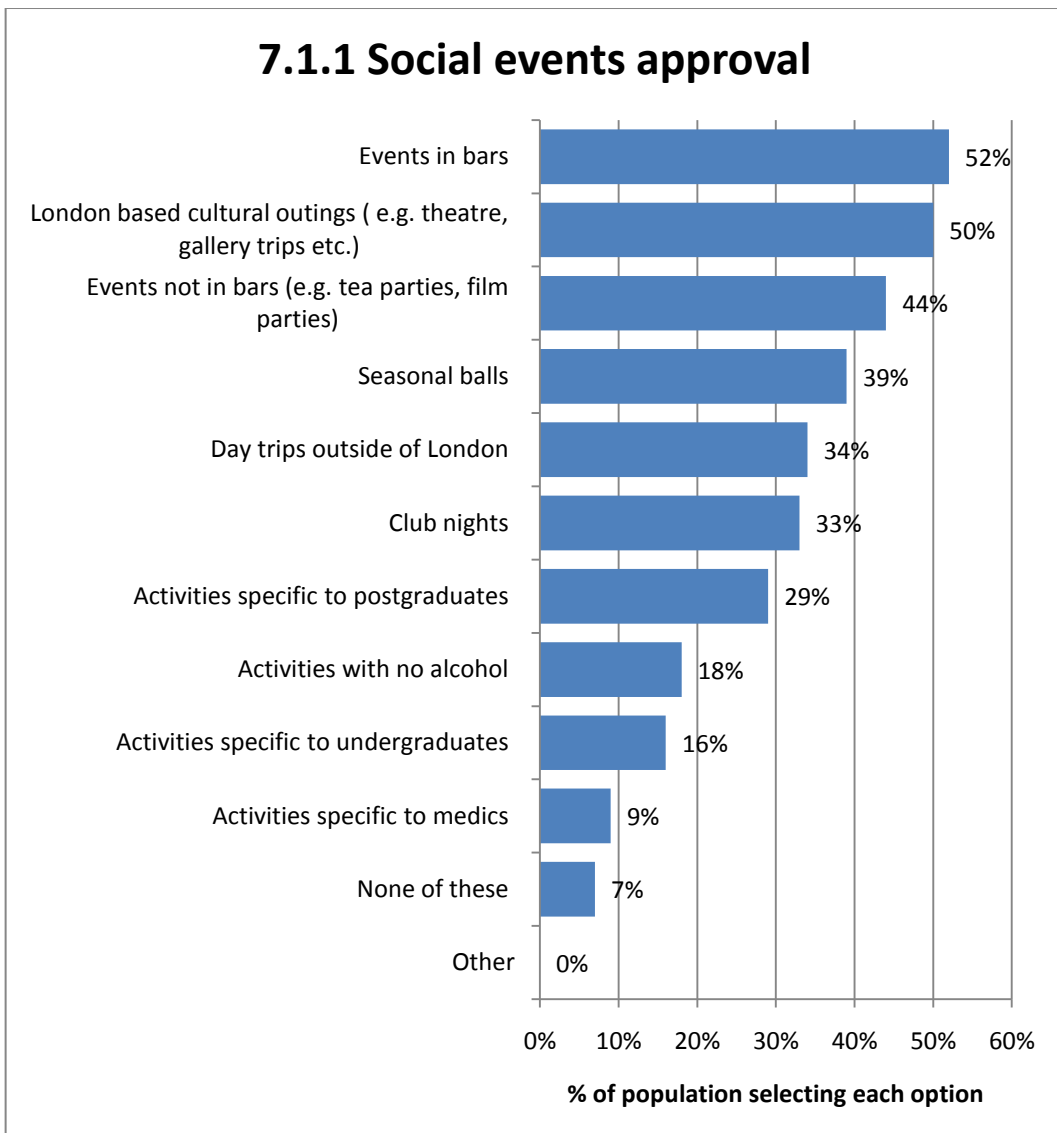


Additional analysis on Most important actions is available in Addendum.xlsx as Important actions by Faculty. The Addendum also contains a demographic breakdown of those who want UCLU to “provide career opportunities” as one of the most important things it should do.

4.8 Social events ideas

Survey

Students were presented with a list of ideas for different types of social event and were asked which (if any) they would really enjoy and make use of.

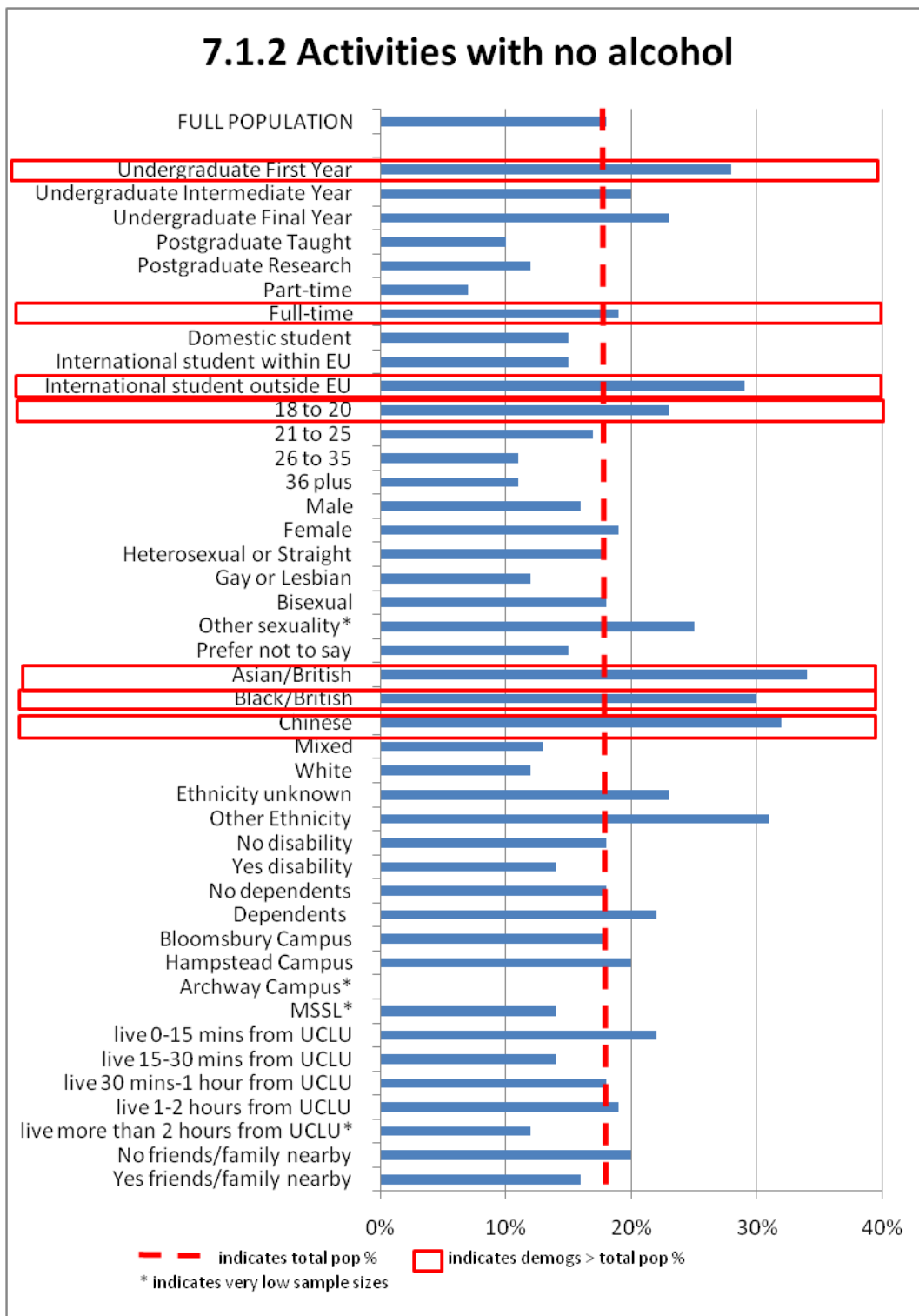


Although students were not forced to select more than one answer to this question, it is clear that many were selecting multiple options. This shows that they want UCLU to put on a wide *variety* of entertainment.



More cultural events would possibly pull in less engaged student groups such as postgraduates.

Although ‘activities with no alcohol’ ranks quite low, the fact that 18% of students selected this choice is significant - perhaps a signal of changing times? Chart 7.1.2 from the survey report shows the demographic breakdown of those students who selected this ‘activities with no alcohol’ option’:



The chart shows that 18% of the total population selected 'activities with no alcohol'. Those demographics that have higher proportions of students wanting UCLU to provide 'activities with no alcohol' are:

- Undergraduate first years (28%)
- Full-time students (19%)
- International students outside of the EU (29%)
- Asian British (34%) Black British (30%) or Chinese (32%) students
- Students who live 0-15 minutes from UCLU (22%)



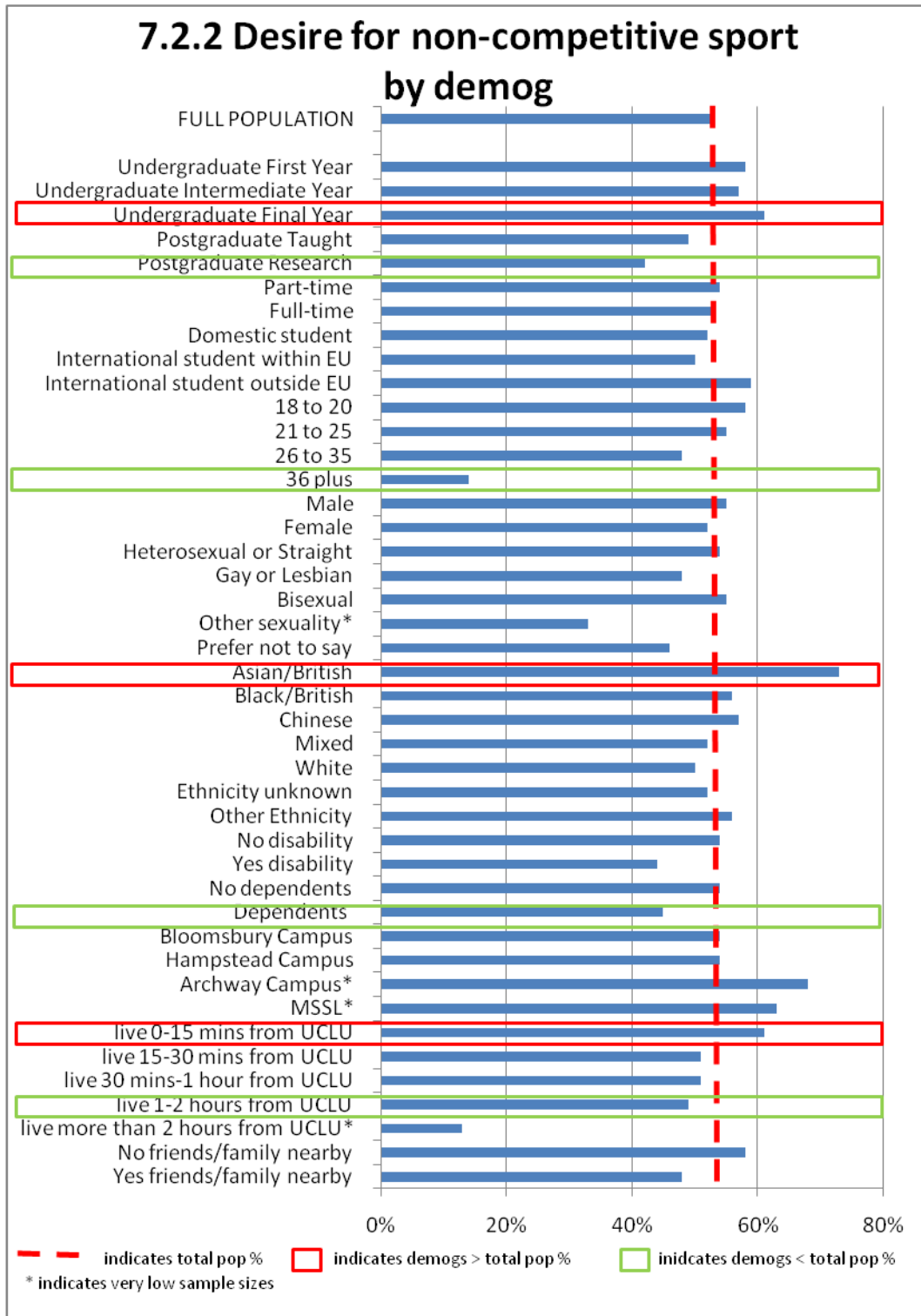
Whilst it might be expected that some non EU internationals are culturally averse to alcohol focused events, the high proportion of undergraduate first years who selected this option is perhaps surprising? This demographic break down is even more of an indication that times are changing and that perhaps young people are moving away from this heavy drinking culture, or at least willingness to pay bar prices is diminishing.

4.9 Non-competitive sports

Survey

Another issue raised in the focus groups was a desire among some participants for a less formal and competitive way to get involved in sports. A question was included in the survey to test this idea:

Chart 7.2.2 from the survey report (below) looks at the proportion of those who would take part in such activities for a range of different demographics and highlights those with significantly higher or lower results. The "FULL POPULATION" result is shown first for ease of comparison.

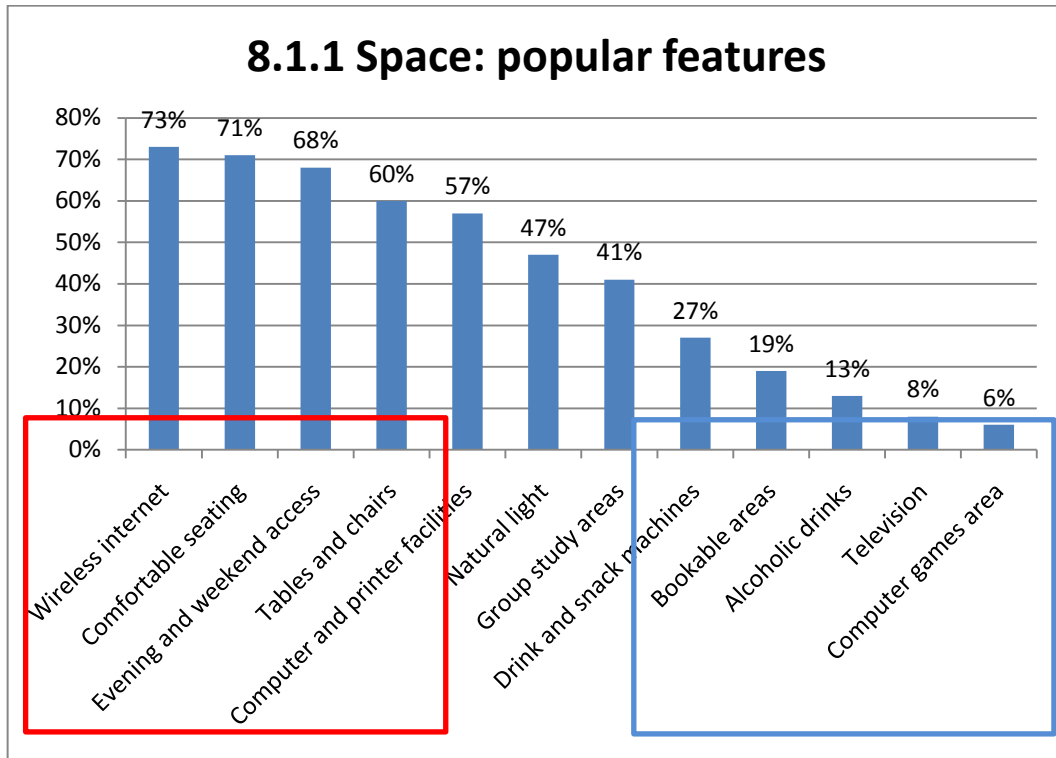


A higher proportion of undergraduate students than postgraduate students showed a desire for non-competitive sports. This peaked slightly amongst final year students at 61% for undergraduate final years. This is perhaps indicative of work load pressures that would make competitive sports difficult to take part in. At 14%, a very low proportion of 36+ students said that they would take part in competitive sports. At 73% a significantly higher percentage of Asian/British students said that they would like to take part in non-competitive sports than any other ethnic groups. Travel distance from UCLU did not seem to affect interest in non-competitive sports, unless the students lived more than 2 hours away at which point interest dropped considerably.

4.10 Space for fun

Survey

Respondents were asked to select a maximum of 5 features they'd want to see in any multi-functional space. Chart 8.1.1 from the survey report illustrates the proportion of respondents selecting each feature anywhere in their top 5 list.



It is interesting that the top choices (red box) are all academic features whilst the least popular choices (blue box) are 'fun' features. Do students actually want more calm study spaces than noisy common rooms?

Evidence from the focus groups suggest that space is important in enabling certain activities to happen. Perhaps the conflict here shows that underlying priorities remain with 'working' uses of space, or it may indicate that students do not see 'fun' space within a multi-functional environment – fun requires dedicated specialised spaces. Perhaps our assumption about what fun means is questionable when analysing this response – although we've interpreted Wireless internet as an academic/work requirement, this would depend largely on what it is used for.

4.11 Making uni life more fun

Ideas Cafe

- 206 comments were recorded on this topic
- There was a strong desire for more social events outside the clubs and societies
- One-off events were seen to be more ‘fun’ than regular recurring events
- BBQs, parties, sporting events and more ‘themed’ union nights were all suggested
- ‘More’, ‘Events’ and ‘Free’ are the 3 most frequently used words across all the comments

A full transcription of all the comments made on this subject is available in the appendix of the Ideas Cafe Report.

5 Representation & Campaigning

The primary sources of evidence relating to this theme are listed in the table below which also indicates where there may be crossover in use of evidence with other work themes and therefore where collaborative effort or co-ordination may be required in the use and interpretation of evidence.

Source	Evidence	Crossover
Focus Group Report	Attitudes to representation	
	Campaigning – attitudes and obstacles	Creating a Quality Environment
Survey Report	Knowledge of membership	
	Understanding decision making	Democracy
	Understanding UCLU structure	
	Campaigning involvement	
	Campaign focus	
Ideas Cafe Report	What reps should be doing	
	UCLUs role in influencing course/dept/college	

5.1 Attitudes to representation

Focus Groups

A significant number of students, both international and domestic, felt a lack of engagement with UCLU. However there was a mixed opinion over whether this engagement actually mattered or not. A number of international students felt that it did not really matter to them, whilst other students wanted to feel closer to the union. One first year expressed his feelings below:

“I don’t really know the union – I feel I want to get to know the union but it doesn’t want to know me”.

Along similar lines, another student felt that the union needed to *“listen to feedback”*.

When the council members were asked to categorise their relationship with the union there was mixed response. One student in the group described it as *“obstructive”* and like a *“big bully who prevents you from stuff”*. This student spoke from a committee member perspective and could vouch for the *“bullying”* as they had been a part of it. (It is important to note that the student used the word ‘bullying’ in a tongue-in-cheek way). However, others felt more engaged with the union. One said:

“everyone loves to hate the union but actually it is fine”

When it came to the subject of voting, Red Brick deliberately challenged the students by asking them whether democracy was important or not. Are there better ways to ensure that a student organisation stays on-track and is meeting the needs of new students? The majority of students felt that a democratic election was important. However, it was described by one student as *“the least, worst way of doing it”*. Many students from various groups seemed to reiterate this idea that there was no way of achieving 100% democracy and effective representation, and that the current system was the best.

Another recurring problem was that many students did not take advantage of the election process because they felt that their vote would simply “dilute” the outcome. They felt that they did not know the candidates or the system and therefore their vote was not really relevant or helpful in any way. Many felt disengaged and disconnected. Some of those only at the university for a year, such as some internationals and postgraduates, didn’t think they really had any right to interfere in the union as it was mainly for undergraduates.

Postgraduate researchers

Initially the Postgraduate Research students failed to see what the union could ever do for them. Once we got onto the subject of representation some of them began to express issues they had. There was a broad consensus that some departmental problems that arise at this level can be both serious and confidential. On reflection, a union support system with representation options was definitely needed! One student referred to how a fellow student had experienced a very strained relationship with their supervisor and felt completely unhappy without anyone to talk to – the student being interviewed was naturally concerned that they would experience the same issue.

One specific issue raised was that some felt the system whereby supervisors are automatically notified about courses being taken by the researchers was a breach of confidentiality. This notification could cause problems if, for example, the courses being taken were to reveal that the researcher was having problems in certain academic areas. The problems was clearly widely known - one of the other participants actually gave a few tips on how to manipulate the system to make sure a supervisor didn’t get notified!

There was a general consensus that the main union “*isn’t mature enough*” for postgraduate needs and the postgraduate centre is disorganised. There was a general lack of faith in the service.

Significantly, these students believed that co-locating postgraduate support with a postgraduate-only social/study space in the union would significantly increase the likelihood of them being aware of support services and would foster a greater engagement with UCLU.

MSSL Postgraduates

There was a general consensus amongst MSSL students that they wanted recognition from UCLU; as one student put it “*acknowledgement that we are actually here*”.

Another student commented on how UCLU is very focused on London and doesn’t really think beyond that. This recognition does not simply relate to activities but general administration issues. This particular student spoke about how they had been given the wrong time to register at the university and they were told to go away and come back another time. He felt that the union staff had no concept of how far they had come. He said:

“Recognition is important. We are not in the same boat as other students. We can’t just be told to come back one day”

They all felt that having more of a representative presence in UCLU would be beneficial, though they had very few actual complaints about their current situation.

5.2 Campaigning – attitudes and obstacles

Focus Groups

Some students were more actively involved in campaigning than others. No-one said that it shouldn't be an option. One third year undergraduate spoke about it being important to have the "right" and "opportunity" to campaign, even if he wouldn't necessarily get involved himself. He also defended the right of other students to campaign on issues that he disagreed with, including the boycotting of specific goods or companies which might negatively affect him.

"It is a good thing that students feel that they have a chance".

A third year undergraduate spoke about campaigning being fundamental to building life skills.

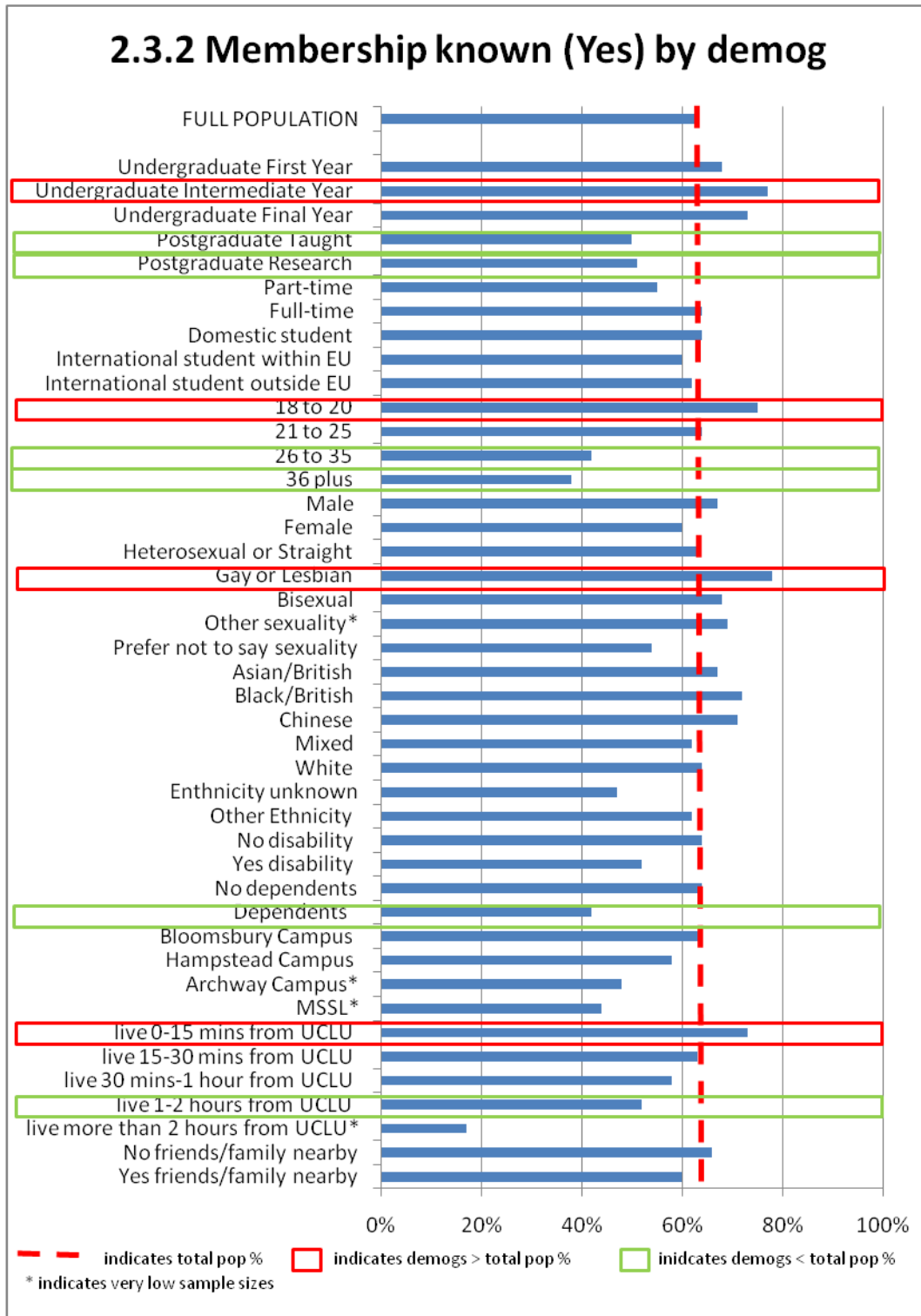
The Activists spoke about how there was a lot of 'red tape' in the way of organising campaigns. There were far too many forms to complete and there was very little clarity over what you were and were not allowed to do. For example, one student spoke about the Conservative campaign and how the student banners had to read "Vote now" and say "Sponsored by Conservatives" in small print at the bottom rather than "Vote for the Conservatives!" This student suggested that there should be a clear and concise guidelines book to assist club/society leaders and avoid a lot of wasted time and effort.

One student in the international group was surprised that there hadn't been more of a student reaction to the recent national higher education budget cuts. They felt that in France and Germany there would be more campaigning as a result of such a significant political decision. However, as a group the internationals were not that involved in campaigning, primarily because they felt they did not have the time and that it wouldn't really make a difference.

5.3 Knowledge of membership

Survey

Chart 2.3.2 from the survey report looks at the proportion of student who know they are member for a range of different demographics and highlights those with significantly higher or lower results. The "FULL POPULATION" result is shown first for ease of comparison.



At 77% there is a higher proportion of intermediate year undergraduates claiming membership knowledge than any other stage of study.



It is interesting that basic membership knowledge increases from first to second year - perhaps students take longer to understand the role of UCLU than it is thought they do?



Fewer final year undergraduates than intermediate year undergraduates consider themselves members. Perhaps this is simply a result of their interpretation of ‘membership’? If their work load has increased and they are not spending any time in the union, maybe they think this means they are no longer members?

Membership knowledge is higher amongst undergraduates (75%) than postgraduates (51%).



Assuming that knowledge, once gained, can not be lost, the fact that the proportion of postgraduates claiming membership knowledge is lower than the proportion of undergraduates suggests that a number of postgraduates did not study their undergraduate degree at UCL. It is possible that this population of new entrant postgraduates are not being engaged with to the same level as undergraduate students.

Alternatively, low postgraduate membership knowledge could be due to the fact that they perceive the union to be an undergraduate organisation and are simply choosing not to be ‘members’.

A slightly greater proportion of males (67%) than females (60%) know that they are a member. Whilst this *could* indicate that a greater higher % of males are more engaged, it could equally mean that a greater % of males have more confidence in their own knowledge. A higher proportion of gay/lesbian students know that they are a member than any other sexuality bracket. This could be due to their being a minority and therefore motivated to get actively involved with UCLU. At 42%, a low proportion of students with dependents have membership knowledge. The distance that students live from UCLU does not significantly affect membership knowledge, so long as the journey is less than two hours long.



Additional analysis on Knowledge of Membership is available in Addendum.xlsx as

- o Knowledge of membership vs Club/soc involvement***
- o Knowledge of membership vs Positive impact***
- o Knowledge of membership by Faculty***

5.4 Understanding decision making

Survey

Respondents were presented with a set of statements and asked to indicate which they believed to be true. Statement order was randomised.

Charts show the proportion of respondents who believed each statement and the proportion of respondents who believed NONE of the statements.

It is important to understand that respondents were free to select as many or as few options as desired, even when they may seem to be mutually exclusive.

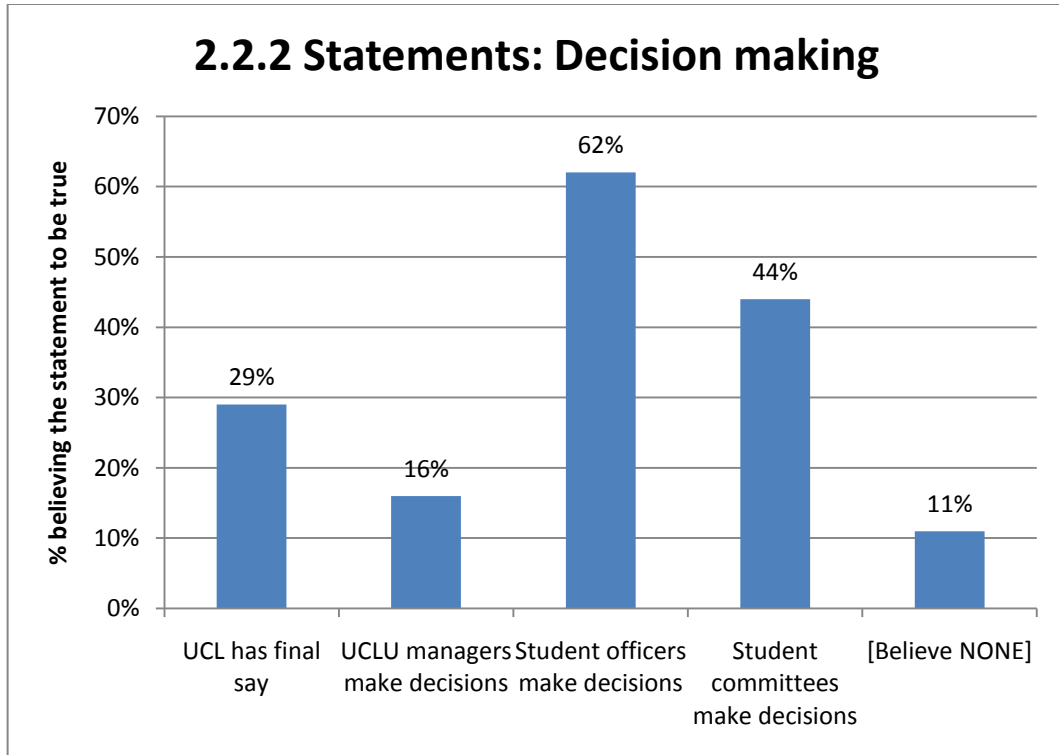


Chart 2.2.2 from the survey report shows a significant degree of multi-selection. Clearly there is a strong belief that students are making most of the important decisions within UCLU but 29% believe that UCL has the final say on what UCLU does.

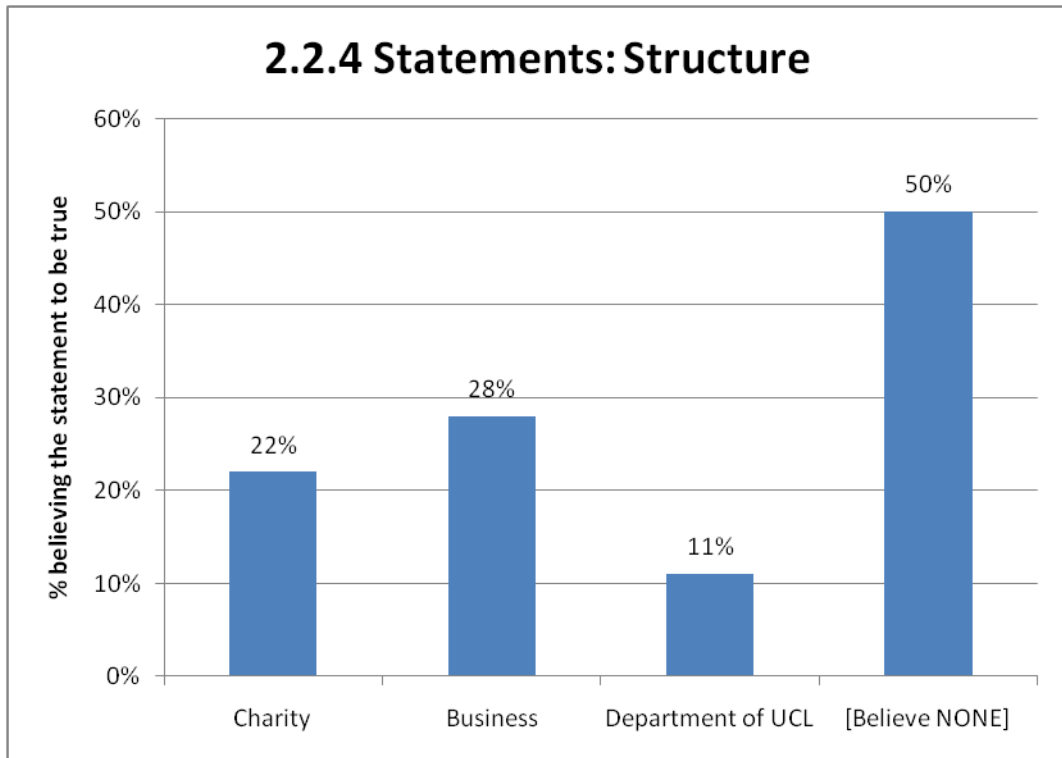
5.5 Understanding UCLU structure

Survey

Respondents were presented with a set of statements and asked to indicate which they believed to be true. Statement order was randomised.

Charts show the proportion of respondents who believed each statement and the proportion of respondents who believed NONE of the statements.

It is important to understand that respondents were free to select as many or as few options as desired, even when they may seem to be mutually exclusive.

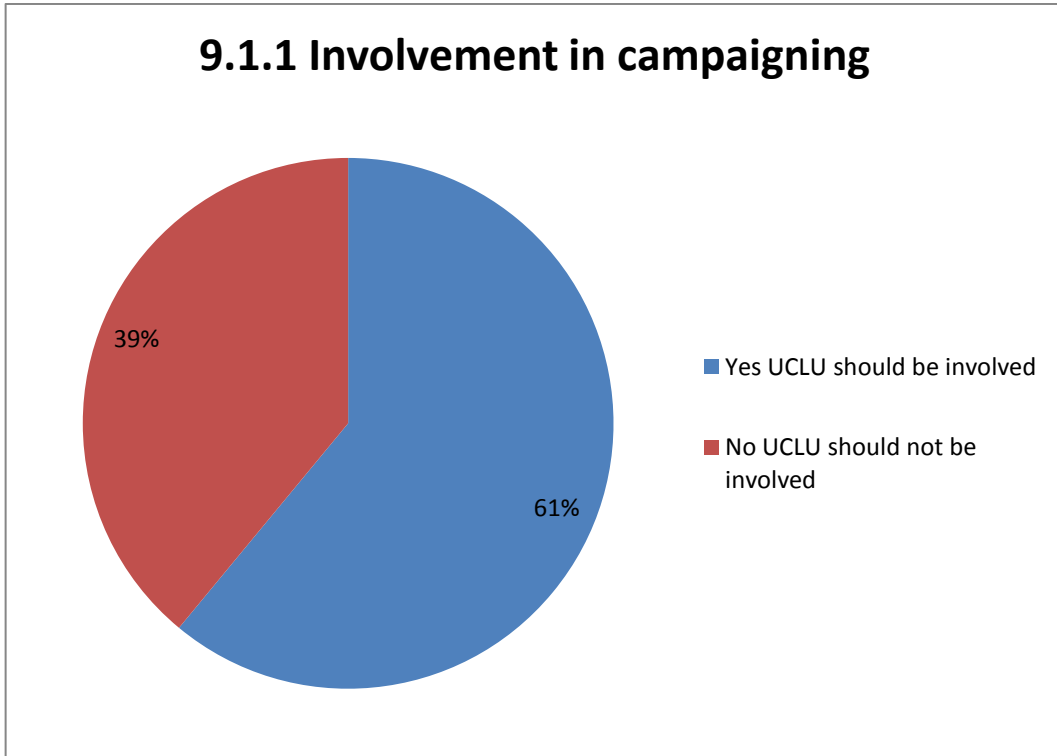


The statements relating to structure show the greatest degree of confusion with exactly half of members not able to select any of the statements in this category.

5.6 Campaigning involvement

Survey

Chart 9.1.1 from the survey report (below) illustrates the proportion of students who believe UCLU should or shouldn't be involved in campaigning.

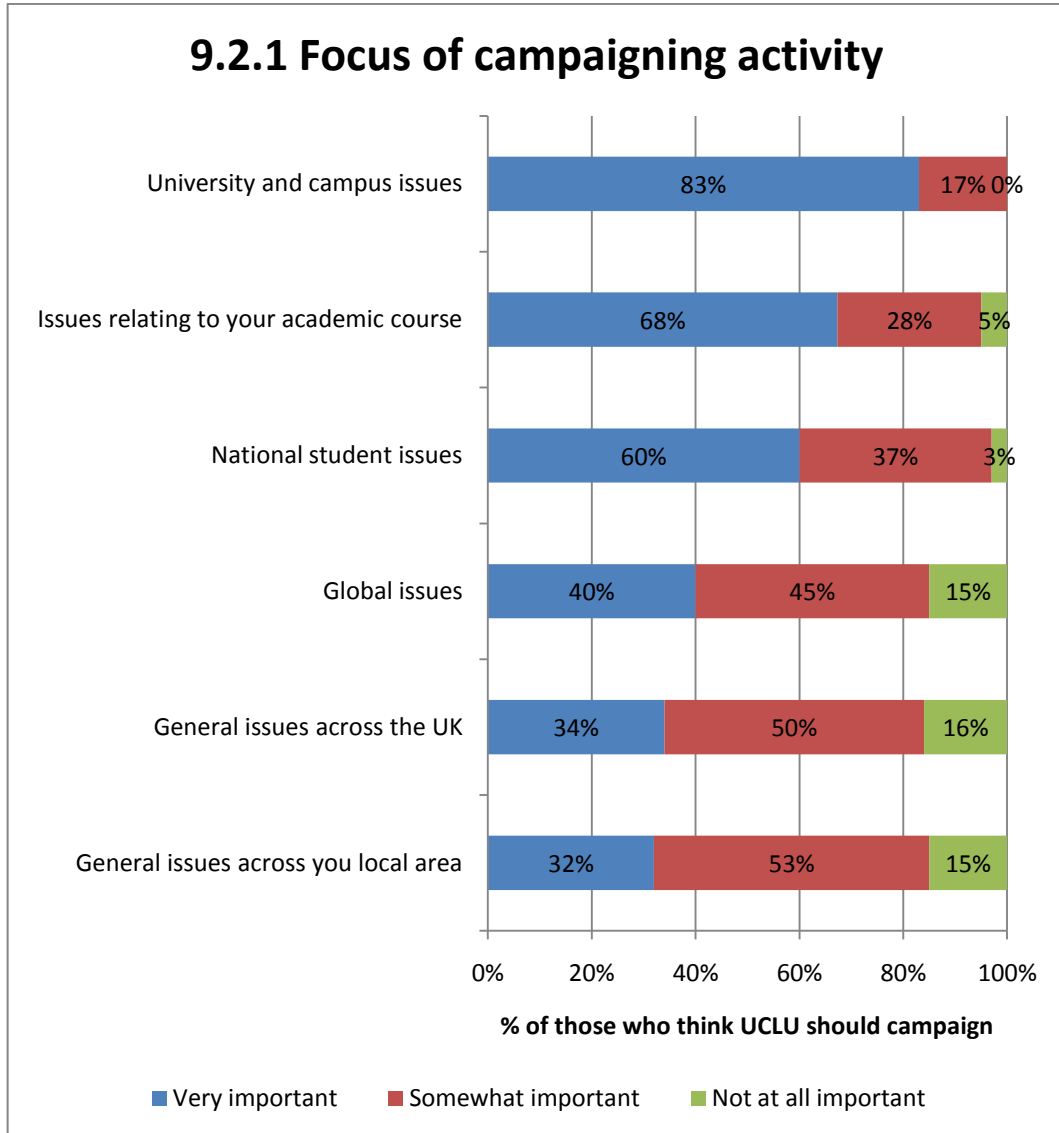


It would be interesting to find out why this group feel that UCLU should not be involved in campaigning - ie, do they consider it to be pointless, do they not really understand what it is etc. Perhaps this is a reaction to a particular type of campaigning that is uppermost in peoples minds when they respond to this question.

5.7 Campaign focus

Survey

Respondents who believe UCLU **should** be involved in campaigning were also asked what that campaigning should focus on.



Even amongst pro-campaigners, the desired focus is on university, campus and course issues over national and international ones.

5.8 *What reps should be doing*

Ideas Cafe

- 98 separate comments were recorded, identifying 213 ideas
- A large proportion of comments relate to representation;
 - a desire for it to be better
 - for action to be taken on students' needs
 - for representatives to be more responsive
- There was also a strong desire for more events of various kinds
- A number of lobbying ideas were suggested, particularly on issues relating to the libraries

A full transcription of all the comments made on this subject is available in the appendix of the Ideas Cafe Report.

5.9 *UCLUs role in influencing course/dept/college*

Ideas Cafe – Mini Focus Groups

Mixed postgraduates

Group 1 unanimously agreed that they felt they could influence the department more than UCL. They also agreed that de-departmental influence mattered more to them than college influence. When asked how they thought UCLU could help them achieve this influence, they unanimously agreed that they would not go to UCLU for help in this area and would prefer to stay within department. One student said that they 'would not go over the hierarchy of the department'. Another said 'I have no idea what bearing the union has' –others agreed. The group were asked whether they felt closer to their department or the union - 6/6 said that they felt closer to UCLU.

As an influence technique, surveys were a popular option. Yet all the students in group 1 felt that a survey would be more useful if it came directly from the department.

Students were asked whether there was anything department related that they would go to UCLU for. There was a mixture of responses to this question:

- 'Only if the department couldn't help'
- 'How much influence could the union have? I wouldn't know'
- 'Nothing-it's the equivalent of mummy and daddy sorting out a problem for you'
- 'Maybe if there was one member of the union with power within each department'
- 'Maybe if there was made available a list of things that the union was able to help with'

One student said that science postgraduates had a stronger relationship with their department than arts postgraduates as they were seeing their supervisor every day. They argued that science postgraduates were therefore even less likely to go to the union with departmental issues.

First year undergradates (A)

Group 2 felt that influence within the department was quite important but, at this stage, not important enough to actually use it. The group unanimously agreed that in their second year they would take their course more seriously and therefore being able to influence their department would be more important to them.

They all agreed that they are more likely to go to their department than UCLU with any issues they might have. When asked who, specifically, they would go to, they all replied 'Catherine, our course administrator'. (Group 2 students were all on the same course). The students went on to describe this very close relationship that they had with 'Catherine'. They all felt that they could go to her with any problem-welfare issues, lecturer issues-one student even referred to her as a 'part-time doc-tor!'.

When the group was asked whether there was anything department related that they would go to the union for, the re-sponses were mixed:

- 'If I had a problem with Catherine'
- 'I didn't realise the union could do stuff like that'
- 'If I had known more about what the union could do, then I probably would do'
- 'Maybe a more serious problem'

There was definitely a sense within this group, more than with the postgraduate group, that if students had known about the fact that the union could help solve their departmental issues then they would have considered it. Communication seemed to be a problem for the undergraduates. One said that an event 'like this' would help them understand what the union could offer.

First year undergradates (B)

Group 3 agreed that it was important to have influence with the department. They cared particularly about department issues but they did also express concern for UCL wide issues. Again this group did not associate the union with departmental issues-for them the union was all about fun and possibly careers. Again, as with the previous undergraduate group, the issues seemed to be more about communication. This group agreed that they would go to the union for help with departmental influence but they didn't know this support existed.

When they were asked how the union could help with influencing their department, the responses were mixed:

- 'If there was a specific union representative for each department'
- 'If we were just told more about what they do'

They were asked whether more surveys would be a good thing. One student said 'yes if they were anonymous'. They agreed that if a survey wasn't anonymous they'd be more likely to respond truthfully if it came from UCLU.

Masters students

This group held quite mixed opinions. One student was aware that they could go to the union but felt that it was a much faster process to go directly to their department with any issues they might have. Other students felt that they didn't know what the union would really do about their problems. They felt they had a close relationship with their department and a good rapport with lecturers and wouldn't know what they would get out of going to the union

6 Meeting a Support Need

The primary sources of evidence relating to this theme are listed in the table below which also indicates where there may be crossover in use of evidence with other work themes and therefore where collaborative effort or co-ordination may be required in the use and interpretation of evidence.

Source	Evidence	Crossover
Focus Group Report	Careers advice	Development (Skills & Experience)
	Alumni	Development (Skills & Experience)
	Healthcare	
	Advice and support needs	Development (Skills & Experience)
	Prayer facilities	Making Best Use of Space
Survey Report	Concern about issues	Development (Skills & Experience)
	Most important UCLU actions	Development (Skills & Experience)
Ideas Cafe Report	Help into careers	Development (Skills & Experience)

6.1 Careers advice

Focus Groups

There is a broad consensus amongst students that careers advice is the responsibility of the university, although not necessarily a departmental responsibility as many subjects do not automatically lead on to specific careers.

A few groups commented on the type of companies that the Careers Service invites to the university. Some students would like to see a wider variety of companies – not just obvious, big corporations but smaller firms from a more interesting mixture of fields. A student from the postgraduate research group said that the careers service:

“needs to offer a broader variety of partnerships”

Final year undergraduates

There was a broad consensus amongst the final year undergraduates that they needed more help when it came to career preparation. They expressed the view that job seminars would be useful - covering CV writing tips, application timelines and interview practice.

One medic also expressed a need for more graduate advice. They emphasised that there is vital information that medics need to be aware of when they graduate, such as registering with the General Medical Council. Without doing this graduates are not able to practice medicine.

6.2 *Alumni*

Focus Groups

Final year and postgraduate students

Final year students, masters students and postgraduate research students all expressed a need for a better Alumni. They were really keen for more support and guidance when it came to life after university, especially as the advice they would be looking for might be quite specialised.

6.3 *Healthcare*

Focus Groups

Students mentioned healthcare as a core need. The general consensus from students was that healthcare needs to be provided by NHS with university collaboration to ensure that it is appropriate and student focussed.

No specific feedback on existing facilities was offered.

6.4 *Advice and support needs*

Focus Groups

Throughout the focus groups many students expressed the need for advice and guidance. This advice tended to fall into the following categories:

- Welfare (counselling)
- Housing
- Financial
- Legal
- General

Welfare (counselling)

The majority of students felt that counselling was a vital provision, even if they never actually used it themselves. Students may not use it daily, but when they do need it, it's important that they can access it. There was a broad consensus that "*professional*" counselling was necessary. Some students liked the idea of a student helpline answered by other students. However, others felt that they would prefer not to talk to their peers about personal problems; issues of anonymity and trust came up.

Housing

Many demographic groups expressed a need for housing advice. Students entering their 2nd year were particularly emphatic about this. Several of the intermediate year undergraduates said that they had felt a strong sense of worry and panic when it came to finding accommodation for their second year. Some of them felt forced to take on more expensive properties because they did not want to 'miss the boat'. There was unanimous agreement that a housing FAQ website and a comprehensive student landlord list would be very useful. One student even suggested a UCLU lettings agency with approved or vetted accommodation, not just a list of bad houses.

Financial

Many students expressed a need for both financial guidance and actual financial support in the form of hardship loans. They felt it would be useful to know where to access all types of finance information on funding, loans and grants

Legal

This was a need particularly expressed by international students. The postgraduate research group suggested a “*hierarchy*” of legal support. In their opinion the first port of call could be law students working for the union. Professional support would then be available if needed. One student in the council members group referred to an experience of getting a parking fine and was not sure how to deal with it.

General

A few students commented on the fact that they needed clearer communication from the union in terms of important social dates. Many also felt that a comprehensive step-by-step guide to London and UCL was necessary. This could be part of the Welcome pack (see 3.15 *Welcome pack and welcome events*).

In one of the mixed groups there was a clear distinction between postgraduates and undergraduates. Undergraduates wanted the union to provide them with information about events that are going on in London. Postgraduates seemed more independent - one said “*Can't you just use Time Out?*”

MSSL Postgraduates

Red Brick feels it is important to mention that one none of the students at MSSL brought up welfare or legal advice as core needs. All the students gave Red Brick the impression that MSSL was self-sufficient in these areas. One student spoke directly about there being a strong departmental support network in place where departmental staff are happy to give students advice across all areas – not just academics. Red Brick asked this student whether the staff were very “*hands on*” and the student agreed saying “*yes hands on is a very good way of putting it*”. All students mentioned at some point that they were ‘happy’.

MSSL students were also impressed with the safety mechanisms implemented by the university when it came to relationships with supervisors. All students also have a secondary supervisor and regular reviews including a third-party to whom they could voice concerns about the supervisors should they have any.

They felt that the hierarchy they could address should they have any academic issues was excellent and that needing to approach the union for support in this area would be highly unlikely.

One student did specifically mentioned the lack of information about finding housing near MSSL and suggested that perhaps they good link up with services provided by University of Surrey to help them find local approved student housing.

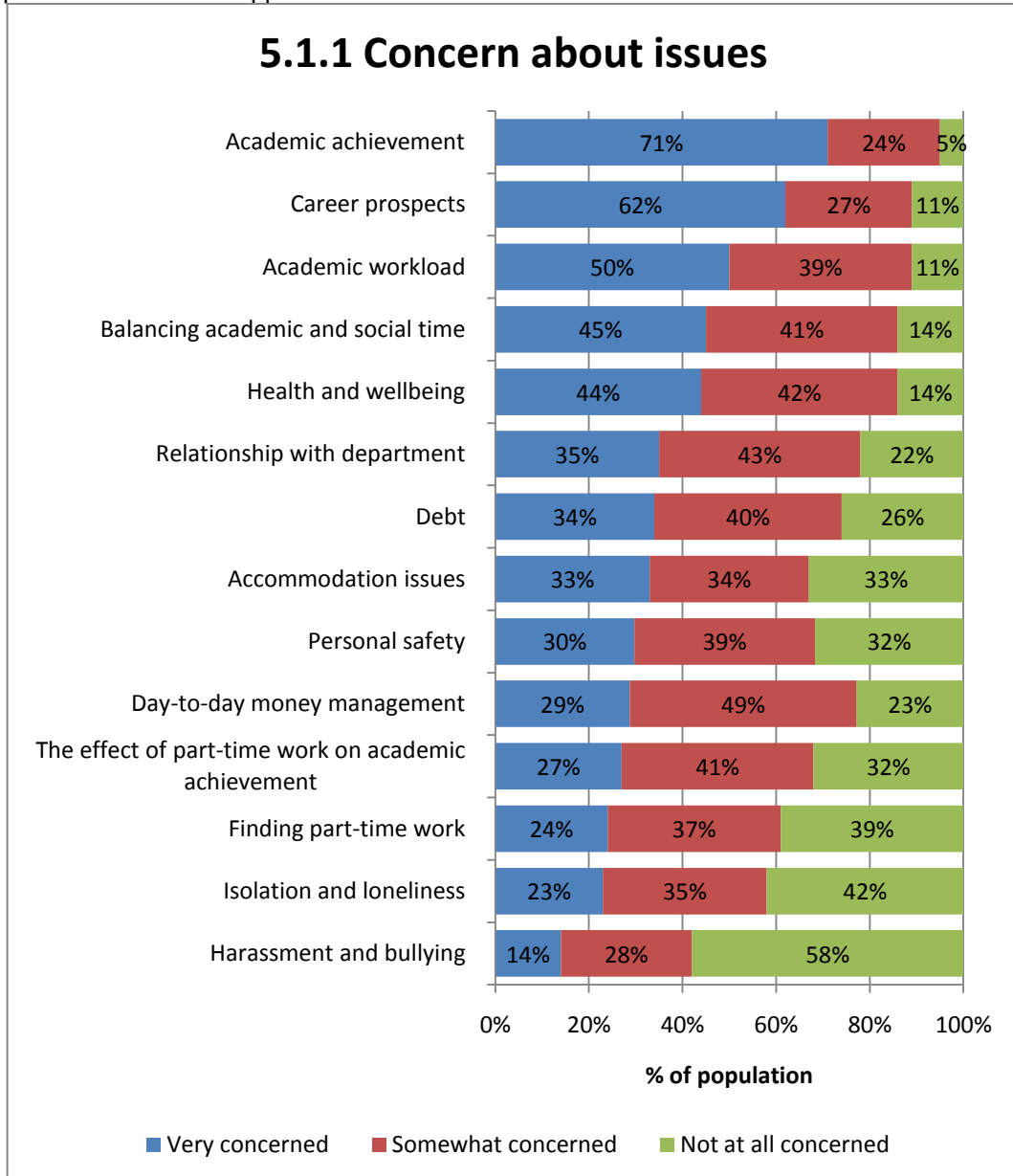
6.5 Prayer facilities**Focus Groups**

Two students in a particular group felt that prayer facilities were very important for all religions. They both felt it was important that to be consulted on the design of these facilities.

6.6 Concern about issues

Survey

The survey of student contained a question asking students to identify what issues most concern them. These results in chart 5.1.1 from the survey report may be useful in helping to prioritise and focus support effort.



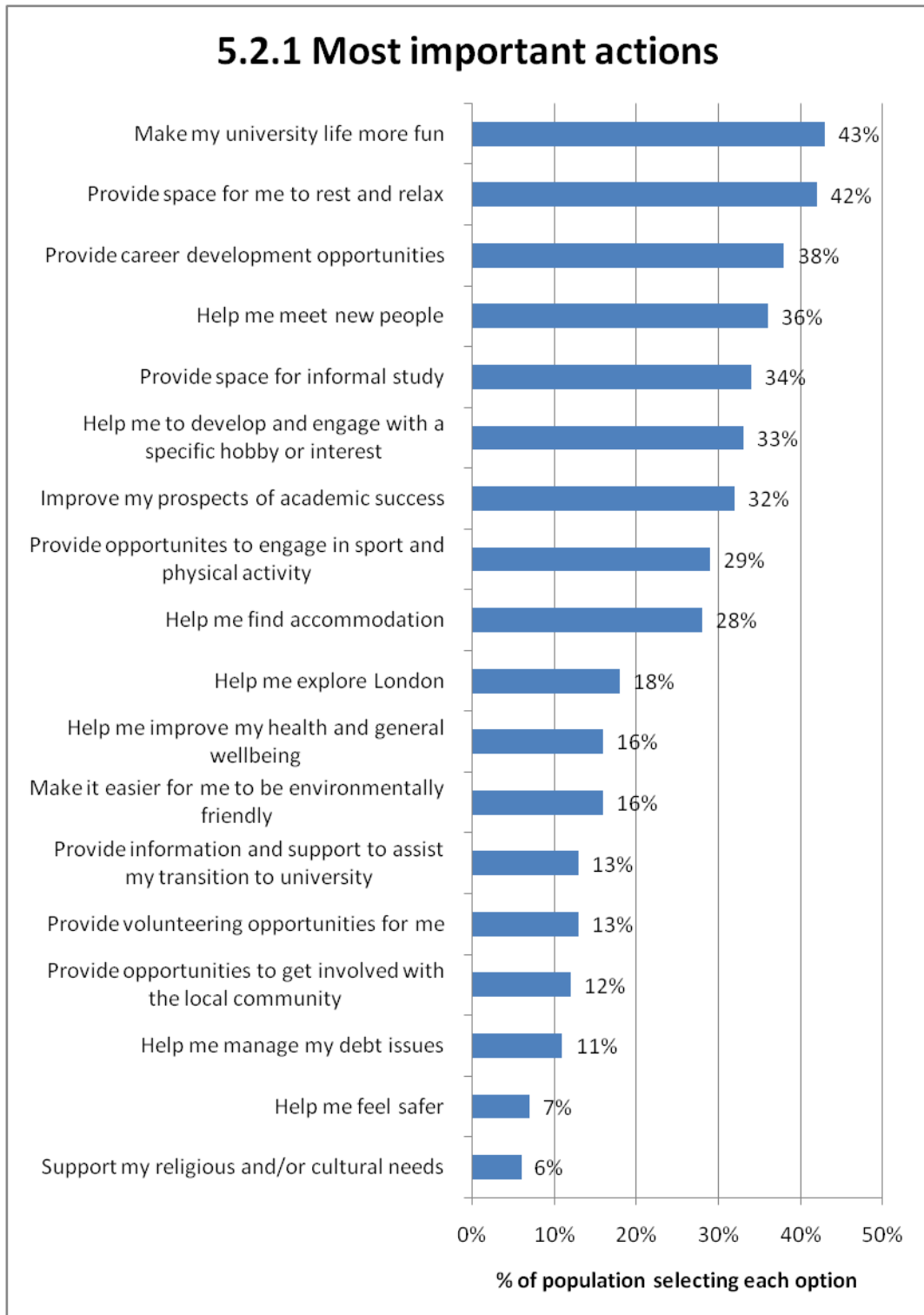
Additional analysis is available in Addendum.xlsx on the demographics of those who are “very concerned” about career prospects.

6.7 Most important UCLU actions

Survey

Further evidence to assist the planning of support needs comes from the survey and a question about how UCLU can help students.

Students could select up to 5 items from a list to indicate what they thought it was most important for UCLU to do for them. The chart below shows the proportion of students who checked each option as one of their 5.





A deeper analysis of the “Help me find accommodation” responses is available in the survey report document (chart 5.2.2) and was updated in the errata.



Additional analysis on Most important actions is available in Addendum.xlsx as Important actions by Faculty. The Addendum also contains a demographic breakdown of those who want UCLU to “provide career opportunities” as one of the most important things it should do.

6.8 Help into careers

Ideas Cafe

- 105 comments or suggestions were contributed, including some objection to this as a core function of UCLU
- Many mentions of alumni and “networking” as well as requests for more of what’s already available
- Several mentions of services such as careers fairs specifically for postgraduates
- Desire to connect with and learn from industry experts - suggestions this should be part of courses
- Several comments expressed a desire for UCLU to provide clearer links between careers and clubs/societies

A full transcription of all the comments made on this subject is available in the appendix of the Ideas Cafe Report.

7 Making Best Use of Space

The primary sources of evidence relating to this theme are listed in the table below which also indicates where there may be crossover in use of evidence with other work themes and therefore where collaborative effort or co-ordination may be required in the use and interpretation of evidence.

Source	Evidence	Crossover
Focus Group Report	Needs for space	Fun, Excitement & Activities
	Computer and printer facilities	Creating a Quality Environment
	Prayer facilities	Meeting a Support Need
	Academic needs	Development (Skills & Experience)
	Cycle racks	
Survey Report	Multi-functional space features	Fun, Excitement & Activities
	Service sacrifice	The Case For/Against Commercial Operations
	Need for bookable space	
Ideas Cafe Report	Convert 2 nd floor bar	The Case For/Against Commercial Operations

7.1 Needs for space

Focus Groups

All students from all groups repeatedly expressed their need for space.

Not only did the majority of students share this same core need but there was also an astonishingly broad consensus when we discussed both background motivations and particular features.

Motivations for requiring Space (broad consensus)

- A physical space that allows for student interaction is fundamental – there was a very negative response to the idea of a ‘virtual’ union.
- Space is needed for social facilitation – one final year undergraduate student spoke about “*social cohesion*”
- Every student space creates a sense of unity and student identity; of ownership
- Social space facilitates personal development

Features (broad consensus)

- Social space should be provided by UCLU
- “*Common room*” was the most frequent way of describing the ideal student space
- “*Lounge*” was a word that one student used. Another used “*Hub*” whilst a third individual thought it should be “*gravitational*”
- The aesthetics of this space were generally considered important – one student from the Activists group said of the current UCLU building:

“It is currently a building that no one wants to be in”

He added-

“It doesn’t really facilitate socialising which is its main job”

- The space should be non-bookable
- Somewhere relaxed and chilled
- An individual suggested “sofas” and another that it should be “light”
- Somewhere you can chat but not as noisy as a bar – a third year undergraduate described the imagined space as “fairly quiet but not like a library”. Similarly a student from one of the mixed groups described it as “not like a library – this would be too restricted”
- Another student described it as a “space in between lectures”
- There was a repeated emphasis on this space having a non-commercial focus i.e. there would be the option to eat and drink but you should not feel obligated to.
- It would be multi-functional – the students were generally very keen for a space where you could eat, chat, work, discuss essays, discuss yesterday’s night out, use laptops etc.
- Sockets for laptops
- WIFI
- Workstations were mentioned several times as many students do not carry laptops around

Several society members mentioned a problem with all the bookable rooms being the same size so there was a lot of wasted space and it was difficult to find venues for different numbers of people to meet. One society leader also estimated that if suitable ‘open’ space were available it would reduce their requirement for room bookings by about 75%.

The Activist group spent some time talking about this issue of space. There was a broad consensus amongst this group that space was, as one student put it, “a major thing”. One individual advocated having “a single community space with stalls”. The individual felt that there needed to be more “free reign” space so that students could put their stamp on it; where “student creativity could create a unique community feel” and suggested the Slade School of Fine Art come and decorate the union. They linked space directly to community. One student actually claimed that, for them:

“all other needs are fulfilled other than the community feel”

There was a general feeling in the group that a community space would help create a UCLU identity that wasn’t currently there. One student divided the ULU population into three categories:

- Medics
- Postgraduates
- The rest

They felt that the union was a fall-back for “the rest” i.e. nothing more than a collection of fragmented identities. They felt that the union did not have an identity of its own.

Red Brick asked the group:

“So is UCLU just a wrapper that encompasses other sub groups?”

The unanimous response was “yes”

The council members group were equally emphatic about the importance of space. When Red Brick suggested the concept of a union without a building there was an audible gasp and one student said “*what a shame!*”. Red Brick then asked “*So a physical space is important then?*” and everyone answered “yes” very firmly. One student summarised the feeling of the room by saying “*a very passionate yes!*”.

An individual in one of the mixed groups expressed a desire for “*outside space*” – something that looked “*green*” and “*oldy*” rather than having “*just steel and glass everywhere*”. This desire was also shared by a few other students in other groups, though they appreciated it was a difficult need to meet.

7.2 Computer and printer facilities

Focus Groups

There was definitely a need by all groups for more (working) computer and printer facilities around the university.

Students repeatedly emphasised a need for computers in multi-functional spaces; spaces where you can work at tables, buy food and use toilet facilities without having to lug your possessions from one facility to another. This would relieve a lot of general inconvenience.

Students expressed a need for printers and computers in the union – for society/club administration, for academic work, and for general use, e.g. e-mail.

It was suggested by many that the “*common room*” space should have sockets for laptops, computers and printers.

7.3 Prayer facilities

Focus Groups

Two students in a particular group felt that prayer facilities were very important for all religions. They both felt it was important that to be consulted on the design of these facilities.

7.4 Academic needs

Focus Groups

Many students expressed a need for more academic space, or at least easier access to existing study and seminar rooms.

Postgraduate research students

There was a general consensus amongst the postgraduate research students that, considering their academic level and the amount of work they were required to do, they should be allowed to access labs, computers and libraries 24 hours a day. A couple of students suggested that a fob or key system would be successful. A number of them felt time restricted when it came to carrying out particular experiments as departmental rooms and computer facilities closed early.

They also felt that their accommodation should be fitted with computer rooms so that they could work from home.

Approximately half of the group also complained about not having their own desks. They felt that this facility was fundamental at this stage in their academic career as they had so many research resources, reference books and equipment that they needed to use.

MSSL postgraduates

There was a broad consensus amongst MSSL students that extra-curricular courses offering points towards their PHD were very difficult to attend due to the travel distance. A couple of students suggested that particularly popular courses could be held at MSSL. Alternatively more of them should be available as intense 1 or 2 day courses in London so that they did not have to travel in and out of London several times. One student argued that there was a small “pot” of money used to fund travel so several trips to London instead of one could jeopardise students’ ability to go to more important conferences.

International students

In one of the mixed groups there was a clear difference in priorities between the international students and the domestic. Whilst the domestic students spoke first about food and shops before any other need, some of the international students began the session with a list of more academic needs such as books, computer labs and wireless.

7.5 Cycle racks

Focus Groups

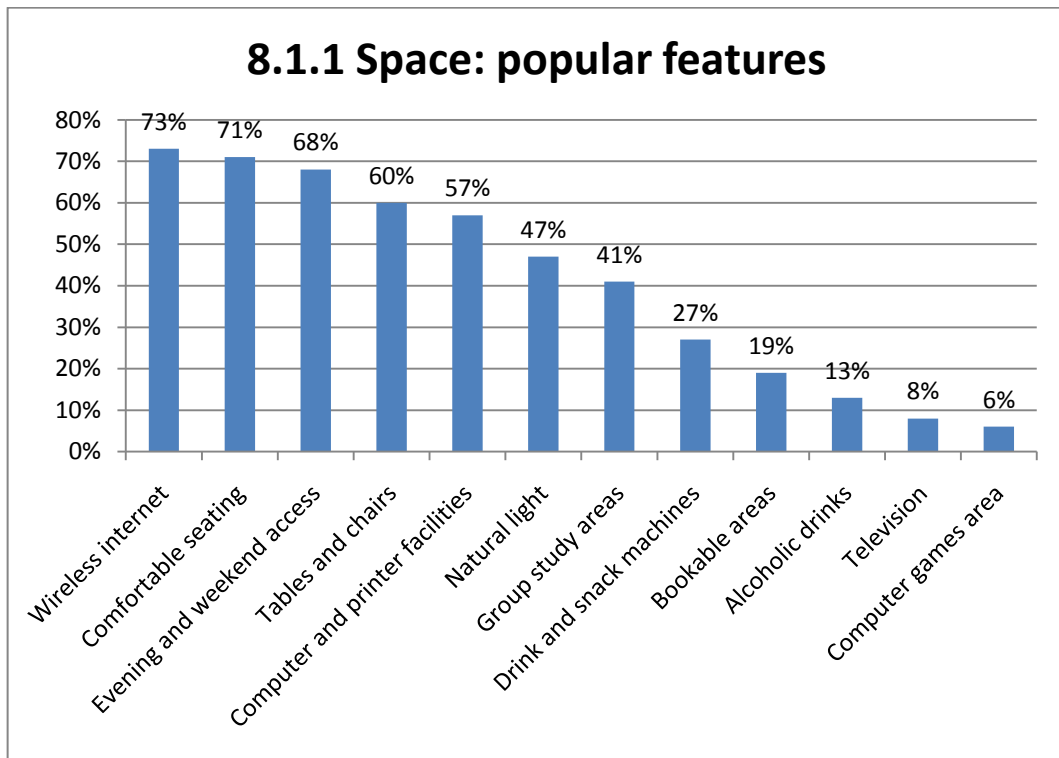
Several cyclists from a number of different groups complained about not having enough racks to park their bikes in. They felt that the university should be supporting environmentally friendly travel. They also considered it to be the university’s responsibility to ensure bike security.

7.6 Multi-functional space features

Survey

The survey asked student what features would be necessary in the provision of any new multi-functional space within UCLU.

Respondents were restricted to selecting a maximum of 5 features. Chart 8.1.1 from the survey report illustrates the proportion of respondents selecting each feature anywhere in their top 5 list.



Additional analysis on Multi-functional space features is available in Addendum.xlsx as Space features by Faculty.

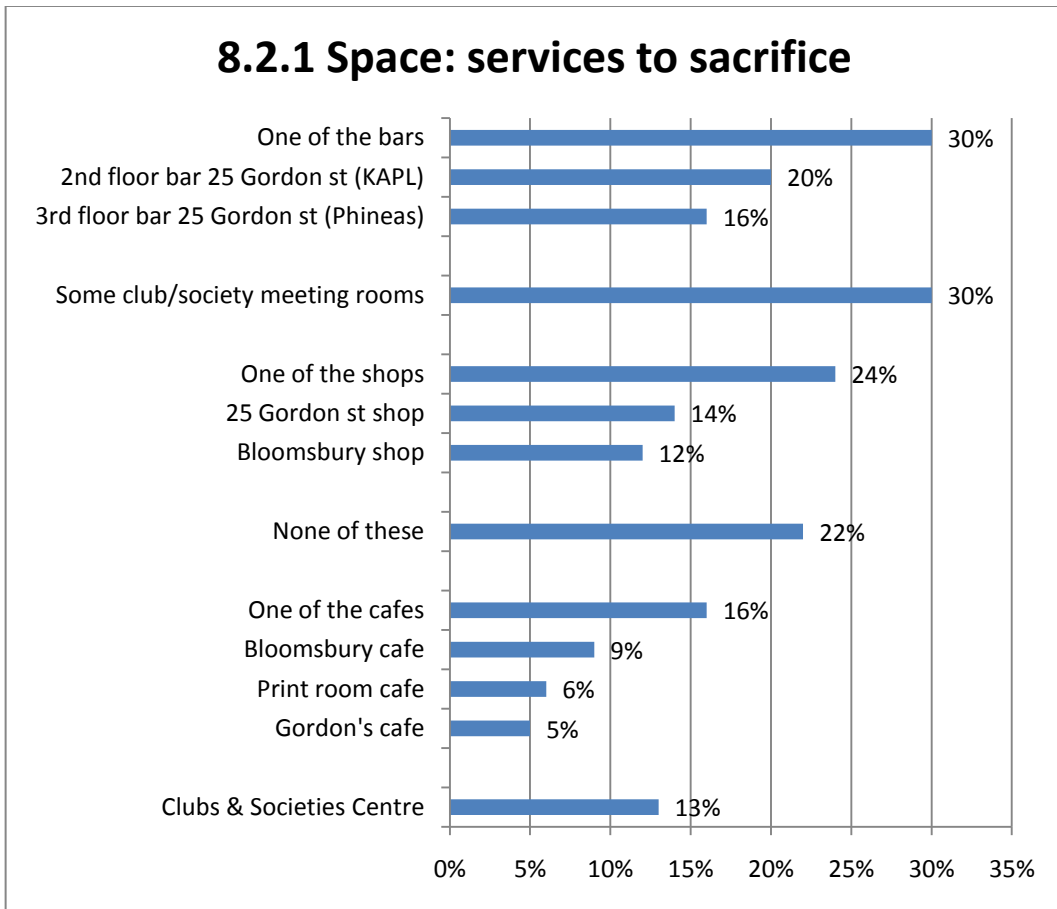
7.7 Service sacrifice

Survey

After being asked about the features most desired in a multi-functional space, respondents were asked what services (if any) they'd be prepared to give up.

The 'None of these' option was the only 'exclusive' option meaning that it could not be selected in combination with any other options.

Chart 8.2.1 from the survey report shows the proportion of population willing to give up each service.

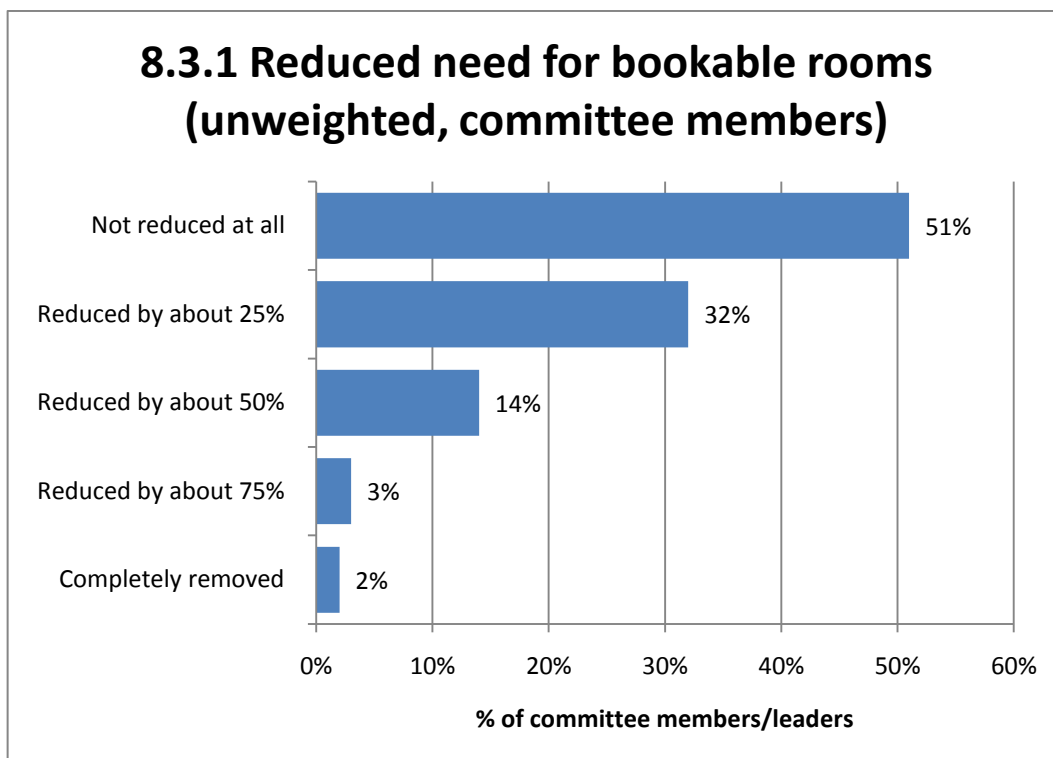


Some of the options were nested to allow respondents to be specific if they wished. 30% of respondents would be prepared to sacrifice One of the bars. Two-thirds of them (20% of the total) specified the KAPL, some specified Phineas, some will not have specified either (indicating no preference) and some will have specified both bars (also indicating no specific preference).

7.8 Need for bookable space

Survey

Clubs and societies leaders identified specifically were asked how much the need for bookable rooms could be reduced by the provision of suitable multi-functional space.



On the basis of these figures the likely reduction in the need for room bookings would be approximately 20%.

7.9 Convert 2nd floor bar

Ideas Cafe

- 148 'votes' were cast: 83 Yes (56%), 64 NO (43%) and 3 Unknown (2%) however the motivation was primarily to stimulate discussion not conduct a fair referenda
- 50 comments were also recorded including a number of interesting suggestions: Beanbags, whiteboards, mixed comfy/study seating, novels, sofas
- A number of comments suggest the space could be hybrid between study in the day and bar at night
- Several comments suggest that this should not be UCLUs responsibility

A full transcription of all the comments made on this subject is available in the appendix of the Ideas Cafe Report.

8 Creating a Quality Environment

The primary sources of evidence relating to this theme are listed in the table below which also indicates where there may be crossover in use of evidence with other work themes and therefore where collaborative effort or co-ordination may be required in the use and interpretation of evidence.

Source	Evidence	Crossover
Focus Group Report	Part-time work	Development (Skills & Experience)
	Computer and printer facilities	Making Best Use of Space
	Campaigning processes	Representation & Campaigning

8.1 Part-time work

Focus Groups

The broad consensus is that the union should be providing a good part-time jobs website for students. This site should be updated regularly, be as comprehensive as possible and very student specific. After the focus groups, Red Brick actually went onto the UCLU website and explored the Job Shop which appears to tick all of these boxes. Perhaps this indicates that there needs to be better communication of this site?

A few students mentioned the need for more on-site jobs whilst international students spoke about having more language/translation jobs available. Some also mentioned that part-time work could also be a university and union collaboration when it comes to subject related jobs.

8.2 Computer and printer facilities

Focus Groups

There was definitely a need by all groups for more (working) computer and printer facilities around the university.

Students repeatedly emphasised a need for computers in multi-functional spaces; spaces where you can work at tables, buy food and use toilet facilities without having to lug your possessions from one facility to another. This would relieve a lot of general inconvenience.

Students expressed a need for printers and computers in the union – for society/club administration, for academic work, and for general use, e.g. e-mail.

It was suggested by many that the “*common room*” space should have sockets for laptops, computers and printers.

8.3 Campaigning processes

Focus Groups

The Activists spoke about how there was a lot of ‘red tape’ in the way of organising campaigns. There were far too many forms to complete and there was very little clarity over what you were and were not allowed to do. For example, one student spoke about the Conservative campaign and how the student banners had to read “*Vote now*” and say “*Sponsored by Conservatives*” in small print at the bottom rather than “*Vote for the Conservatives!*” This student suggested that there should be a clear and concise guidelines book to assist club/society leaders and avoid a lot of wasted time and effort.

9 The Case For/Against Commercial Operations

The primary sources of evidence relating to this theme are listed in the table below which also indicates where there may be crossover in use of evidence with other work themes and therefore where collaborative effort or co-ordination may be required in the use and interpretation of evidence.

Source	Evidence	Crossover
Focus Group Report	Food and drink	
	Ents – variety, price and importance	Fun, Excitement & Activities
	Bars	Fun, Excitement & Activities
Survey Report	Understanding funding and use of income	
	Use of services	
	Importance of service provision	
	Service criteria	
	Service ratings	
	Service gap analysis	
	Importance of UCLU bars	
	Service sacrifice for multi-functional space	Making Best Use of Space
Ideas Cafe Report	Conversion of 2 nd floor bar	Making Best Use of Space

9.1 Food and drink

Focus Groups

In several of the focus groups Food and Drink was a heavily debated topic.

The majority of groups volunteered this category as one of the top student needs. However, when asked who should provide it, they were evidently uncertain. It was a decision that most groups found hard to make so we encouraged them to come at the problem from another direction:

“Well what matters to you most when it comes to this category?”

This line of questioning seemed more approachable to the students, although their responses and priorities were varied. The main answers are included below:

- Price
- Convenience
- Variety
- Quality

Food and drink being student/union run did not come up as a specific priority although most students believed that food and drink would probably have to be student led to ensure low prices. It was generally agreed that a commercial service would not want to be involved in anything ‘non-profit’ and would probably charge too much. Price was a primary consideration for many students. One student in the Clubs and Societies group expressed the opinion that

the food and drink definitely needed to be *“a little bit less expensive”*. Similarly an intermediate year undergraduate said *“Cost is important. I don’t want to end up eating at Itzu every day!”* The council members group agreed unanimously that price was more important than variety.

One student actually felt that fair pricing was an *“equal access issue”*. They felt that low cost food was essential to students choosing to study in London.

In order to measure how important union involvement was (i.e. whether or not it was simply price related), we asked...

“If a commercial or private company was able to achieve all of the above (price, convenience, variety and quality), would you mind if food and drink was provided by a commercial / outside / private company?”

...the broad consensus was *“No”*, although there was scepticism that this would be at all possible. The council members were more hesitant and felt *“it would be nice if students were running it”*.

One individual from the final year undergraduate group said that food and drink is the lowest direct responsibility of the union – the rest of the group agreed with her.

There were, however, individuals that believed there to be key advantages to having student run food and drink, other than low prices.

These were:

- Student jobs
- More control over menu
- Ethical reasons – can include fair trade options
- Student identity and environment
- Variety – students have the opportunity to enjoy commercialism all over London and it’s nice to have another option

When these advantages were vocalised, other students often agreed but they weren’t instinctive thoughts in most cases.

The majority of students did not really discuss commercial services with anything other than food and drink in mind. A few students mentioned that the Bloomsbury shop was useful in terms of stationary and ‘hoodies’ but generally the feeling about it was either indifference or negativity and although the stationary was convenient, none saw any reason why hoodies couldn’t be bought online.

9.2 **Entertainments**

Focus Groups

Entertainment is an umbrella term that covers a number of extra-curricular needs, such as night time events, music and cultural experiences.

The majority of groups agreed that entertainment provision was a vital part of UCLU. However, a couple of students did express that they would also like more social events organised by their departments.

When the students were asked what mattered when it came to entertainment, several things came up:

Variety

A variety of entertainment was something that was repeatedly emphasised. Students felt that entertainment should represent the diverse student population. Individuals came up with suggestions such as comedy nights, quizzes, bands, one off dance nights and cocktail nights. One student from the final year undergraduate group said that

“A lot more all year round could come from the union”

They then added:

“There is not enough going on in the evenings”

This sentiment was shared by others in the group. They felt that entertainment tailed off as students went through the academic year. One student from the Activists group also felt that entertainment took a nose dive after Freshers Week. They suggested a *“refreshers theme”* event that could happen later on in the year. A couple of council members felt that union events were all very similar and assumed that students were all the same. They gave the example of *“club neon”*.

Interestingly, the 1st year undergraduate group felt that freshers week was too alcohol focused and that there should be a broader spectrum of activities available. One individual suggested a *“garden party”* as a possible summer event. A student in the Activists group also spoke about hoping to get the *“non-alcohol thing happening”*; that too many events were currently club or pub focused.

A number of internationals requested more *“traditional”* English events that, again, were not alcohol driven. They were given *“cream teas”* as an example and responded enthusiastically to this suggestion.

Price

The price of entertainment is important for students. Students believed that having events in the UCLU building would keep the price of tickets and drinks to a minimum and thereby promote cohesion because all student could afford to participate.

Student identity

Student organised entertainment really keeps the student identity strong. They need to be separate from the rest of the London night life. One student in the final year undergraduate group said:

“If you have nights in clubs you lose that sense of place”

Space

Several students mentioned the importance of having space to facilitate special events and live bands. Without the correct space the entertainment cannot happen. Particularly variety of entertainment cannot exist if there aren't enough rooms/spaces.

A couple of students in one of the mixed groups felt quite negatively about the club nights organised by UCLU. They felt that the advertising was *“corny”* and that they *“would rather go somewhere else”*

Variation – MSSSL Postgraduates

A number of the MSSL students felt ignored when it came to UCLU activities. However they were generally quite pragmatic and acknowledged that it was impractical to join in with events as they were situated so far away from the union building. In the words of one student, if you wanted to join in you would have to “*write your day off*” because of all the travel involved.

There was a general consensus that UCLU should try to organise specific events that brought remote students in. The idea of transport funding came up, so that they could join in with clubs and societies. A mini bus was suggested a number of times.

Red Brick prompted one student by referring to the Give it a Go programme. They had not heard of Give it a Go but seemed very keen that the MSSL campus should offer something similar – providing that a minimum level of participation could be met.

Students seemed generally happy with the entertainment facilities they already have at MSSL in terms of canteen, social spaces, pool, gardens etc. However, one did mention that a better “*social hut*” (the hub for the social club) would be nice. Red Brick and students are uncertain whether this social hut is a UCLU responsibility or not.

9.3 Bars

Focus Groups

There is unanimous agreement amongst students that the bars should be union controlled for the following reasons:

- They will be unique
- Jobs will be created for students
- Sense of community
- Lower price

A mature undergraduate student suggested that “*there should be Sky Sports available in the Bars*”. Students are currently going to other unions to watch matches and UCLU is missing out on revenue.

There is a general consensus that the bars need to feel cleaner and fresher. It is imperative that the environment feels pleasant to be in. Individual students described the current UCLU bars as “*sticky*” and “*dodgy*”. The neon Chris Akabussi Pleasure Lounge sign didn’t win many votes either, and most students were unaware of the name, referring to it instead as “*the upstairs bar*”.

An individual in the Activists group suggested that there is not enough union branding in bars. They felt that a stronger sense of identity needs to be created as people don’t even know that Huntley Street, for example, is even UCLU owned. Another student in this same group asked the question:

“UCL bars are relatively empty considering that there are 20,000 students milling around. Why is that?”

She answered her own question by suggesting that:

“The student body hasn’t really had a chance to personalise the union”.

She felt that the bars lacked a sense of unique identity and community.

9.4 Understanding funding and use of income

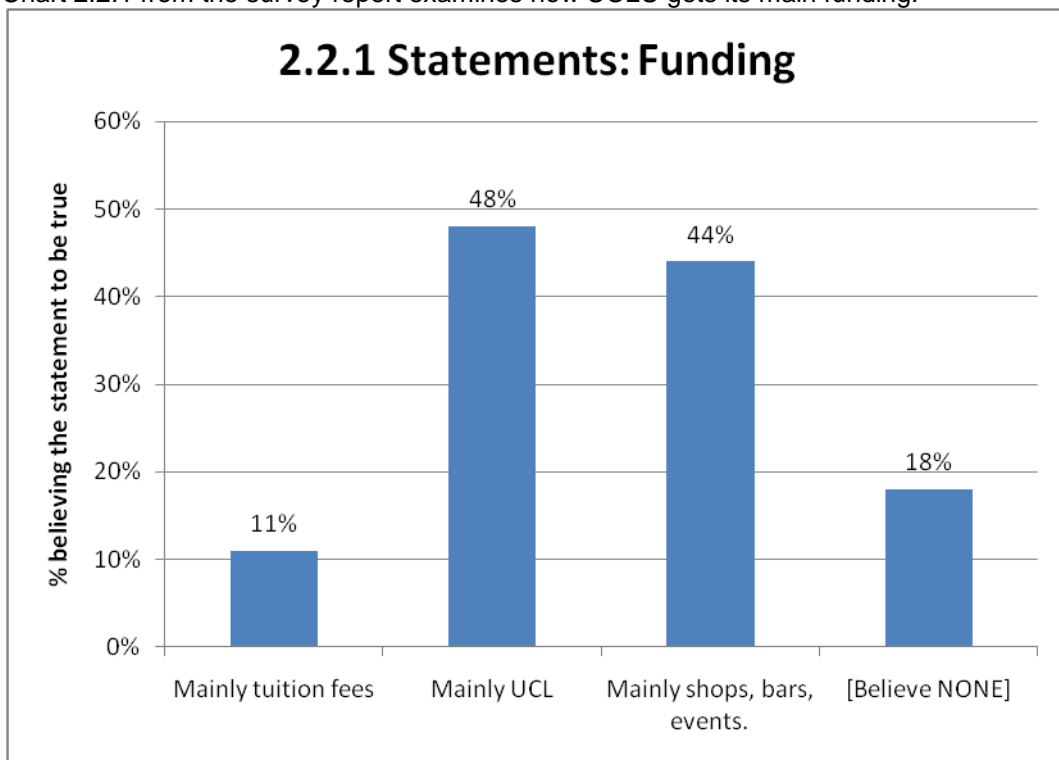
Survey

Respondents were presented with a set of statements and asked to indicate which they believed to be true. Statement order was randomised.

Charts show the proportion of respondents who believed each statement and the proportion of respondents who believed NONE of the statements.

It is important to understand that respondents were free to select as many or as few options as desired, even when they may seem to be mutually exclusive.

Chart 2.2.1 from the survey report examines how UCLU gets its main funding.



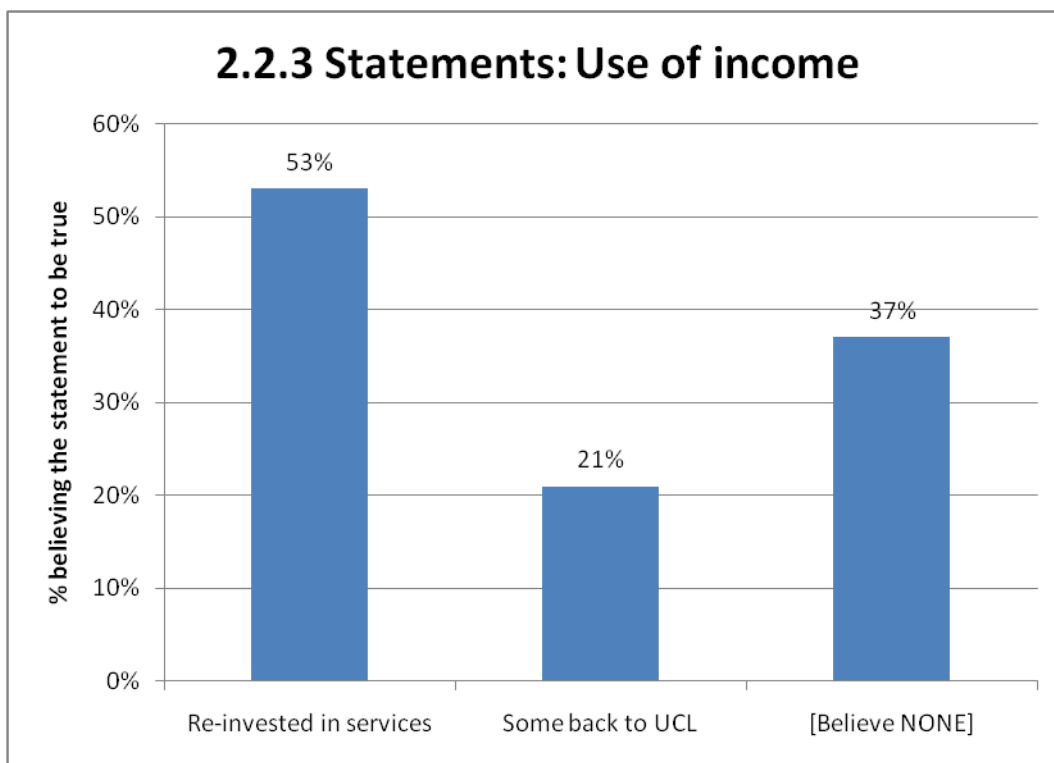


Chart 2.2.3 shows the majority of members understand that income is used to support services, but over a third (39%) didn't believe either of these statements.

9.5 Use of services

Survey

Respondents were asked how frequently they use a range of services.

Table 2.1.1 Freq of use of services

Top: Freq of use

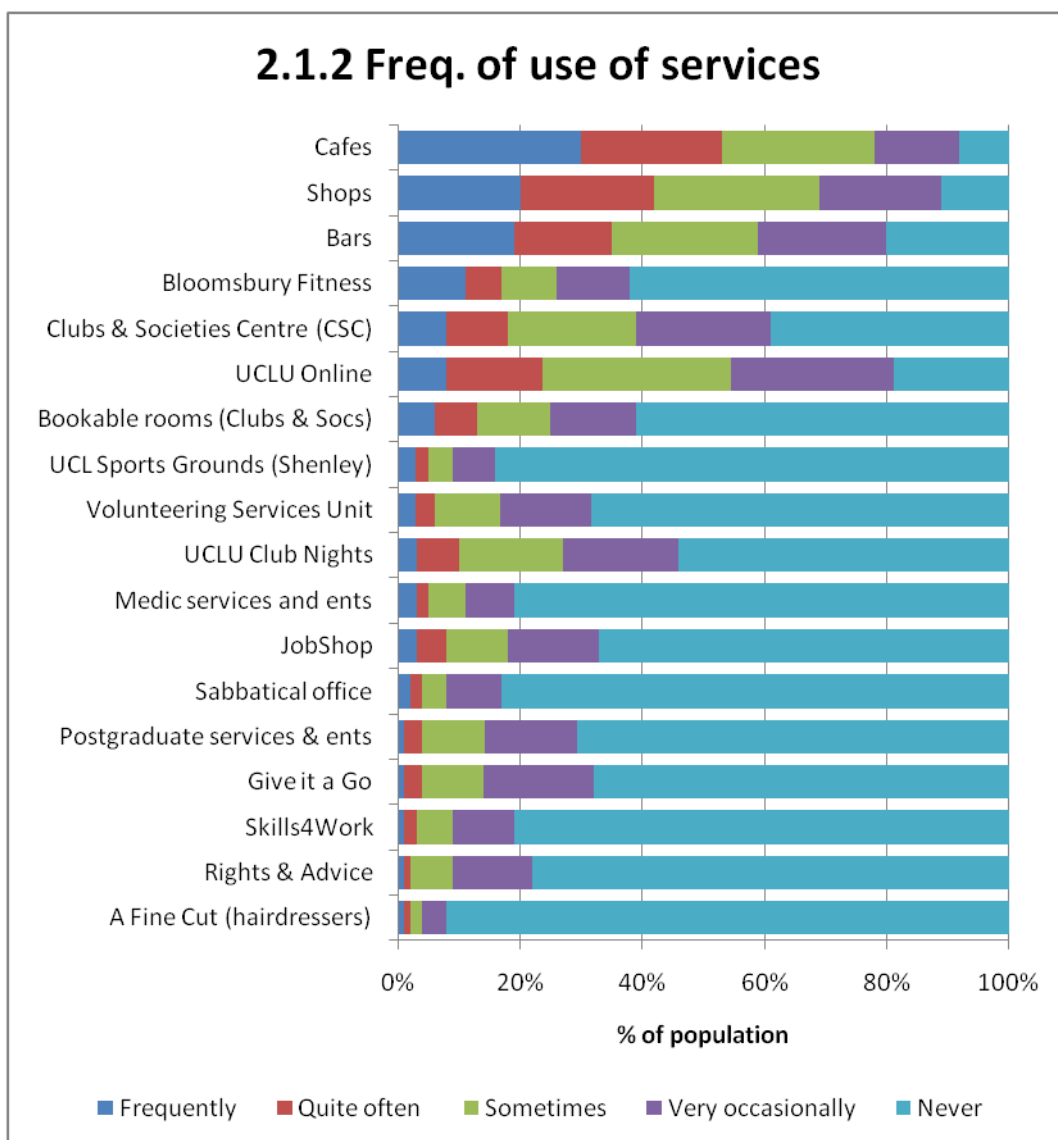
Side: Service

Filter: submitdate (All)

Weight: weight_stage_ftpt_gen_intl (All)

	Frequently	Quite often	Sometimes	Very occasionally	Never
Bars	19%	16%	24%	21%	20%
Bloomsbury Fitness	11%	6%	9%	12%	62%
Cafes	30%	23%	25%	14%	8%
CSC	8%	10%	21%	22%	39%
Bookable rooms	6%	7%	12%	14%	61%
Give it a Go	1%	3%	10%	18%	68%
PG services	1%	3%	10%	15%	70%
Medic services	3%	2%	6%	8%	81%

Rights & Advice	1%	1%	7%	13%	78%
Shops	20%	22%	27%	20%	11%
Skills4Work	1%	2%	6%	10%	81%
UCLU Online	8%	16%	31%	27%	19%
UCLU Club Nights	3%	7%	17%	19%	54%
VSU	3%	3%	11%	15%	69%
JobShop	3%	5%	10%	15%	67%
A Fine Cut	1%	1%	2%	4%	92%
Sabbatical office	2%	2%	4%	9%	83%
UCL Sports Grounds	3%	2%	4%	7%	85%



N.B. The original chart (2.1.2) in the survey report was superseded by this one in an errata to the report document. The table (2.1.1) was accurate and remains unchanged.



A huge amount of additional detail on frequency of use of services is available in the Appendix B (excel workbook) accompanying the survey report. This workbook shows which demographic groups use each services with what

frequency. It is an extremely useful resource in helping to understand how 'broad' the user-base of each service is, i.e. broad range of low frequency users vs. narrow range of high frequency users.



A simplified breakdown of service usage is also available in Addendum.xlsx as Freq of use of services for UG, PG, Intl groups.

9.6 Importance of service provision

Survey

In order to help understand how best to prioritise UCLU resources, respondents were asked how important it was for UCLU itself to be running a variety of different services.

It is important to note that this question has no element of jeopardy or forced prioritisation.

Full sample weighted results for this question are shown in table 3.2.1 from the survey report (below) and illustrated graphically in chart 3.2.2.

Table 3.2.1 Importance of service provision

Top: How important is it that UCLU provides the following services? Rating

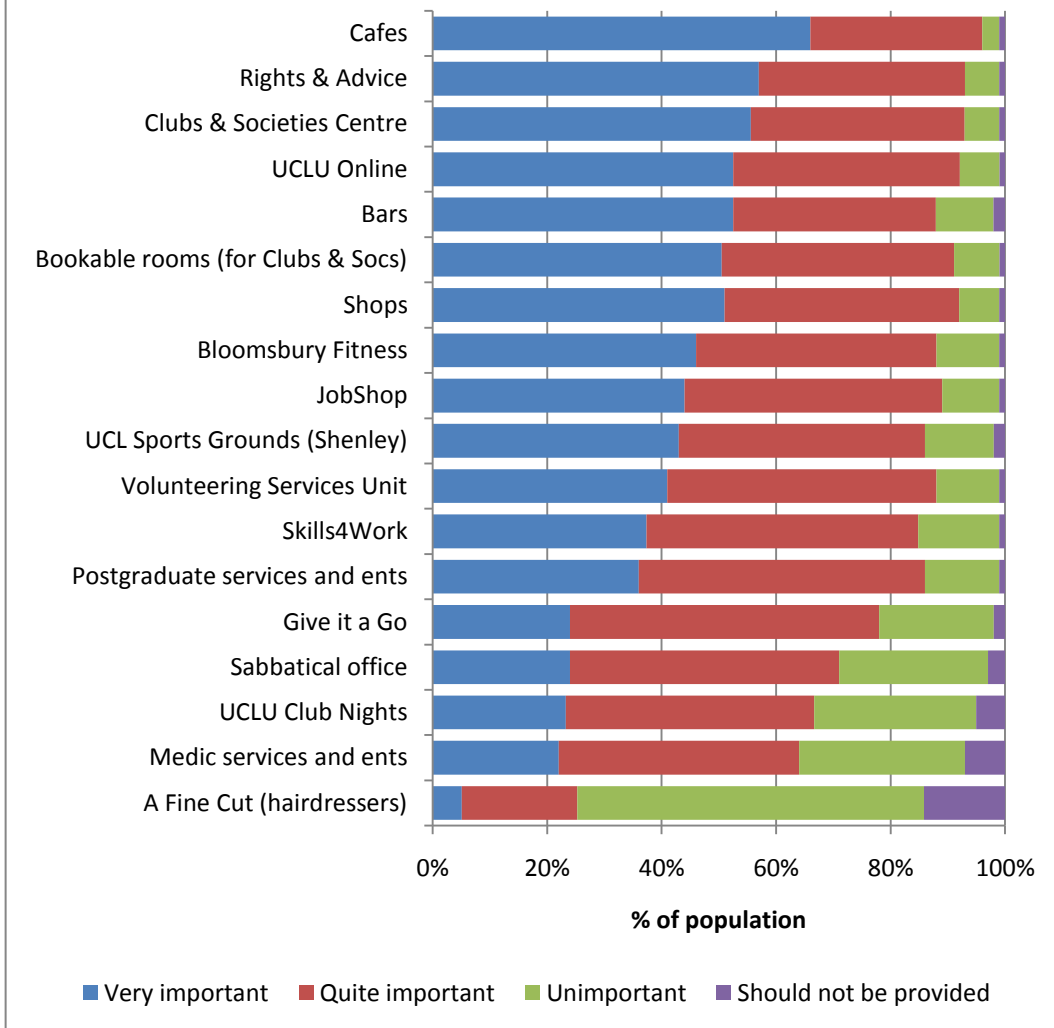
Side: How important is it that UCLU provides the following services? Service

Filter: submitdate (All)

Weight: weight_stage_ftpt_gen_intl (All)

	Should not be provided	Unimportant	Quite important	Very important
Cafes	1%	3%	30%	66%
Rights & Advice	1%	6%	36%	57%
Clubs & Societies Centre	1%	6%	37%	55%
UCLU Online	1%	7%	40%	53%
Bars	2%	10%	35%	52%
Bookable rooms (for Clubs & Socs)	1%	8%	41%	51%
Shops	1%	7%	41%	51%
Bloomsbury Fitness	1%	11%	42%	46%
JobShop	1%	10%	45%	44%
UCL Sports Grounds (Shenley)	2%	12%	43%	43%
Volunteering Services Unit	1%	11%	47%	41%
Skills4Work	1%	14%	47%	37%
Postgraduate services and ents	1%	13%	50%	36%
Give it a Go	2%	20%	54%	24%
Sabbatical office	3%	26%	47%	24%
UCLU Club Nights	5%	28%	43%	23%
Medic services and ents	7%	29%	42%	22%
A Fine Cut (hairdressers)	14%	60%	20%	5%

3.2.2 Importance of service provision



The chart above represents the full population. Unsurprisingly the underlying data shows that “Postgraduate services and ents” are perceived as more important by Postgraduates themselves with 91% rating them Very or Quite important.

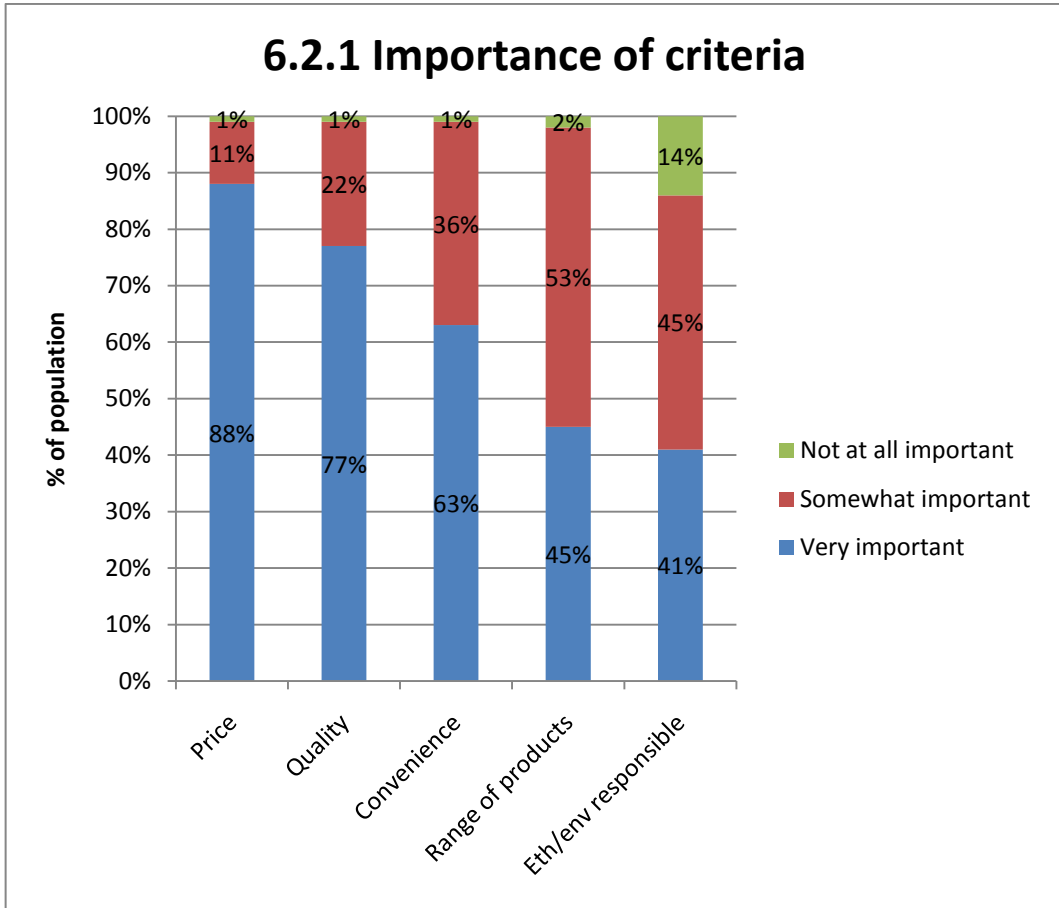


A breakdown of the importance of service provision is available in Addendum.xlsx as Importance of services for UG, PG, Intl groups.

9.7 Service criteria

Survey

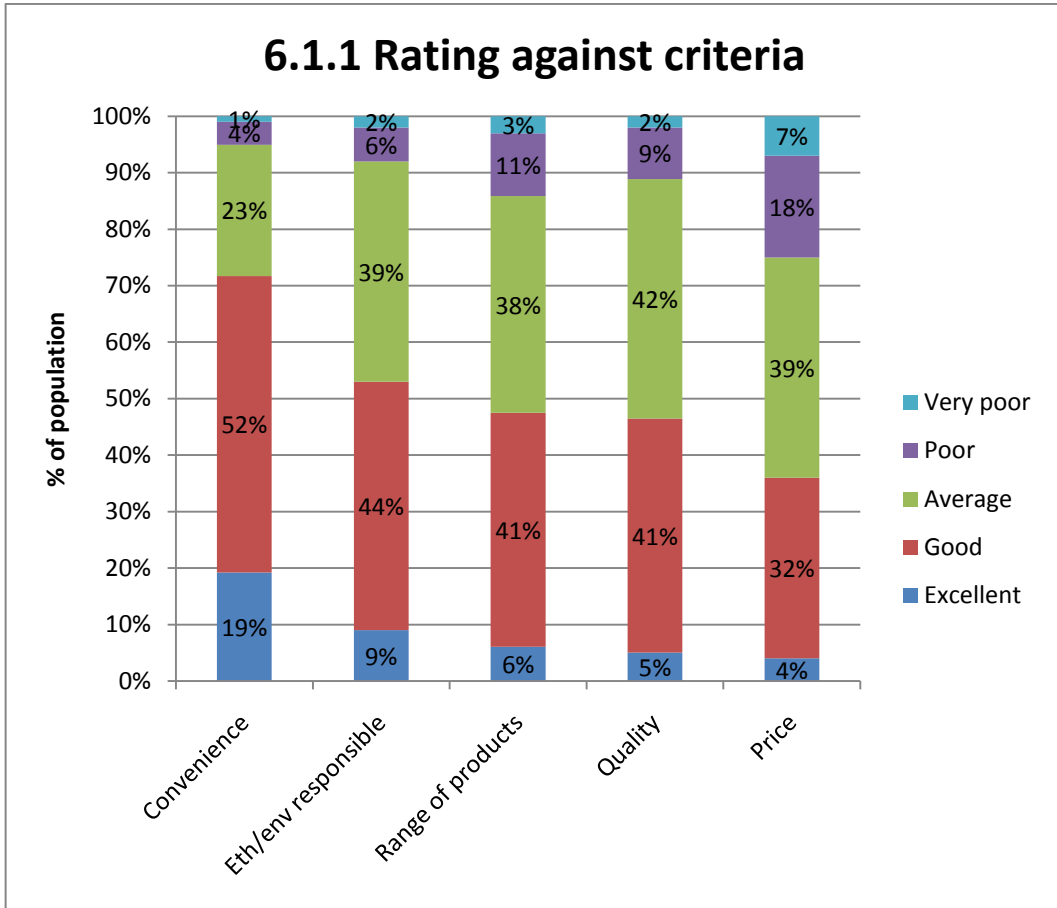
Respondents were asked to indicate the importance of certain criteria in relation to food, drink and retail.



9.8 Service ratings

Survey

Students were asked to rate food, drink and retail against a number of criteria. The results are shown below.



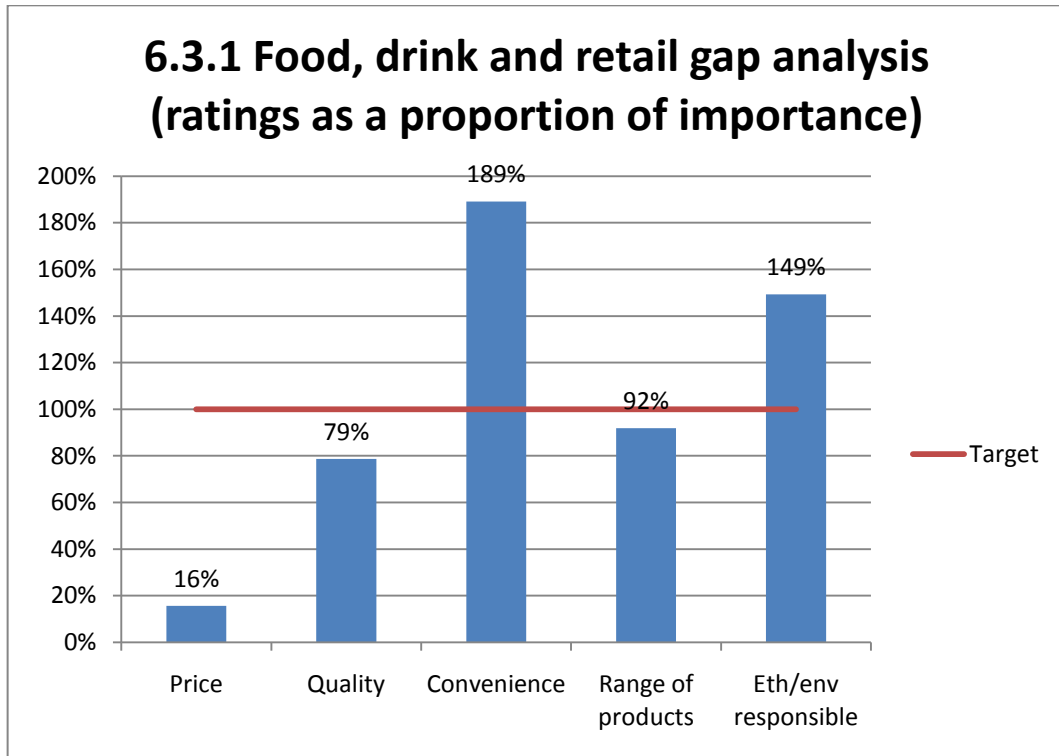
9.9 Service gap analysis

Survey

Rating the food, drink and retail against a set of criteria and measuring the importance of the criteria allows this data to be combined to produce a gap analysis.

Although the answer scales are not identical (they were chosen to be more naturalistic), responses on these scales can be normalised to allow a gap analysis to be conducted.

The analysis measures the proportion of total positive performance for each criterion against the proportion of total importance for that same criterion.



It is important to understand what the gap analysis is and is not showing. Importantly it is *not* a measure of performance. Increasing ratings by 20% across all criteria would not change this chart because the chart is showing the relative performance of each.

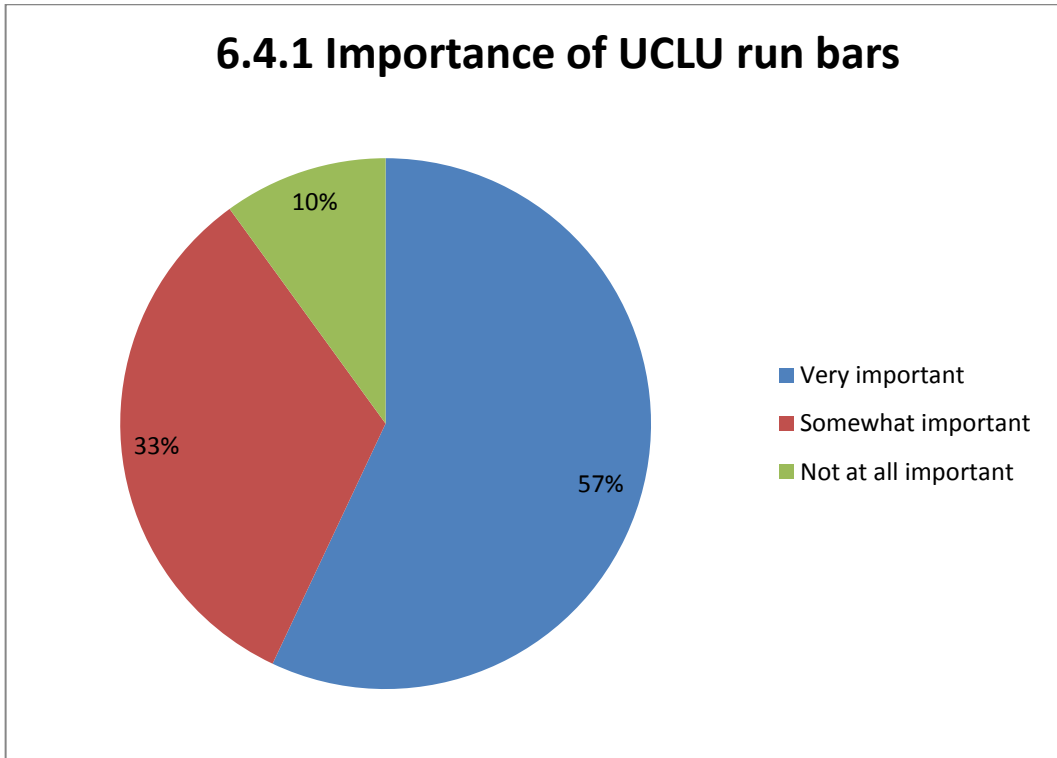
A perfectly balanced gap analysis would show all bars at exactly 100% although again this would not indicate good or bad performance, only that performance across the criteria is in proportion to the importance of the criteria.

The gap analysis is most useful when deciding on how to target resources for the most beneficial outcome.

9.10 Importance of UCLU bars

Survey

Respondents were asked how important it was that UCLU run student bars.



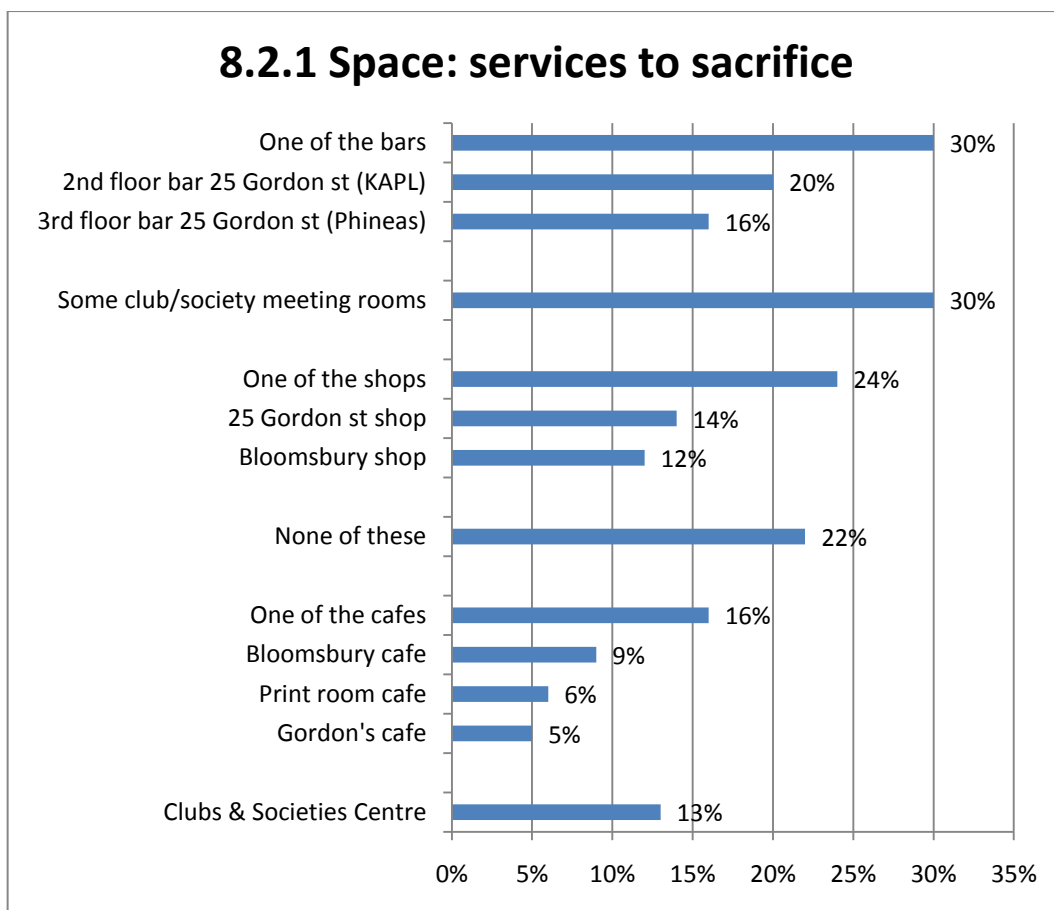
9.11 Service sacrifice

Survey

After being asked about the features most desired in a multi-functional space, respondents were asked what services (if any) they'd be prepared to give up.

The 'None of these' option was the only 'exclusive' option meaning that it could not be selected in combination with any other options.

Chart 8.2.1 from the survey report shows the proportion of population willing to give up each service.



Some of the options were nested to allow respondents to be specific if they wished. 30% of respondents would be prepared to sacrifice One of the bars. Two-thirds of them (20% of the total) specified the KAPL, some specified Phineas, some will not have specified either (indicating no preference) and some will have specified both bars (also indicating no specific preference).

9.12 Convert 2nd floor bar

Ideas Cafe

- 148 'votes' were cast: 83 Yes (56%), 64 NO (43%) and 3 Unknown (2%) however the motivation was primarily to stimulate discussion not conduct a fair referenda
- 50 comments were also recorded including a number of interesting suggestions: Beanbags, whiteboards, mixed comfy/study seating, novels, sofas
- A number of comments suggest the space could be hybrid between study in the day and bar at night
- Several comments suggest that this should not be UCLUs responsibility

A full transcription of all the comments made on this subject is available in the appendix of the Ideas Cafe Report.

10 Communication

The primary sources of evidence relating to this theme are listed in the table below which also indicates where there may be crossover in use of evidence with other work themes and therefore where collaborative effort or co-ordination may be required in the use and interpretation of evidence.

Source	Evidence	Crossover
Focus Group Report	Communication needs	
	Needs relating to other areas	Creating a Quality Environment Development (Skills & Experience) Meeting a Support Need
Survey Report	Communication preferences	
	Desired improvements	
	Importance of consultation	Democracy
Ideas Cafe Report	How students should be consulted	Democracy

It is important to note that as a broad strategic service, communication needs are likely to be driven by and connected to all other work themes.

10.1 Communication needs

Focus Group

Several students from various groups felt that they needed more publicity and marketing from the union. They suspected that maybe some of their 'needs' were actually being catered for but they simply did not know about it. One individual spoke about how few students turned up to Freshers week this year, in their opinion because it was not publicised well. One student from the Activist group articulated this point about poor communication very clearly:

“Advertising, just awareness and visibility of the union; of what the union is and what the union offers and the fact that it is there, ‘cause we’re in central London and it’s very hard. You could spend your entire undergraduate degree going to lectures and never setting foot inside the union, never knowing what they do, never seeing them. So the onus has to be on the union the put themselves out there and say this is what we are, we exist, this is what we can offer”

The same student also made it clear that this communication needed to be reciprocal. They talked about a “*feedback loop*”; where students can express what they actually want in focus groups and surveys and then the union must be receptive to this feedback.

According to one student the union has been asking itself the same question for a while:

“Is it a marketing problem or is it that students just don’t care?”

10.2 Needs relating to other areas

Focus Group

Clubs and societies leaders

The Activists group felt that the union did not support the clubs and societies. Generally speaking they had a problem with bureaucracy and red tape. The specific issues are listed below:

- Too many forms to complete.
- Forms e-mailed to one central e-mail address so there are suspicions of inefficiency in handling the e-mails. One individual referred to a frustrating e-mail he had received, apologising that his form had been “*lost in transit to the accounts office*”.
- Inefficient finance department.
- Issue of UCLU e-mails only going to President and Treasurer as opposed to the whole committee. One student in the group referred to an incident when both the President and Treasurer were off sick and the club nearly got struck off because it had failed to meet a deadline.
A couple of the students did acknowledge that the problem is partly due to a lack of communication within individual clubs and societies.
- However, the general consensus was that more guidance and advice needed to be offered to students in the first place, in order to avoid these communication gaps.
- There was a general agreement that the union has a problem with assumed knowledge. Often UCLU fails to recognise that students can have no experience in setting up a club or society and really need help. As one student a mixed group put it, you need a framework and “*starting point*”.

Job shop

The broad consensus is that the union should be providing a good part-time jobs website for students. This site should be updated regularly, be as comprehensive as possible and very student specific. After the focus groups, Red Brick actually went onto the UCLU website and explored the Job Shop which appears to tick all of these boxes. Perhaps this indicates that there needs to be better communication of this site?

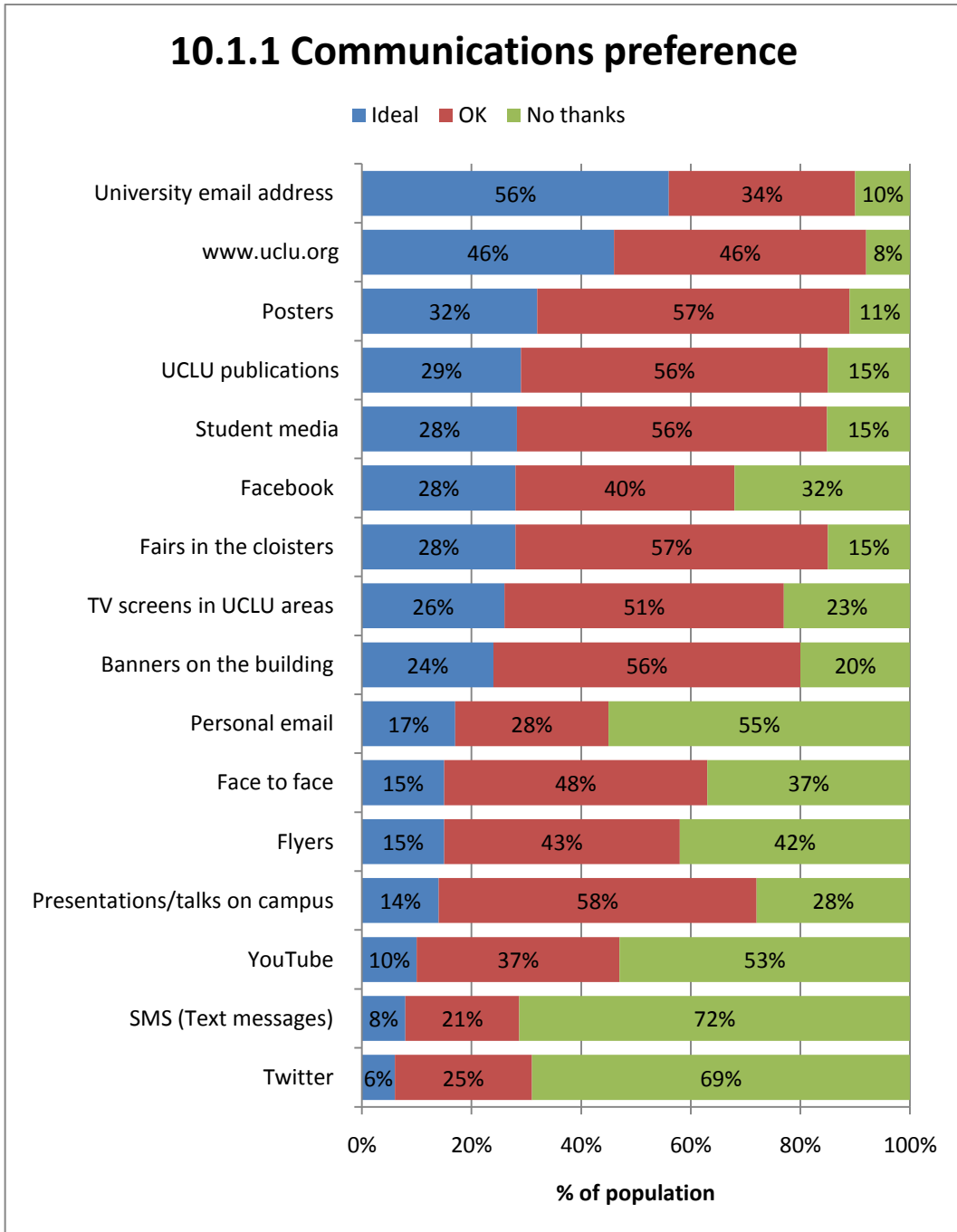
Advice and support

A few students commented on the fact that they needed clearer communication from the union in terms of important social dates. Many also felt that a comprehensive step-by-step guide to London and UCL was necessary. This could be part of the Welcome pack (see 3.15 *Welcome pack and welcome events*).

In one of the mixed groups there was a clear distinction between postgraduates and undergraduates. Undergraduates wanted the union to provide them with information about events that are going on in London. Postgraduates seemed more independent - one said “*Can't you just use Time Out?*”

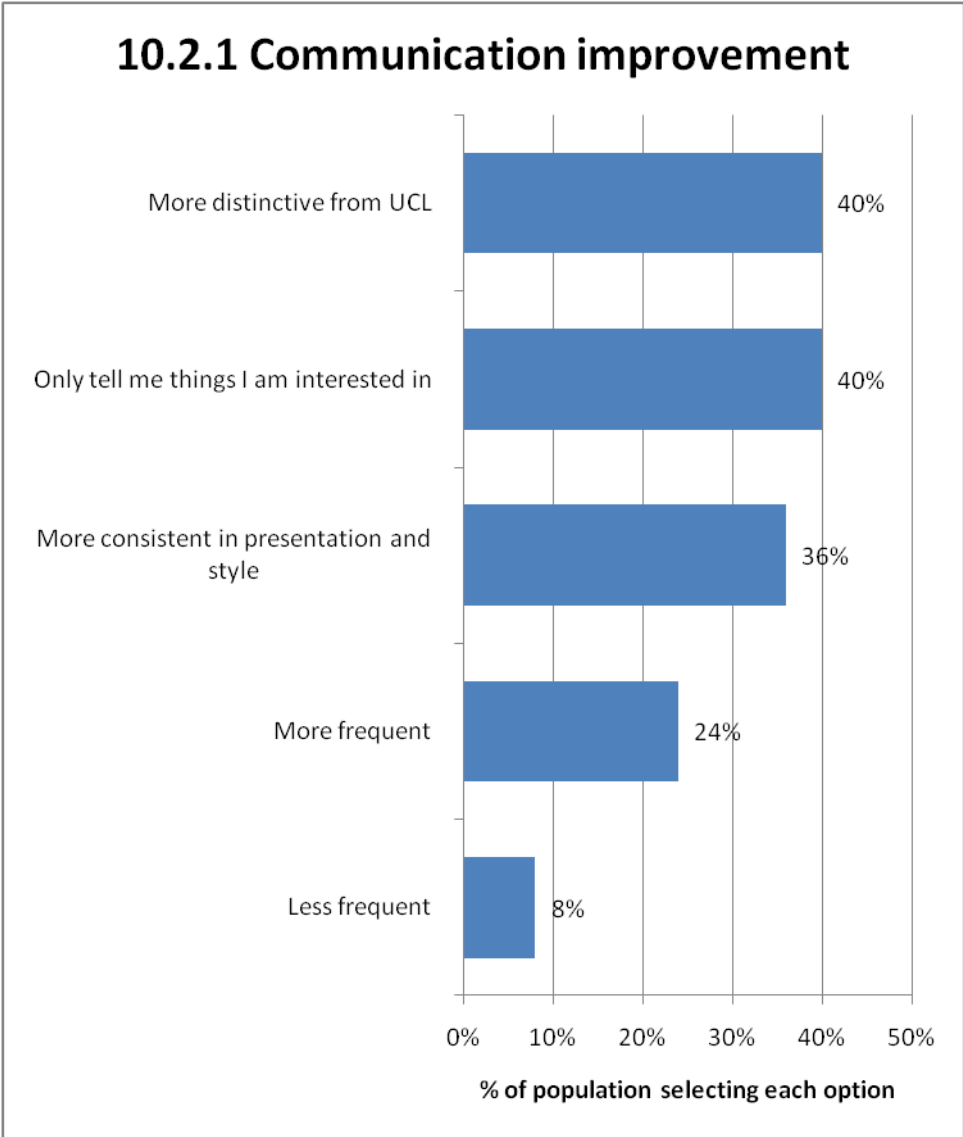
10.3 Communication preferences

Survey



10.4 Desired improvements

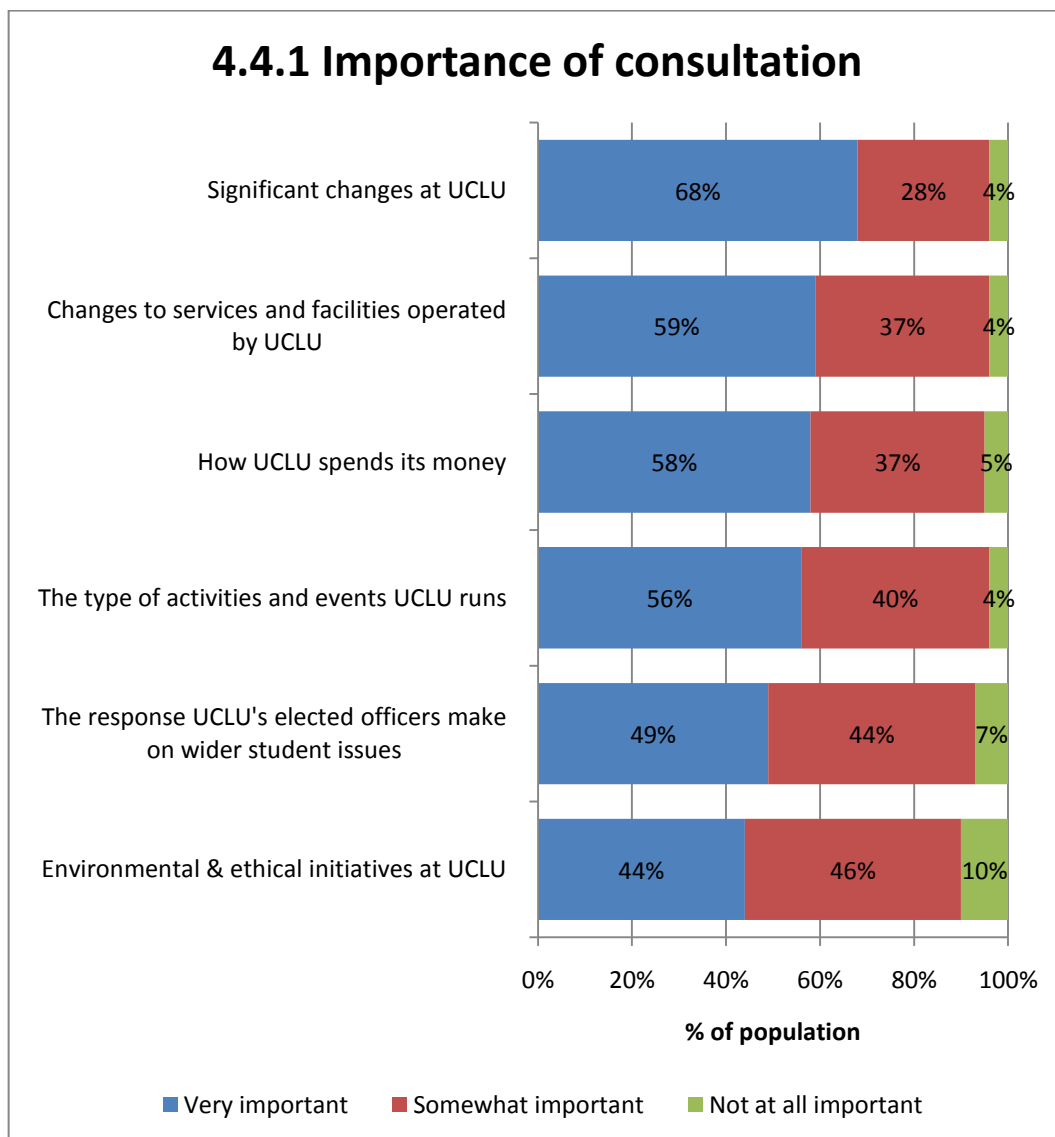
Survey



10.5 Importance of consultation

Survey

Respondents were asked how important it was for them to be consulted on different issues.



10.6 How students should be consulted

Ideas Cafe

- 108 comments or suggestions were contributed
- A strong desire for more face to face contact, events and “stuff like this”
- Other frequently mentioned communication mechanisms were Online, Email, Facebook and Posters, though there were also some negative comments on these
- Opinion polls, surveys and referenda were each mentioned several times as preferred means of consultation

A full transcription of all the comments made on this subject is available in the appendix of the Ideas Cafe Report.