



**Healthy Hallam**

**An analysis of physical activity and wellbeing of  
Sheffield Hallam University students**

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## 1. Summary

The Healthy Hallam Survey had 390 responses and, of those, 365 (94%) were active prior to University; the majority of these students took part in football, went to the gym, or ran. Once at University, the percentage of active students dropped by 4 percent (n=350, or 90%) and students indicated that they still go to the gym and run, but also do a bit more walking. There is a small decrease in the number of students taking part in organised or team-based activity (i.e. football, hockey, etc.) once at University.

Of currently active students, when asked what would increase their activity, if wanted, the majority indicated they have a lack of time. Some also felt incapable due to their academic commitments or physical activity being too expensive. Seventy-one percent of respondents were also part of Sheffield Hallam organised sport, either as part of Team Hallam or through social sporting opportunities. These students thought the main benefit of taking part in Sheffield Hallam organised sport was making friends, the ability to socialise with like-minded students, and to be part of a community (whether that is the wider Sheffield Hallam community or within their specific sport).

Of the 10 percent of respondents that are not active at all, these students mentioned that they did not feel they belonged to any Sheffield Hallam sport or physical activity offers and this was a barrier to increasing their activity levels. Furthermore, these same students indicated that they have a lack of time due to their academic commitments or that taking part is too expensive. Within the additional comments, currently inactive students would like additional 'taster' opportunities or the ability to bring a friend along, so as not to feel so intimidated.

In terms of their wellbeing, as there was such a small percentage of respondents that are currently inactive that making sweeping comparisons between active and inactive students would be inappropriate. Despite the low numbers, there was still a 9.17 percent difference between students that indicated they have low life satisfaction and their activity level; active students were slightly more likely to be generally more satisfied with their life compared to inactive students. In addition, active students were more likely to feel part of a community of friends at University and less likely to find it difficult to relax.

## 2. Introduction

Previous research has found that physical activity has a dose-response effect on overall wellbeing; that is, the more physical activity one takes part in, the higher an individual's feeling of happiness and contentedness is.<sup>1</sup> In addition, earlier research conducted by Alterline involving Sheffield Hallam Students' Union with a consortium of thirteen other Students' Unions found that, in comparison to other Students' Union's, Sheffield Hallam has a 8 percent increase in the percentage of students that feel that their wellbeing has become worse since starting university.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, previous research found that upwards of 70 percent of university students do not take part in physical activity or exercise in their free time or that the number of minutes university students are active drops once they get to university.<sup>3</sup> British Universities and College Sport (BUCS) also identified that students that took part in organised sport at university were more likely to state that they expected to finish with a distinction or upper-second class degree than those that do not.

As Maher (2013) note, satisfaction with life is positively associated with physical activity and daily activity, in a dose-response effect, had the most significant impact on overall satisfaction and happiness.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, adults aged 18-25 may benefit from changing small habits (e.g. taking the stairs instead of the lift), which could influence their satisfaction with life, instead of trying to implement large sweeping changes in their activity.<sup>5</sup> Previous research conducted by Alterline found a 6 percent decline in the percentage of respondents indicating high life satisfaction between participating Students' Unions nationally and students at Sheffield Hallam, with Hallam students less satisfied.

Therefore, taking part in physical activity at the University-level has a multitude of possible benefits: improved feelings of happiness and life satisfaction; improved academic performance; and feeling part of a community in the University. This research aims to explore these benefits, whilst also continuing to make impactful change across the University to increase student activity levels, resulting in improved mental wellbeing outcomes, and to improve services already offered, where needed.

This survey also aimed to better understand the impact of taking part in organised sport on student mental wellbeing at Sheffield Hallam University and any influence on student retention, overall life satisfaction, and confidence. An iteration of this survey was launched last year, SHSU 2019 Sport & Physical Activity Survey. This year's survey, renamed Healthy Hallam Survey, added these questions about organised sport and allowed these students to feedback about Team Hallam, if relevant.

<sup>1</sup> Haase, A., Steptoe, A., Phil, D., Sallis, J., & Wardle, J. (2004). Leisure-time physical activity in university students from 23 countries: Associations with health beliefs, risk awareness, and national economic development. *Preventative Medicine*, 39, 182-190.

<sup>2</sup> Alterline. (2018). *Being well, doing well*. Manchester, UK: Alterline. Retrieved from <https://alterline.co.uk/student-wellbeing-and-mental-health-report/>

<sup>3</sup> British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS). (2018). *British active students survey: 2017/2018 report*. British Universities & Colleges Sport. Retrieved from <https://www.bucs.org.uk/page.asp?section=20636&sectionTitle=British+Active+Students+Survey>; Roberts, S., Reeves, M., & Ryrle, A. (2015). The influence of physical activity, sport and exercise motives among UK-based university students. *Journal of further and Higher Education*, 39(4), 598-607.

<sup>4</sup> Maher, J., Doerksen, S., Elavsky, S., Hyde, A., Pincus, A., Ram, N., & Conroy, D. (2013). A daily analysis of physical activity and satisfaction with life in emerging adults. *Health Psychology*, 6, 647-656.

<sup>5</sup> Maher, J., Pincus, A., Nilam, R., & Conroy, D. (2015). Daily physical activity and life satisfaction across adulthood. *Developmental Psychology*, 10, 1407-1419.

## ***Research Method***

The Healthy Hallam Survey was open from 20 January to 29 February 2020 and 390 students completed it. The survey was promoted primarily by Sheffield Hallam Students' Union's Sport & Physical Activity Officer 2019/20 through social media and emails to students that they regularly contact. The survey was also promoted by Sheffield Hallam Students' Union (SHSU) on social media and in newsletter emails to SHSU student members. The survey was circulated as an open link and, to avoid duplicate responses, students were asked to provide their Student ID. Providing their Student ID also allowed the research team to explore demographic differences and to compare the sample population to SHU general population (see Demographics section for this comparison).

As highlighted above, the survey asked students questions about their physical activity levels, including how active they were prior to university and how active they are currently, whilst at university. Respondents were also asked what sport or activity they did or do take part in, for how many minutes each week they were or are active, and why they did or do take part in sport or activity. These questions remained unchanged from the SHSU 2019 Sport & Physical Activity Survey. As noted above, additional questions specifically for Team Hallam were added to the Healthy Hallam Survey to understand specific needs of very active students; these additional questions explored what is going well and what could be improved.

Furthermore, all respondents were asked questions related to their mental wellbeing and about their academic achievement. Though some of these questions were asked in SHSU Sport & Physical Activity Survey in 2019, some additional questions were added to provide further context and more robust research practice. These questions were all optional.

For some sections, respondents were asked to provide qualitative feedback and these have been thematically analysed, with the most prominent themes and some quotes mentioned in this report. All quantitative data was analysed bi-variately using Excel. For some questions, such as within the wellbeing section, these questions have been analysed using Mann Whitney U through SPSS to explore any statistically significant differences between currently active and inactive students, as relevant.

As mentioned above, this survey received 390 responses; a very high proportion of these students are currently active (90%, n=350) and a very small number (n=40, or 10%) are currently inactive. In comparison to SHSU 2019 Sport & Physical Activity Survey where only 60 percent of respondents were active at university, this is a substantial increase in the percentage of students that are active. However, the previous survey had a total of 1538 responses; this indicates that the previous survey was able to reach many more students than the Healthy Hallam Survey. This report will occasionally compare findings from the Healthy Hallam Survey to research conducted last academic year (SHSU Sport & Physical Activity Survey), but will also link to national data on wellbeing and life satisfaction.

### 3. Activity Before University

Respondents were asked to indicate if they were active prior to attending university, referring specifically the following definition of activity, as adapted by the World Health Organisation (WHO)<sup>6</sup>: “any bodily movement that results in energy expenditure, this could include: brisk walking, jumping rope, dancing, weight lifting, climbing, yoga or any type of casual or organised sport such as football, running, swimming, etc.” Of the 390 students that responded to the survey, nearly all (94%, n=365) indicated they were active previously. Of the students that were active prior to university, 38 percent went to the gym, 27 percent participated in football, and 21 percent went running, as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Top 10 forms of activity prior to university of respondents that indicated they were active before coming to university, selecting all that apply (n=365).

Activity	Count	%
Gym	139	38%
Football	99	27%
Running	76	21%
Swimming	75	21%
Netball	72	20%
Fitness classes	71	19%
Walking	71	19%
Athletics	64	18%
Cycling	59	16%
Hockey	58	16%

Furthermore, respondents were asked to indicate how active they were, with the largest majority of respondents (40%, n=145) noting they were active 151 minutes or more per week (see Figure 1). As regularity and length of physical activity can improve an individual's mental health health, as well as lowers risk of non-communicable diseases such as type-2 diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, or stroke, respondents were asked to indicate the minutes they were active. Currently, the World Health Organization (WHO) encourages individual's aged 16-64 to be active for 150 minutes or more per week (approximately 30 minutes of activity per day).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> World Health Organization (2019). *Physical activity: key facts*. Retrieved on 2 April 2020 from: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/physical-activity>

<sup>7</sup> World Health Organization (WHO) (2020). *Physical Activity and Adults*. Retrieved on 7 April 2020 from: [https://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/factsheet\\_adults/en/](https://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/factsheet_adults/en/).

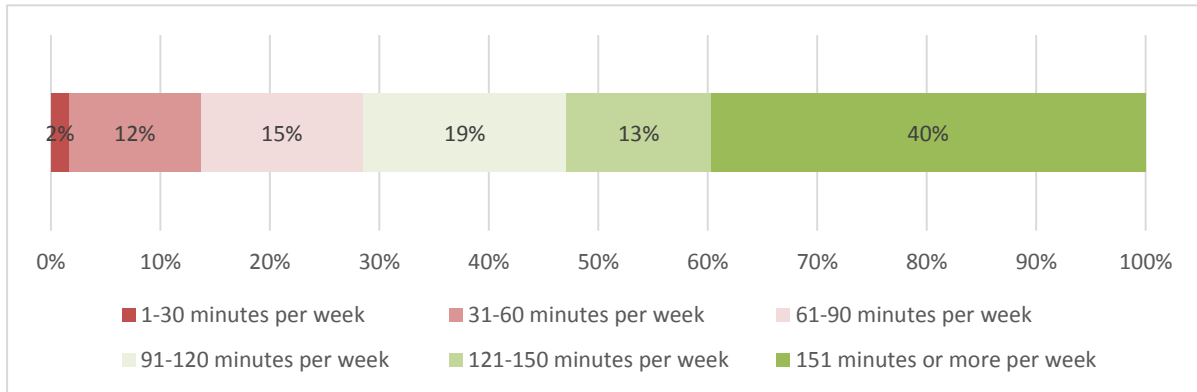


Figure 1: Minutes of activity per week for respondents that were active before university (n=365).

Furthermore, respondents were asked to indicate why they were active prior to University, with 89 percent noting they were active because they enjoyed it, 87 percent for their own physical health or fitness, and 67 percent to socialise (Table 2).

Table 2: Reasons respondents participated in physical activity before university, selecting all that apply (n=365).

Reason why participated	Count	%
For enjoyment	325	89%
For physical health/fitness	319	87%
To socialise/ hang with friends	244	67%
The competition against others/myself	188	52%
To improve my focus/mental health	155	42%
To increase my confidence	110	30%
To spend time outdoors	109	30%
For something to do	76	21%

## 4. Activity At University

Understanding the activity levels of students prior to university is helpful to determine the difference in physical activity levels once at university; therefore, respondents were asked to indicate if they are currently active, referring once again to the following definition: "any bodily movement that results in energy expenditure, this could include: brisk walking, jumping rope, dancing, weight lifting, climbing, yoga or any type of casual or organised sport such as football, running, swimming, etc.", as adapted by the WHO.<sup>8</sup>

### 4.1 Active At University

Of the 390 respondents, 350 (90%) indicated they are currently active. Of currently active students, the majority went to a gym, with much smaller pockets of students taking part in walking, running, fitness classes, or hockey; this indicates that students take part in a wide variety of sport and fitness opportunities to stay active whilst at university (see Table 3).

Table 3: Top 10 forms of activity whilst at university of respondents that indicated they were active at university, selecting all that apply (n=350).

Activity	Count	%
Gym	144	41%
Walking	51	15%
Running	45	13%
Fitness classes	40	11%
Hockey	33	9%
Cycling	32	9%
Football	32	9%
Netball	30	9%
Swimming	29	8%
Rugby League/ Rugby Union	28	8%

Notably, the percentage of respondents that go to a gym at University, compared to prior to University, has increased by 3 percent and group sports (e.g. football, netball) has decreased. Furthermore, of the recommended minutes of physical activity by WHO (2020)<sup>9</sup>, 43 percent are active at or above the recommended amounts (n=152). Despite only 43 percent reaching the recommended minutes, many more students (20%, n=70), are active for 121 to 150 minutes per week, meaning that many students that completed this survey are relatively active throughout their time at university.

<sup>8</sup> World Health Organization (2019). *Physical activity: key facts*. Retrieved on 2 April 2020 from: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/physical-activity>

<sup>9</sup> World Health Organization (2020). *Physical Activity and Adults*. Retrieved on 7 April 2020 from: [https://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/factsheet\\_adults/en/](https://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/factsheet_adults/en/).



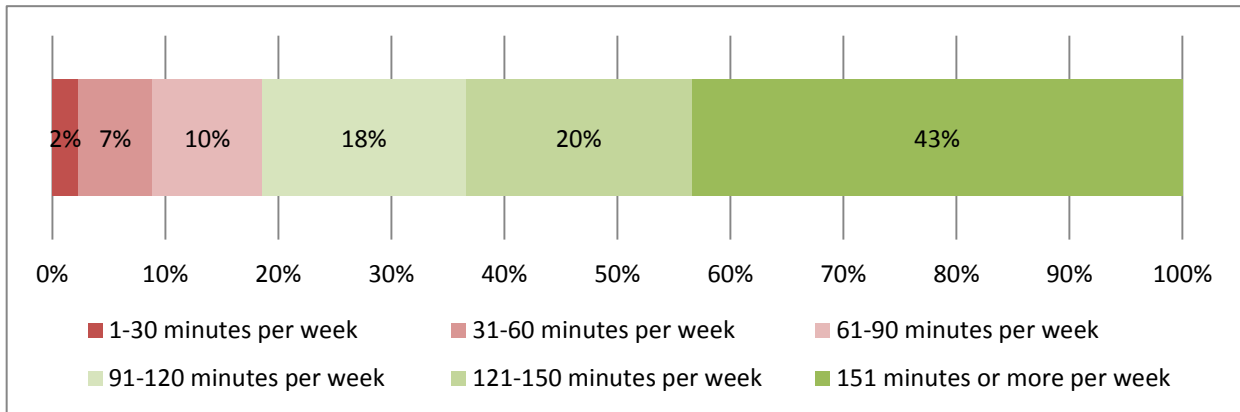


Figure 2: Minutes of activity per week for respondents that are active at university (n=350).

Of the students that are currently active, 87 percent noted that they are currently active for their own physical health and fitness levels, with a high majority also being active for their own enjoyment (75%), to socialise or hang out with friends (66%), or to improve their focus or mental health (53%). Prior to University, respondents indicated that they were mainly active for their own enjoyment (89%), whereas now students are more likely to be active for their physical health or fitness (87%).

Table 4: Reasons respondents participated in physical activity at university, selecting all that apply (n=350).

Reason	Count	%
For physical health/fitness	305	87%
For enjoyment	262	75%
To socialise/ hang with friends	232	66%
To improve my focus/mental health	187	53%
The competition against others/myself	165	47%
To increase my confidence	124	35%
To spend time outdoors	91	26%
For something to do	82	23%

Currently active students were also asked to indicate if they currently go to a gym and, if so, what gym they attend. Of the 350 active students, 277 (79%) currently attend a gym and the most popular gym is Hallam Active (62%, n=173). Other students attend: Pure Gym (11%), 'The Gym' (7%), their gym in their accommodation (6%), or Fitness Unlimited (5%). In addition, these respondents were asked to consider factors that influenced their choice in gym membership and 74 percent (n=205) considered the cost of their membership and/or 74 percent thought of the physical location of the gym (n=204), see Table 5.

Table 5: Factors that respondents considered when choosing a gym, selecting all that apply (n=277).

Factors	Count	%
Cost of membership	205	74%
Physical location	204	74%
The quality of gym facilities	112	40%
The availability and opening hours	103	37%
The amount of gym equipment	82	30%
Type, timing or availability of fitness classes	56	20%
Locker/ changing room facilities	28	10%
Included in sport membership	22	8%
The availability/cost/helpfulness of a personal trainer	21	8%

When active respondents were asked if they would like to be more active than they currently are, 60 percent of respondents (n=210) agreed that they would. Of those, 65 percent (n=137) lack time to increase their activity levels, whilst, similarly, some students indicated that their academic commitments (45%, n=95) or timetabling (28%, n=59) inhibited them. As Table 6 highlights, a small percentage of respondents (11%) do not feel like they belong with Team Hallam and this was a barrier to being more active whilst at University.

Table 6: Barriers to increasing physical activity levels in respondents that are currently active, selecting all that apply (n=210).

Barriers	Count	%
Lack of time	137	65%
Academic commitments	95	45%
Too expensive/financial reasons	75	36%
Timetabling	59	28%
Too busy with paid employment/ volunteering	50	24%
Personal commitments	42	20%
Ability of travel	36	17%
Cost of travel	35	17%
Do not feel like I belong with Team Hallam	24	11%

#### 4.2 Hallam Teams & Clubs

Currently active students were asked to indicate if they are part of any sporting teams or clubs through Sheffield Hallam and 280 respondents (80%) are. As noted in Table 5, 8 percent of respondents chose their gym primarily because it was included in their sport membership (n=22).

Students that are part of Hallam teams and clubs were asked to comment the benefits of being involved. Where students did provide comments, some mentioned making friends and socialising with like-minded individuals was beneficial or that taking part made them feel part of a community within their club or generally as part of Team Hallam.

*"Team community and opens the doors to more social events and made my best friends through joining a Hallam club. A healthy distraction from my course."*

*"The social aspect of sport at university is massive. It keeps a lot of people from dropping out in their first year and gives people incentive and belonging."*

Other students mentioned the benefits of keeping active and staying healthy in an enjoyable, fun way; some respondents commented that the facilities available at Hallam are one of the benefits of being a part of Team Hallam.

*"Everything is organised for you, and access to the S&C suite and physio are a big bonus."*

*"Being able to use many different sports facilities. Not just having the swimming pool as a part of my training but also S&C."*

Conversely, respondents also commented what could be improved with the majority focussed on costs: the membership payment timing and amount, the cost of their sport kit, or the good value of their membership fees.

*"The price of the sport and the membership. Some sports you have to pay for transport to and from competitions but other sports get it free."*

Other respondents commented about the facilities, with a few comments about the opening times of the Hallam Active gym, specifically the strength and conditioning suite. For some respondents, they would like to see improved communication from the Team Hallam about decisions made or support available at SHU.

*"There is sometimes not a lot of transparency which leaves a lot of people confused as to why decisions are being made and would prefer to just be kept up to date with changes and where possible an explanation as to why and what benefits these decisions bring."*

When asked about the cost of membership to their club or sport, 52 percent (n=145) indicated that the membership is just right, whilst 48 percent thought it is too expensive (n=135). As noted above when asked what could be improved, cost was something that 49 respondents felt strongly about. For some students that thought the cost of membership was just right also mentioned that the payment could be separated throughout the academic year, instead of one large lump-sum upfront cost (as noted above as well).

*"Lowering the price/having a monthly pay/broken down pay option. It's a big bulk sum at the start of the year."*

*"Spread cost over a few months as £260 at once is a lot"*

*"Allow the payment to spread out of the course of the year."*

If respondents did think that the cost of membership was a good value, they commented that having access to facilities and physiotherapy was a benefit. Despite this, a small number of respondents thought that some of their clothing (i.e. kit, socks, hoodie, t-shirt) should be included in the price as well.

### 4.3 Not Active at University

Many respondents to this survey were currently active (90%, n=350), but there were, however, a small number of students that are not active at all (10%, n= 40). Of these 40 students, 31 (78%) would like to be active and their reasons for not being active are: feeling like they did not belong (n=18), academic commitments taking up their time (n=17), activity being too expensive (n=17), and having a lack of time (n=16), see Table 7.

Table 7: Reasons inactive students are not active at University, all respondents (n=40), selecting all that apply.

Reason	Count	%
Did not feel like I belong	18	58%
Academic commitments	17	55%
Too expensive/financial reasons	17	55%
Cost	16	52%
Lack of time	16	52%
Confidence	11	35%
Timetabling	8	26%
Too busy with paid employment/volunteering	7	23%
Personal commitments	6	19%
Prefer to spend time doing other activities	5	16%
Don't know	3	10%

These same students were also asked to comment what would motivate them to take part. Thirteen respondents mentioned the price of gyms or making social sport opportunities cheaper. Eight respondents would like to see more inclusive sporting opportunities and activities available, both for students with disabilities that inhibit their mobility and to encourage all physical abilities to take part. There were a small minority that indicated, in the previous question, that one of the reason they are inactive is they did not feel they belonged with Team Hallam, specifically. When asked to explain why they do not feel they belong with Team Hallam, students commented the teams were intimidating at the Fair or that they did not feel they had the athletic ability to join.

## 5. Wellbeing

As previous research has highlighted, there is an intrinsic link between mental wellbeing, mental health, and physical activity. To better explore this link at Sheffield Hallam University, respondents were asked to complete a number of scale questions, as well as self-report recent academic achievement and confidence in their ability to obtain employment after graduate. This report, therefore, will display the overall wellbeing of all respondents and then explore disparities between students that are currently active and those that are not active.

Of all respondents, since beginning their course at Sheffield Hallam, 31 percent state that their mental wellbeing has become better (n=119) and 44 percent thought that their mental wellbeing has stayed the same (n=170). Despite this, there were still just over a quarter of respondent (26%, n=99) who felt that their mental wellbeing had become worse since starting at Sheffield Hallam. This is especially relevant with current trends in university student mental wellbeing and the increased efforts across the Higher Education sector to provide more and improved support for all students.<sup>10</sup>

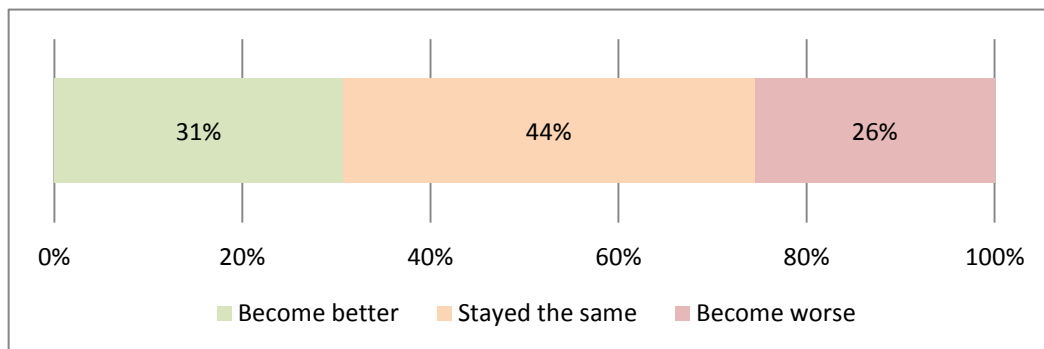


Figure 3: Responses to "Since starting at Hallam, my mental wellbeing has...", all respondents (n=390).

### 5.1 Life Satisfaction

As an additional comparison measure between Sheffield Hallam students and national data, students were asked to specify how satisfied they are with their life nowadays (on a scale of 0 - extremely unsatisfied and 10 - extremely satisfied). Positively, few numbers of respondents had low levels of life satisfaction, with the vast majority of respondents at a 6 or above (82%, n=320), as shown in Figure 4.

<sup>10</sup> Office for Students (2019). *Mental Health: are all students being properly supported?* Retrieved on 15 April 2020 from: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/mental-health-are-all-students-being-properly-supported/>.

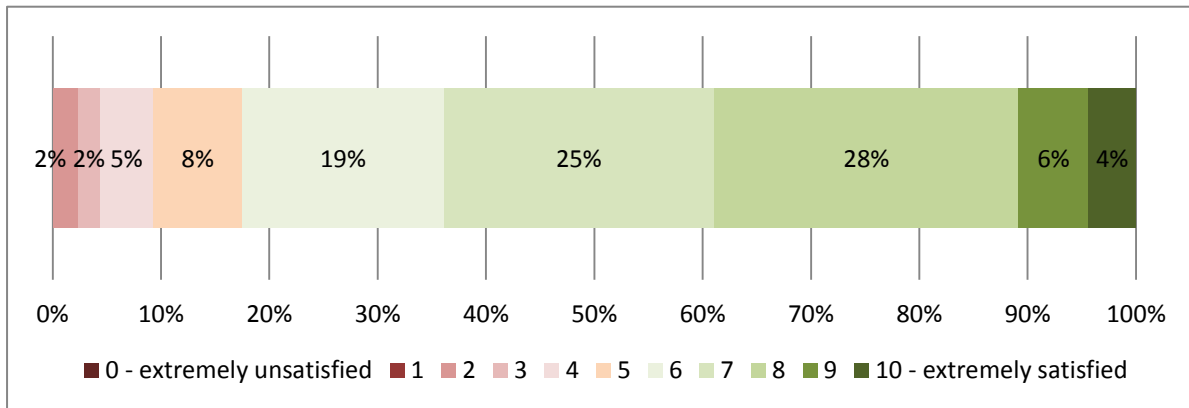


Figure 4: Percentage of respondents that indicate overall life satisfaction to the question: 'Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?' (0 - extremely unsatisfied, 10 - extremely satisfied), all respondents (n=388).

This data was analysed and compared to current data from the Office for National Statistics (see Table 8) and, as this question was asked within the previous SHSU 2019 Sport & Physical Activity Survey, results from SHSU have been provided as well. As Table 8 displays, the percentage of Sheffield Hallam students with low (0-4) life satisfaction has decreased by 10.4 percent and those with medium (5-6) or high (7-8) satisfaction has risen. There was a slight decrease of students that indicate very high (9-10) life satisfaction for all Hallam students, though the demographics of students and the activity levels of students that completed this year's survey is drastically different. This year, 90 percent of students indicated that they are currently active, though only 66 percent of students indicated that they were currently active last year. Furthermore, 55 percent of respondents to last year's survey took part in their physical activity through Sheffield Hallam, either with Team Hallam or in social sports, whereas this year, 71 percent of all respondents take part in some form of organised sport with Sheffield Hallam.

Table 8: Two-year life satisfaction of Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) students and national data from Office for National Statistics (ONS) by low, medium, high, and very high satisfaction quartiles. For SHU 2020, this is life satisfaction of all respondents (n=388).

	ONS 2018 <sup>11</sup>	ONS 2019 <sup>12</sup>	SHU 2019 <sup>13</sup>	SHU 2020
Low 0-4	4.44%	4.53%	19.68%	9.28%
Medium 5-6	13.60%	13.37%	19.22%	26.80%
High 7-8	51.60%	51.65%	47.29%	53.09%
Very high 9-10	30.35%	30.45%	13.80%	10.82%

Therefore, whilst the percentages of respondents indicating that they are active has risen this year and thus the percentage of respondents stating that they have low (0-4) life satisfaction has

<sup>11</sup> Office for National Statistics (ONS) (2019). Annual personal well-being datasets. Retrieved on 1 April 2020 from: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/datasets/headlineestimatesofpersonalwellbeing>

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Sheffield Hallam Students' Union Sport & Physical Activity Survey Report (2019). Retrieved on 1 April 2020 from: <https://www.hallamstudentsunion.com/pageassets/representation/research/reports/SHSU-Sport-Physical-Activity-Report-Comparison-Demographics.pdf>

decreased dramatically, the data does not accurately represent all Sheffield Hallam students. Furthermore, there is no research, known to the research team, which does provide the exact percentages for the activity levels of current students at Sheffield Hallam. It could be that last year's survey is still representative of the overall physical activity levels of students: 66 percent being active in some form. Despite this clear over-representation of students that are part of Sheffield Hallam organised activity, it is still important to understand the life satisfaction of these students. If anything, the decrease in students that have low (0-4) satisfaction only further adds to the argument that individuals that take part in physical activity more regularly are, generally, more satisfied with their lives. As previous research has highlighted, physical activity has a dose-response effect on overall wellbeing. That is, the more physical activity you take part in, the happier and more contented you will be.<sup>14</sup>

In this year's Healthy Hallam Survey: physically active students appeared to be more satisfied with their lives. As Table 9 illustrates, currently active students are more likely to indicate that they are satisfied with their life nowadays, compared to inactive students. Though the numbers of students completing the survey that are not active are low (n=40), there is still a 9.17 percent difference between respondents indicating low (0-4) life satisfaction.

Table 9: Life satisfaction comparing SHSU 2020 Healthy Hallam Survey to Office for National Statistics (2019)

Satisfaction Rating	ONS	SHU - currently active (n=348)	SHU - not currently active (n=40)
Low 0-4	4.53%	8.33%	17.50%
Medium 5-6	13.37%	26.44%	30.00%
High 7-8	51.65%	54.31%	42.50%
Very high 9-10	30.45%	10.92%	10.00%

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<sup>14</sup> Haase, A., Steptoe, A., Phil, D., Sallis, J., & Wardle, J. (2004). Leisure-time physical activity in university students from 23 countries: Associations with health beliefs, risk awareness, and national economic development. *Preventative Medicine*, 39, 182-190.

## 5.2 Wellbeing Scale Measures

To better understand associations between student wellbeing and activity levels, respondents were asked to respond to some mental wellbeing statements. As Figure 5 displays, 86 percent of respondents agree that they feel part of a community of friends at university. Despite this high percentage, the reversed statements (i.e. 'I often feel stressed' or 'I find it difficult to relax') had a remarkably high percentage of respondents that agreed to these statements: 69 percent agree they often feel stressed and 42 percent find it difficult to relax.

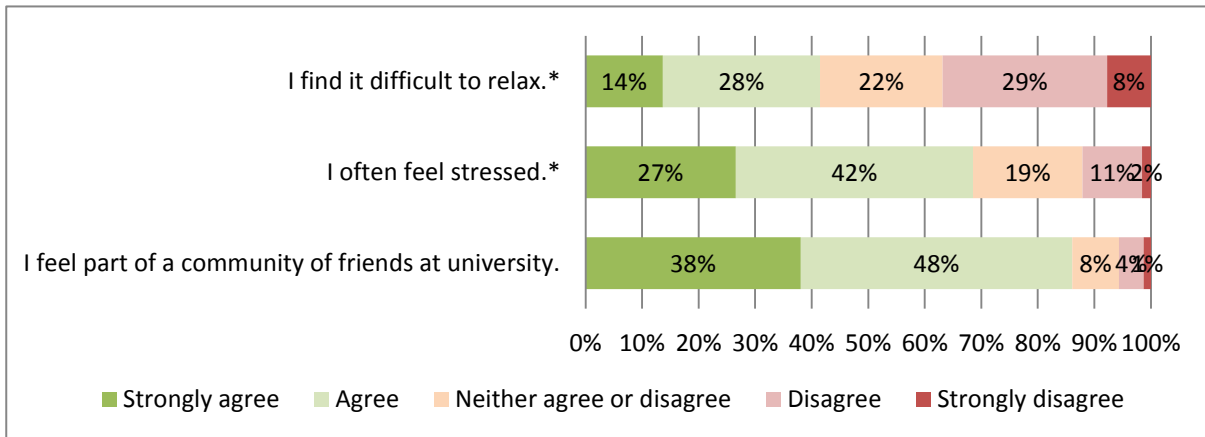


Figure 5: Wellbeing likert-scale statements, all respondents (n=390). NB: Asterisk (\*) indicates reversed, non-positive statement.

Comparing active respondents to inactive respondents (see Figure 6), 88 percent of students that are currently active feel part of a community of friends at university, whilst 68 percent of students that are not currently active feel part of a community at university. Similarly to last year's Sport & Physical Activity Survey, this is a statistically significant difference ( $U=5001.5$ ,  $p<=0.001$ ). In addition, for the statement 'I find it difficult to relax', inactive students were more likely to agree and this was a marginally significant difference ( $U=5553.5$ ,  $p=.015$ ).

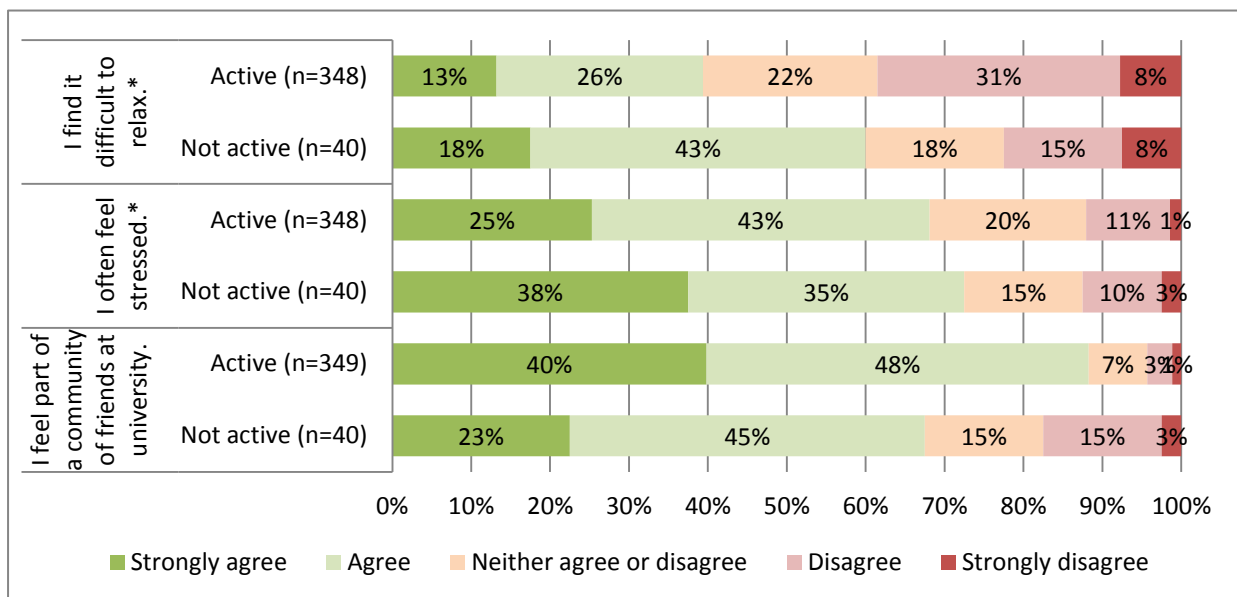


Figure 6: Wellbeing likert-scale statements, by current activity level (active vs. non-active). NB: Asterisk (\*) indicates reversed, non-positive statement.



### 5.3 Achievement Scale Measures

Participation in sport or physical activity can have a positive impact on student attainment and academic achievement; whilst not all of these questions were asked in SHSU 2019 Sport & Physical Activity Survey, some additional questions regarding student achievement were added to the Healthy Hallam Survey as to better understand this for Sheffield Hallam students, specifically. As Figure 8 notes, only 47 percent of respondents agreed that they are doing as well academically as they want and 42 percent noted that they often put off work until the last minute. Most notably, 36 percent of respondents have considered dropping out of university, either currently or in the past.

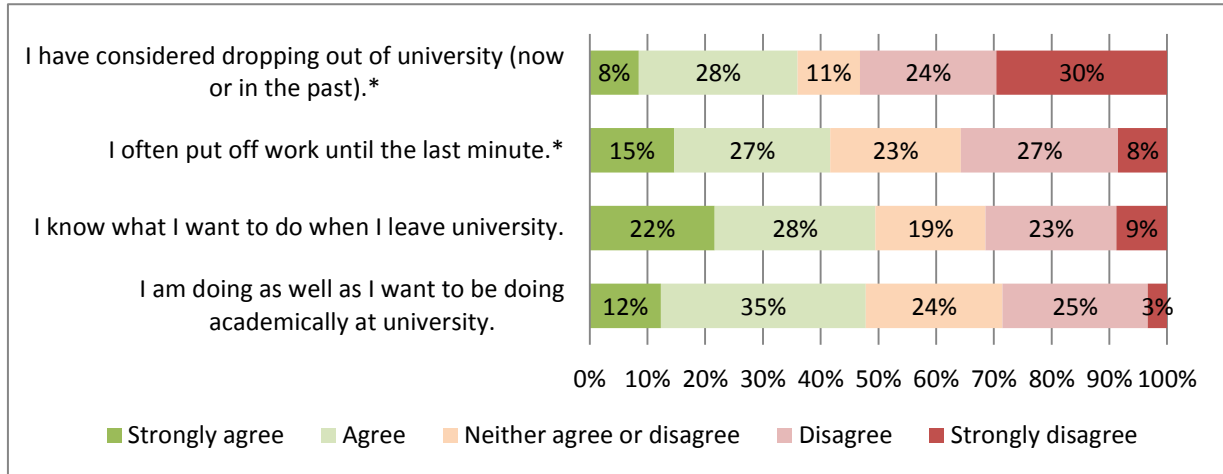


Figure 7: Achievement likert-scale statements, all respondents (n=390). NB: Asterisk (\*) indicates a reversed, non-positive statement.

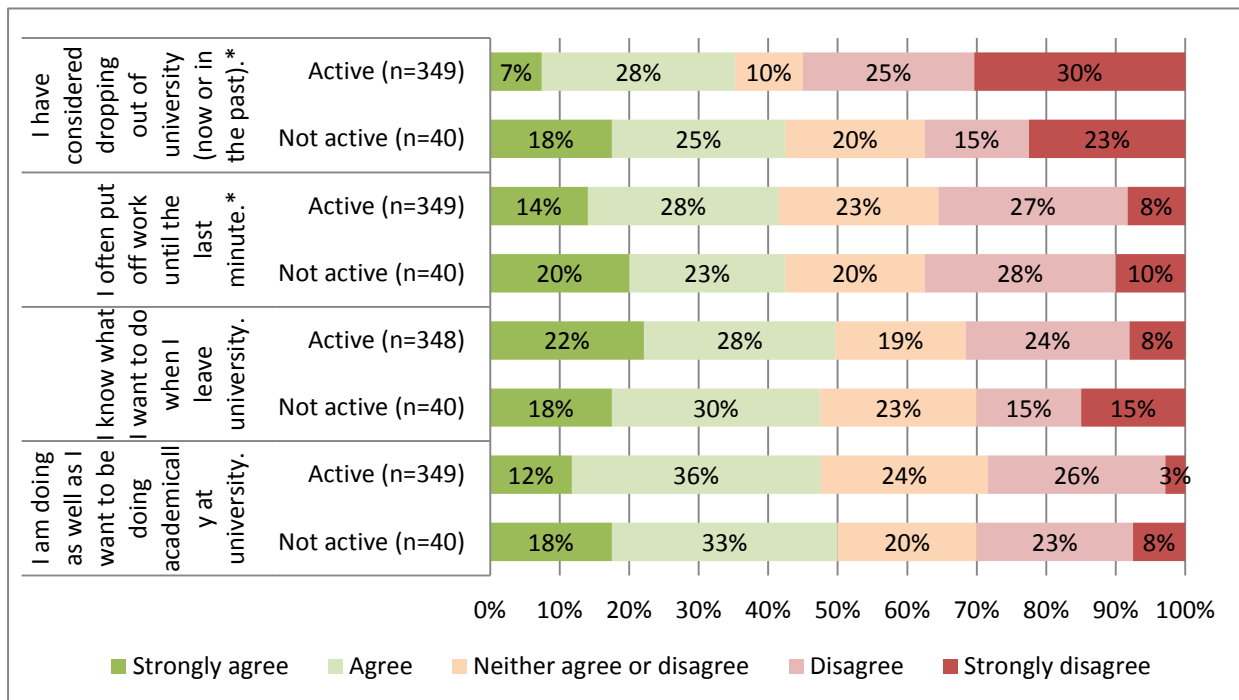


Figure 8: Achievement likert-scale statements, by current activity levels. NB: Asterisk (\*) indicates a reversed, non-positive statement.

When analysed by activity level, there are no substantial differences in the percentages of students that either agreed or disagreed, nor were there any statistically significant differences. Despite this, there is a small increase (by 8 percent) in the percentage of inactive students that have considered dropping out of university (now or in the past), see Figure 7. Numerous studies, however, have highlighted the benefits of physical activity on physical and mental wellbeing. Others have also demonstrated the impact that physical activity can have on academic achievement. As Machek & Janota found, aerobic activity has a benefit on an individual's cognitive ability, especially for female university students.<sup>15</sup> When respondents to the Healthy Hallam Survey indicated their own academic achievement, by answering what mark they received on their most recent assignment or assessment, 84 percent received a 'good' (first or upper second) grade (see Figure 9).

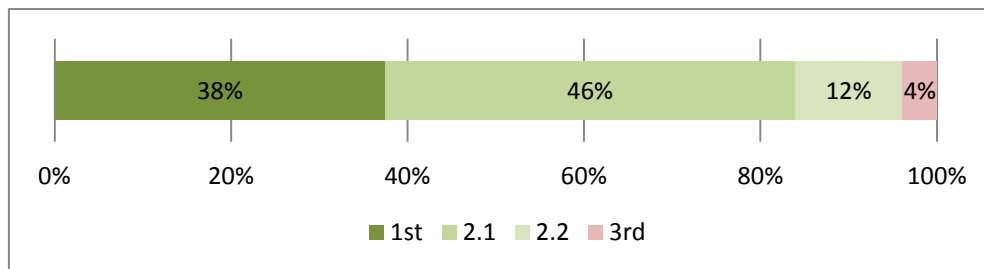


Figure 9: Most recent mark received on assignment or assessment, all respondents (n=360).

When analysed by current activity level, respondents that are not currently active had higher percentages achieving a lower second class or third (see Figure 10). As previously noted, the number of students within this survey that are not currently active is relatively low and even lower for the number of respondents that are not active that chose to share their most recent mark. Nonetheless, it is revealing that active and inactive students did not self-report similar recent marks.

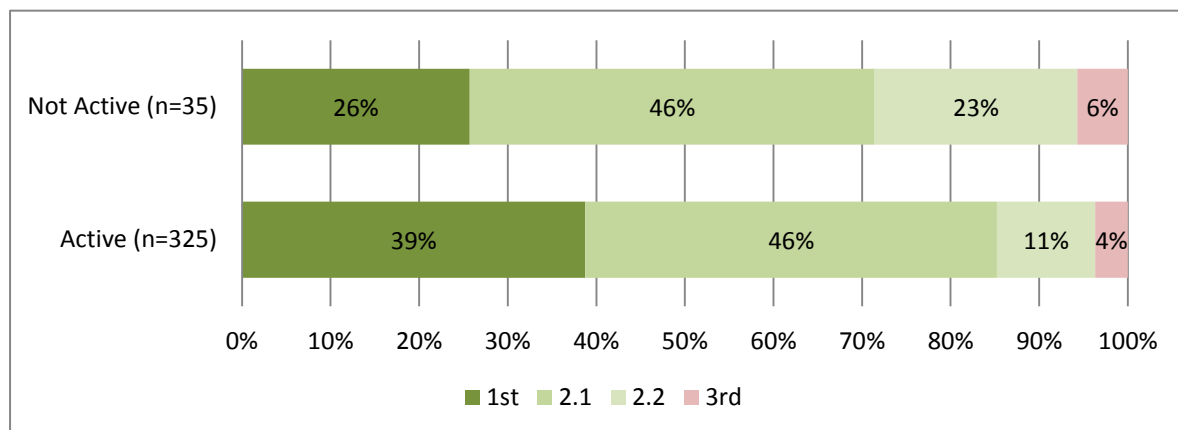


Figure 10: Percentage of respondents, by current activity level, and the most recent mark received on assignment or assessment.

<sup>15</sup> Machek, O., & Janota, J. (2019). The relationship between physical activity and academic achievement of university students. *Journal of Research in Higher Education*, 3(1), 22-36.

As with SHSU 2019 Sport & Physical Activity Survey, it was hypothesized that students that are currently active will have higher levels of confidence, regardless if that confidence is always founded. Therefore, respondents were asked to indicate how confident they felt they are in obtaining employment in their chosen field. For all respondents, 81 percent felt very confident or confident that they will obtain employment. When analysed by activity level, there is a 13 percent difference between currently active and inactive students and confidence (see Figure 11).

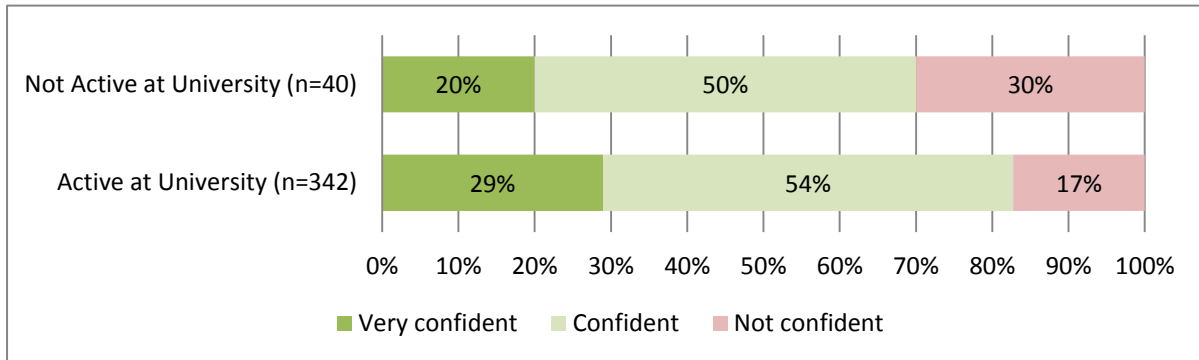


Figure 11: Confidence in ability to obtain employment in chosen field after graduation, by current activity level.

## 6. Awareness

Lastly, respondents were asked to indicate their awareness of sport and physical opportunities available to them as students at Hallam. Within this section, students were asked the following questions:

- Has your course ever mentioned sporting opportunities to you?
- Were you aware of the Sports Fair on Wednesday, 25 September 2019?
- If you've heard of sport and physical activity opportunities at SHU, where did you hear about them?
- To what extent do you agree with the following statement: The sporting opportunities available at Hallam were the deciding factor in my reason for staying at SHU.

Of all respondents, 29 percent indicated that their course had mentioned sporting opportunities to them, with the majority of these respondents from the Academy of Sport & Physical Activity (n=76), and others from Allied Health Professions (n=13). There were small numbers from other departments at Sheffield Hallam. When respondents were asked where they had heard about sporting opportunities, just over half (52%, or n=202) had heard through word of mouth. As Table 10 highlights, the Insider's Guide was the least common.

Table 10: Where respondents had heard about sport and physical activity opportunities at Sheffield Hallam University, all respondents (n=390), selecting all that apply.

Where Heard About Opportunities	Count	%
Word of Mouth	202	52%
Social Media	176	45%
The Students' Union	152	39%
University Emails	147	38%
I have not heard of any opportunities	42	11%
Insider's Guide	32	8%

In addition, the majority of all respondents (84%, or n=328) had heard about the Sports Fair on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019, though only 55 percent were able to attend the Fair. Of those that did attend: 24 percent only signed up for a club; 6 percent signed up for a club and attended a filter session; and 70 percent signed up, attended a filter session, and are now part of a club at Hallam. Of students that stayed at SHU after completing another degree or course (n=30), 17 students specified that the sporting opportunities available at Hallam was a deciding factor in their reason for staying (see Figure 12).

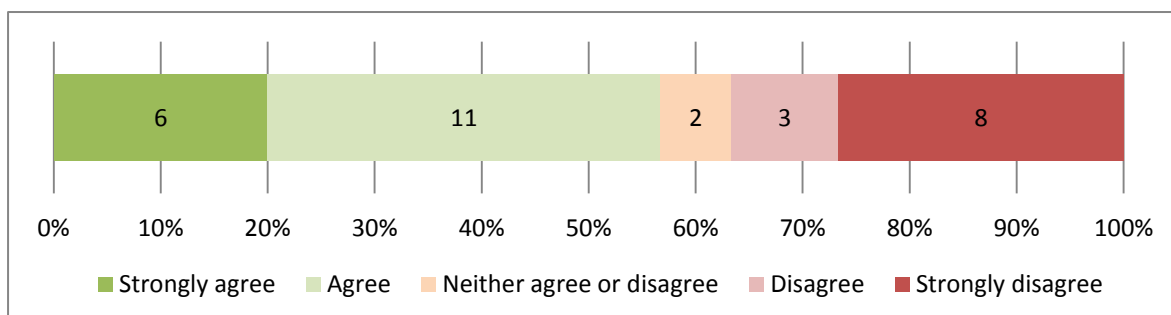


Figure 12: Number of respondents that stayed at SHU after completing a different course or degree, indicating if sporting opportunities available was a deciding factor, n=30.

## Appendix: Demographics

The following displays the demographic information of students that responded to the survey and includes the overall Sheffield Hallam population, as a comparison.

College	Survey %	SHU %
Business, Technology and Engineering	28%	30%
Health, Wellbeing and Life Sciences	42%	28%
Social Sciences and Arts	29%	42%
Unknown	1%	0%

Department	Survey %	SHU %
Allied Health Professions	8%	8%
Art & Design	3%	5%
Biosciences & Chemistry	5%	3%
Computing	4%	5%
Education, Childhood & Inclusion	2%	5%
Engineering & Mathematics	7%	6%
Finance, Accounting & Business Studies	3%	5%
Humanities	2%	4%
Law & Criminology	6%	6%
Management	9%	9%
Media Arts & Communication	3%	5%
Natural & Built Environment	4%	5%
Nursing & Midwifery	3%	11%
Psychology, Sociology & Politics	7%	5%
SBS No Department	0%	0%
Service Sector	5%	4%
Sport & Physical Activity	24%	5%
Social Work, Social Care & Community Services	1%	1%
Teacher Education	3%	6%
Unknown	1%	0%

Age Range	Survey %	SHU %
18 - 21	73%	49%
22 - 25	20%	23%
26 - 30	3%	10%
Over 30	3%	18%
Unknown	1%	0%

Age Groups	Survey %	SHU %
Mature	6%	18%
Young	93%	82%
Unknown	1%	0%

Domicile	Survey %	SHU %
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CHAN/IOM	1%	0%
EU	3%	2%
HOME	93%	86%
OVERSEAS	3%	10%
SPECIAL	0.3%	1%
Unknown	1%	1%

Mode of Study	Survey %	SHU %
Full-Time	65%	56%
Part-Time	3%	21%
Sandwich	32%	23%
Unknown	1%	0%

Gender	Survey %	SHU %
Female	65%	57%
Male	34%	43%

Student Type	Survey %	SHU %
PGC	1%	3%
PGR	1%	2%
PGT	7%	18%
UGD	91%	75%
Unknown	1%	0%

Year of Study	Survey %	SHU %
Foundation	1%	2%
First Year	34%	42%
Second Year	33%	26%
Third Year	29%	24%
Fourth Year	0%	1%
Placement	2%	3%
Unknown	1%	0%

Ethnicity (Two Way)	Survey %	SHU %
BAME	10%	25%
White	89%	74%
Unknown	1%	1%

Commuter	Survey %	SHU %
No	86%	40%
Yes	14%	48%
Unknown	0%	13%