

## Students' Union Monthly Student Feedback Report

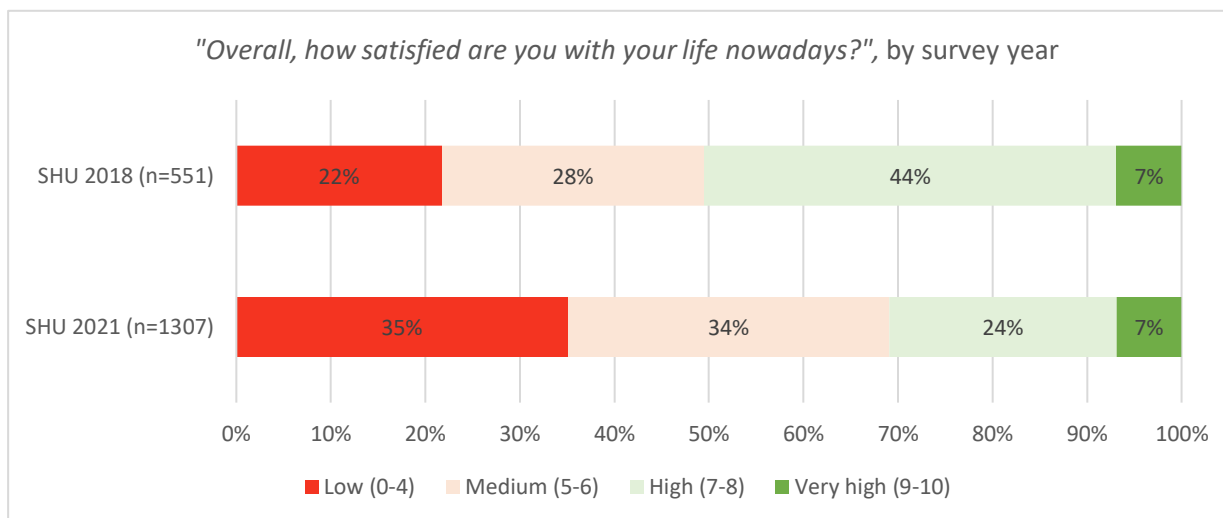
The following provides insights into the most noteworthy issues faced by Sheffield Hallam students in March 2021. This month, the report contains information from our [Advice Centre](#) and Helpdesk, as well as some results from the [‘Being Well, Doing Well’](#) survey (which was open for six weeks between 25 January and 8 March 2021). This survey asked students questions about their mental health and wellbeing and their opinions on university and union services. Sheffield Hallam Students' Union conducted this same research in 2018, alongside a consortium of 13 other Students' Unions across the country. As a follow-on and to investigate changes in wellbeing since, the same survey was distributed to our current student body. Therefore, this report shares selected data comparing 2018 and 2021 results.

**Table 1:** The source and number of enquiries or responses used for this report.  
 \*These enquiries were received between 1-21 March 2021. \*\*This survey was open from 25 January – 8 March 2021.

Source	Number of queries/ respondents
Advice Centre	72*
Helpdesk	81*
‘Being Well, Doing Well’ Survey	1307**

### Wellbeing

Respondents to the ‘Being Well, Doing Well’ survey were asked to indicate their life satisfaction on a scale (0 – extremely unsatisfied and 10 – extremely satisfied). As the below figure displays, the percentages of respondents that indicated they have low life satisfaction nowadays increased by 13 percent and those with medium life satisfaction increased by 6 percent, between 2018 and 2021.

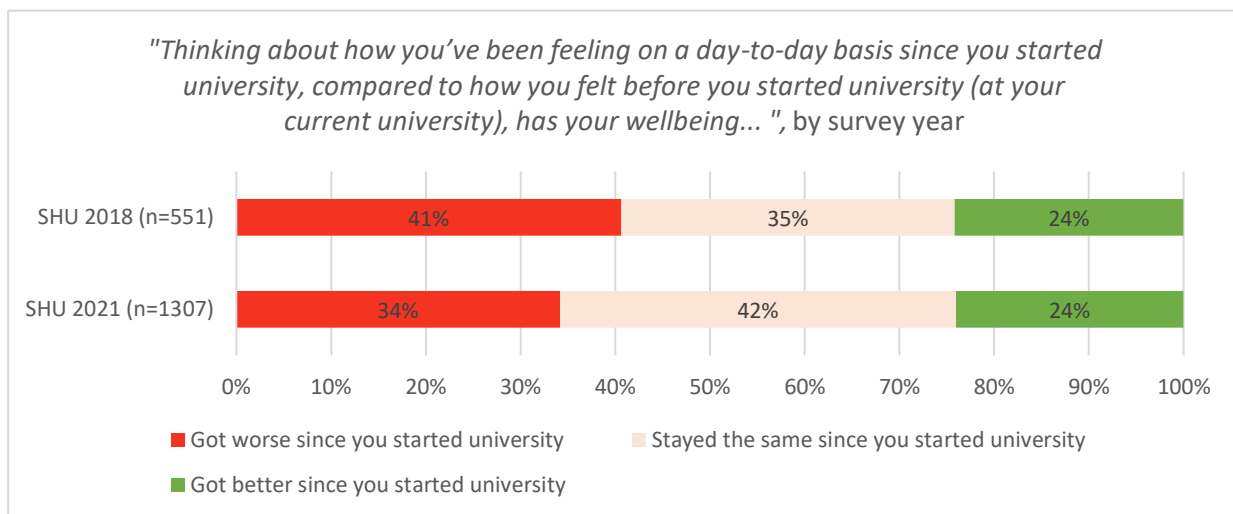


When Sheffield Hallam is compared to national data from the ‘Being Well, Doing Well’ survey in the 2019/20 academic year, 19 percent of respondents nationally indicated that they had low satisfaction.

Furthermore, by demographics, the following groups of students have the highest proportion of respondents with low life satisfaction (from 0 to 4 on the scale):

- Has a disability (49% indicated low life satisfaction)
- Foundation year (47% indicated low life satisfaction)
- LGBT+ students (45% indicated low life satisfaction)
- Undergraduate, 2<sup>nd</sup> year (43% indicated low life satisfaction)
- Undergraduate, 4<sup>th</sup> year or above (42% indicated low life satisfaction)

As an additional measure of wellbeing, respondents were asked to indicate if their overall mental wellbeing had improved, become worse, or stayed the same since starting their course at Sheffield Hallam University. As displayed below, comparing 2021 to 2018, a lower percentage of respondents indicated that their wellbeing had become worse since started university and a higher percentage indicated that it stayed the same.



By demographics, the following groups had the highest proportion of students whose wellbeing had worsened since starting university:

- Has a disability (48% indicated their wellbeing has become worse)
- Living in university accommodation (41% indicated their wellbeing has become worse)
- Undergraduate, 1<sup>st</sup> year (40% indicated their wellbeing has become worse)
- Respondents with no religion (39% indicated their wellbeing has become worse)

By demographics, the following groups had the highest proportion of students whose wellbeing has become better since university:

- Postgraduate students (25% indicated their wellbeing has improved)
- Asian or Asian Mixed students (23% indicated their wellbeing has improved)
- Living in privately rented accommodation in another town (22% indicated their wellbeing has improved)
- International students (18% indicated their wellbeing has improved)

Respondents were also asked to respond to questions about suicide ideation. Comparing 2018 to 2021 results, there are no major differences (see Table 2). The question about taking one’s own life has changed slightly from 2018 and this has meant that the percentage of respondents that indicated ‘yes’ to this decreased by 19 percent.

Table 2: Percentage of respondents, by survey year, that indicated ‘yes’.

Survey year	Have you ever thought of taking your life, even if you would not really do it?	Have you ever seriously considered taking your own life?	Have you ever deliberately harmed yourself in any way but not with the intention of killing yourself?	Have you ever made an attempt to take your life?
2018 (n=551)	51.4%	-	35.2%	11.8%
2021 (n=1307)	-	32.8%	33.1%	11.9%

Next, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed (including strongly agreed and agreed) with the following statements. Comparing 2021 to 2018, there is a lower percentage of respondents that felt part of a community of staff and students in 2021. There is, however, an increase of 9 percent in 2021 where respondents felt that course tutors/lecturers are very supportive of students experiencing mental health problems.

Table 3: Percentage of respondents, by survey year, that agreed (including strongly agree and agree).

Survey year	NSS Q21	University Support		
	I feel part of a community of staff and students	Course tutors/ lecturers at my university are very supportive of students experiencing mental health problems	Non-academic staff at my university are very supportive of students experiencing mental health problems	My students’ union is very supportive of students experiencing mental health problems
2018 (n=551)	53.4%	37.7%	35.8%	35.6%
2021 (n=1307)	42.5%	46.7%	32.1%	35.3%

Furthermore, when asked about the publicity of mental health support at Sheffield Hallam University and the Students' Union, over half of respondents (55%) agreed that the university has well publicised information about mental health support available, though there has been a 3 percent decrease from 2018 to 2021. Just under half of respondents agreed that the Students' Union has well publicised information, with an increase from 2018 of just 0.3 percent.

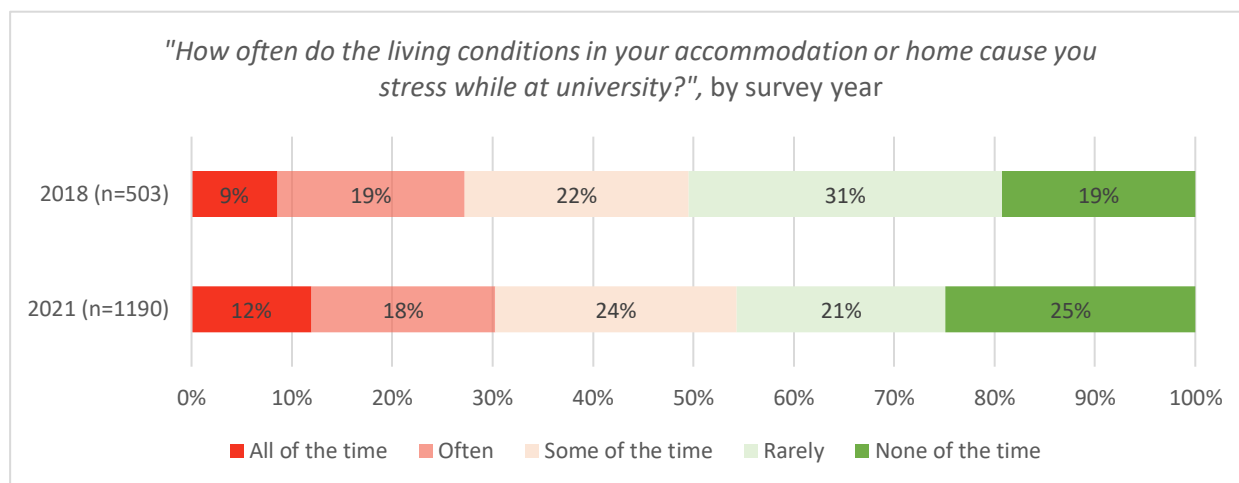
Table 4: Percentage of respondents, by survey year, that agreed (including strongly agreed or agreed).

Survey year	My university has well publicised information about mental health support available at my institution	My students' union has well publicised information about mental health support available at my institution
2018 (n=551)	57.9%	46.1%
2021 (n=1307)	55.0%	46.4%

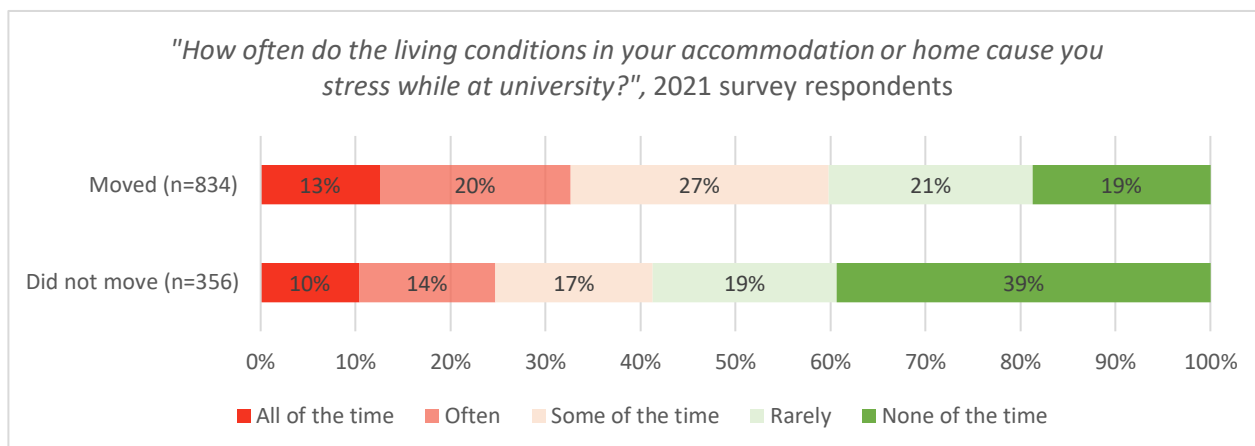
### Accommodation

Between 1 and 21 March, our Advice Centre received 22 new enquiries and our Helpdesk received 10 queries from students regarding their housing and accommodation. The majority of these students sought advice about leaving their accommodation contracts due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

The 'Being Well, Doing Well' survey asked the extent of stress that different aspects might cause in an one's life. When the question about housing and accommodation was analysed, by survey year, there were slight increases from 2018 to 2021 in the percentages of students that indicated that the living conditions in their accommodation or home caused them stress while at university.

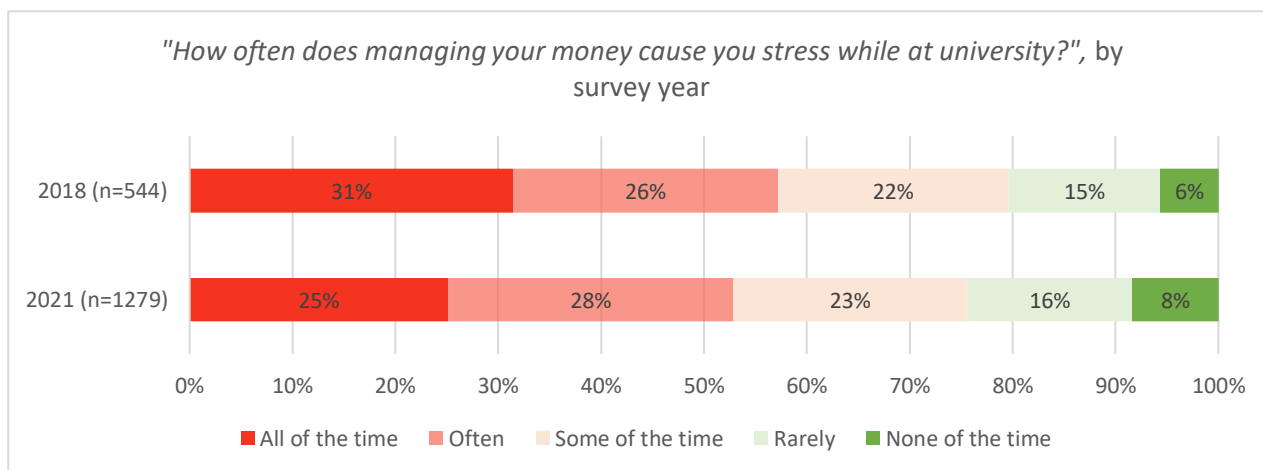


Though, when the 2021 data is separated by respondents who changed living arrangements when starting at Sheffield Hallam, the difference in student experience is clear. As the below figure shows, 39 percent of respondents that did not move indicated that their accommodation or home did not cause them any stress, whilst those that did move had a different experience.



**Finance & Funding**

Between 1 and 21 March, our Advice Centre received 21 new enquiries and our Helpdesk had 6 students get in contact in relation to their finances, with the majority of these students seeking hardship funding information and advice. The 'Being Well, Doing Well' survey also asked respondents the extent of stress that managing their money caused them. As the below figure displays, comparing 2018 to 2021, a lower percentage of students indicated that managing their money is causing them stress less often (57% indicated all of the time or often in 2018 and 53% indicated all of the time or often in 2021 – a decrease by 4 percent). Considering the impact that the Coronavirus pandemic has had on some student's employment, this finding is especially interesting, though the data is not too dissimilar between each academic year.



26 March 2021

### Conclusion

The remainder of the 'Being Well, Doing Well' results are currently being analysed and will be shared with Students' Union and University colleagues throughout the coming months. The further analysis will look, of course, at the difference in survey years for each question, but will also review the differences in wellbeing of students that are currently experiencing mental health difficulties and those who are not or never have.

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