

Students' Union Monthly Student Feedback Report

The following provides insights into queries received from our [Advice Centre](#) and Helpdesk throughout December 2021. This report also includes findings from Sheffield Hallam Students' Union's 'Hallam, How Are We Doing?' survey, which received 3363 responses, and feedback received by Department Reps in the month of December 2021.

*Table 1: The source of data used throughout this report, as well as the number of queries or participants. *Advice Centre and Helpdesk queries received between 1st and 31st December 2021. **'Hallam, How Are We Doing?' survey open from 9th to 28th November, 2021. ^Department Rep Reports impacted due to the winter break.*

Source	Number of queries/ responses
Advice Centre*	55
Helpdesk*	76
'Hallam, How Are We Doing?' Survey**	3363
Department Rep Reports^	5

Summary of this report

- The Advice Centre received 55 new enquiries, of which 19 ended up as a full case. The most common topic students sought advice on between 1st and 31st December was complaints and appeals.
- The Helpdesk received 76 enquiries between 1st and 31st December. The most common reasons sought help from the Students' Union Helpdesk was due to getting support for societies.
- The 'Hallam, How Are We Doing?' survey was open from 9th to 28th November 2021. Seventy-four percent of first year, undergraduate students indicated that their university experience so far was 'excellent' or 'good'. For those that thought their experience could improve, the highest number of negative comments were related to the organisation and management of their course. Respondents mentioned not enjoying their timetable – the mixture of virtual and on-campus learning – though student opinion was mixed on preference. Generally, students that commute preferred set timetables. Where respondents indicated they did not enjoy teaching, this was due to the use of virtual methods that were less directed or modules with too much self-directed study.
- Of the five Department Reps that provided feedback from the month of December, the majority of these were specific to courses (and provided in a separate report for College Officers and HoTLE's). All Department Reps received and provided feedback related to assessments and exams.

Monthly Statistics from the Students' Union

The Students' Union's Advice Centre received 55 new enquiries in total, of which 19 have ended up as a full case or enquiry. As a note, the Advice Centre service operated using email, web form initial contacts, phone, and in-person drop-ins throughout the month of December; this has meant that data collection figures might not be precise. The most common topics during December 2021 were **complaints and appeals**. Other reasons students contacted the Advice Centre in December 2021 include: break in study; placement problems; fitness to practice; progression problems; withdrawals;

personal/wellbeing support; and/or signposting to various services in the University or elsewhere in the Students' Union.

The Students' Union's Helpdesk received 76 enquiries; this number is down substantially from November 2021 due to the University closure over the winter break. Reasons as to why students contacted the Helpdesk include: support for societies (15); course related concerns (10); and 22 'other' queries related to room bookings, obtaining a face mask or covering due to Coronavirus, or the Totum card.

'Hallam, How Are We Doing' Survey Results

The 'Hallam, How Are We Doing' Survey was open from 9th to 28th November 2021 and received a total of 3363 responses.

Within this survey, first-year, undergraduate students were asked to indicate how they would rate their overall university experience so far. Of the 696 first-year, undergraduate respondents, 74 percent indicated that their experience has been 'excellent' or 'good' so far (see Figure 1).

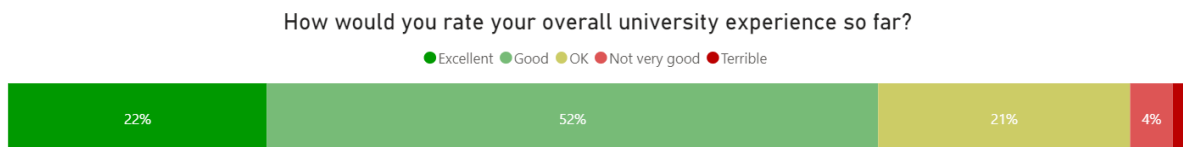


Figure 1: Rating of university experience so far for first-year, undergraduate respondents (n=696).

Whilst there were differences by demographic groups (mode of study; domicile), the number of respondents that responded that are studying part-time or are from an EU or international country were too low to make definitive conclusions. There were, however, differences by Colleges:

- College of Business, Technology & Engineering (n=200): **77%** rated their overall university experience as 'excellent' or 'good'
- College of Health, Wellbeing and Life Sciences (n=202): **76%** rated their overall university experience as 'excellent' or 'good'
- College of Social Sciences & Arts (n=281): **70%** rated their overall university experience as 'excellent' or 'good'

First-year, undergraduate respondents were then asked to provide additional comments to give context to their above response. Of the 696 first-year, undergraduate respondents, 543 added a comment. Most comments were related to their course teaching and learning, the organization and management of their course, their learning community, or the academic support received. The table below outlines each comment theme, the number of comments, and a summary of feedback received for each theme.

Theme	No. of comments	Summary of feedback
Course: teaching & learning	193 total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 141 positives • 53 negatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive comments mentioned high-quality teaching, enjoyment of course content, or enjoyment of teaching methods.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negative comments mentioned dissatisfaction with teaching methods used, especially when delivered virtually, too much self-directed study, or dissatisfaction with particular module(s).
Organisation & management	77 total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 positives 68 negatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive comments referred to enjoying their timetable or the mixture of on-campus and virtual learning. Negative comments referred to not enjoying their timetable and specifically mentioned the mixture of on-campus and virtual learning. There was no consistent theme of preference across students, though as referenced in 'General comments' theme below, students that reported satisfaction overall highlighted being on campus. There were some commenters that mentioned being 'commuters' with a slight preference for virtual learning (or a mixture with one day on campus, one day virtual, etc).
Learning community	119 total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 87 positives 32 negatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive comments mentioned the friends (either in their course or made elsewhere from university) that have made their experience at Sheffield Hallam enjoyable. Negative comments mentioned the difficulty in making friends, especially for students that were learning virtually for part of their course.
Academic support	77 total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 55 positives 22 negatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive comments referred to the excellent support received for academic queries, with some specific reference to Academic Adviser or their module or course leaders. Negative comments mentioned the lack of response or care received from lecturers, module or course leaders.
Student support	34 comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 comments were positive and mentioned specific support services that have helped them (e.g. disabled student support, Hallam Help). 24 comments were negative and mentioned either specific support services that they want more help from (e.g. wellbeing services, disabled

		student support) or unaware of services available.
Assessment & feedback	31 comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nearly all comments, except one, mentioned stress and overwhelm as a result of their assessment deadlines or exams.
Students' Union services	20 comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 comments were positive and mentioned friends made through societies or Students' Union events 10 comments were negative and mentioned the lack of Students' Union presence in the form of student nights or lack of awareness of joining societies.
Accommodation	18 comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13 comments were positive, with respondents citing relationships built via flatmates or others in their accommodation. 6 comments were negative and mentioned difficulties with their flatmates or dissatisfaction with placement allocation.
Coronavirus	17 comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These comments were from students that felt their course was going well and that they do want more from their university experience, but recognised there is nothing to change because it is a result of Coronavirus, rather than anything the University can change.
Commercial outlets at SHU or in city	12 comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 comments were positive and mentioned the wide availability of student-friendly night life in the city. 7 comments were negative and mentioned the lack of food availability around campus or that the food options on or around campus were too expensive.
Inclusivity	10 comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 10 comments stated that Sheffield Hallam felt like a welcoming space where respondents felt that they could be themselves.
Financial support or need	10 comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 10 comments mentioned specific financial struggles which are impacted studies; though some commenters have jobs, the balance of working enough hours to pay for their course, whilst also studying was a clear worry for these students.
Communication	10 comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 comments were positive and mentioned specifically the

		<p>communication from the University (either academic or non-academic staff).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 comments were negative and felt that communication could improve. The comments varied: communication between students and lecturers; communication between enrolment team and students; or communication on support services available or where to get help.
Sport & activity	6 comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 6 comments were positive and mentioned enjoyment with sport offer and atmosphere and ability to make friends.
Employability & skills	4 comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 comment was positive and mentioned the importance of their course in relation to skill development. 3 comments were from students with busy timetables and who would like to do more for their CV development (e.g. volunteer, society) but are unable to due to time constraints.
General comments	156 total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 124 positives 32 negatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive comments were from respondents that are generally satisfied with Sheffield Hallam for a wide-variety of reasons: their course, their learning community; the academic support given to them. Negative comments were from respondents that were dissatisfied with their course or, generally, felt that everything was 'okay' or 'could be better' without explanations.

Department Rep Feedback

Due to the winter break, only five Department Reps completed their monthly report: Finance, Accounting & Business Systems (BTE); Service Sector Management (BTE); Biosciences & Chemistry (HWLS); Social Work & Social Care & Community Studies (HWLS); and Humanities (SSA). As and when new issues arise from other Department Reps, these will be made available to colleagues. Although the following is an overview of the feedback received, a detailed supplemental document will be supplied for Heads of Teaching & Learning Enhancement in each College.

- Concerns with teaching and learning were raised by the Department Reps in Social Work, Social Care & Community Studies (SWSC) and Biosciences & Chemistry (Bio & Chem). SWSC students shared concerns with changes in delivery due to the Coronavirus, with a preference for on-campus teaching. Bio & Chem students have mixed feelings about delivery, though Course Reps stated that continuing on-campus seminars, and more interactive virtual lectures, would be fine. Students in Finance, Accounting & Business Systems (FABS) shared

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that, generally, they feel satisfied with the mixture of virtual and on-campus teaching methods.

- All five Department Reps had feedback from students about exams and assessments. SWSC students shared concerns about a deadline on 5th January, which meant that obtaining support for this was difficult. Some Bio & Chem students are concerned with heavy workloads and have requested a reading week. Similarly, Service Sector Management (SSM) students feel that deadlines are close together or on the same day.
- There were some minor difficulties with technology: SWSC students shared that one of the courses Blackboard sites not working correctly and a course in Bio & Chem is having difficulty with computer use.
- Two Department Reps (Bio & Chem and SSM) shared that students on some courses are dissatisfied with their timetable. Bio & Chem course shared that they do not have enough time allocated for independent study and SSM students have difficulty attending evening sessions, where they have children or caring responsibilities, and taking part or attending sport when Wednesday afternoons are timetabled.
- SSM students dissatisfied with support received on finding jobs or graduate jobs; Handshake is difficult to navigate, and the virtual careers fair did not feel adequate.

END.