STUDENT EXPERIENCE: MEASURING EXPECTATIONS AND OUTCOMES

Universities UK

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

There is a growing public and policy interest in the experience of and outcomes for students studying at university. Students need information so that that they can make informed choices about where to study. Universities need information to review and innovate in their teaching and learning practices. Government and the public want to be assured that the sector delivers value to students, wider society and the economy.

Overall students appear satisfied with their studies at university, with 86% of students reporting that they are satisfied with their course. However, it is important that the collection of data about the experience of students studying at university continues to evolve to meet the evolving needs and priorities of its users. This report aims to contribute to this discussion by exploring potential avenues for development.

It sets out the aspects of the student experience that are covered by existing sector surveys. It goes on to review the extent to which current students are satisfied with each of these individual elements. It then considers how student perspectives on these different elements may evolve. It concludes with recommendations for consideration as part of the development of the sector's data collection.

It proposes that there is an opportunity for sector data collections to incorporate an assessment of the relative priorities and weights that students ascribe to different aspects of study. This would involve:

  i.   Gathering feedback from students on the importance they attach to different elements of the university experience

  ii.   Developing a better understanding of how the weighting and rating of these different elements may change over time, including for/from graduates

By considering these elements, data collections can enable the sector to focus on what students and graduates value the most in terms of achieving their academic, social and career goals.

2. THE STUDENT VOICE AND DATA COLLECTION

Assessing the experience of students studying at university is at the heart of current higher education policy initiatives. The Teaching Excellence Framework plans to use sector surveys to inform judgements about the learning experience offered by different institutions, in order to inform student choice and incentivise investment in teaching. Similarly, the quality assessment system being introduced in England will use student-centred metrics to identify where external oversight might be required.

Table 1: Student and graduate surveys

|	Subject	Respondents/timing
National Student Survey (HEFCE)	Academic experience	Final year undergraduates
HEPI-HEA Student Academic Experience Survey	Academic experience	Full-time undergraduate students (all years)
Times Higher Education Student Experience Survey	Academic, social, career-related services	Full-time undergraduate students (all years)
Longitudinal Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (HESA)	Career outcomes	Graduates (all levels), three years after completing their course

Universities respond to over 525 data requests from over 90 organisations. However, surveys of the 'student voice' play an important role in offering prospective applicants important information about an institution and course. Surveys such as the National Student Survey (NSS) also play an important role in institutional self-evaluation in order to improve what they do and offer to students. Given this importance it is essential that these exercises collect the right content at the right time.

Surveys, such as the NSS and Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE), are designed with extensive sector input. Current surveys focus on asking students to evaluate pre-selected elements of their university experience. However, they tend not to identify or weigh what students find important for achieving particular goals and outcomes. In addition surveys tend to limit their focus to a single point in the student journey, with less scope for exploring how graduates evaluate their overall university experience.

3. OVERALL STUDENT SATISFACTION

Current surveys tell us that, overall, students are quite satisfied with their experience at university. The NSS suggests that course satisfaction is at a near all-time high. This is also borne out by surveys of international students. These find that international students are more likely to recommend higher education in the UK than in any of the other major English-speaking countries that are the UK's main competitors for recruitment.

Figure 1: Course satisfaction, 2010 to 2015
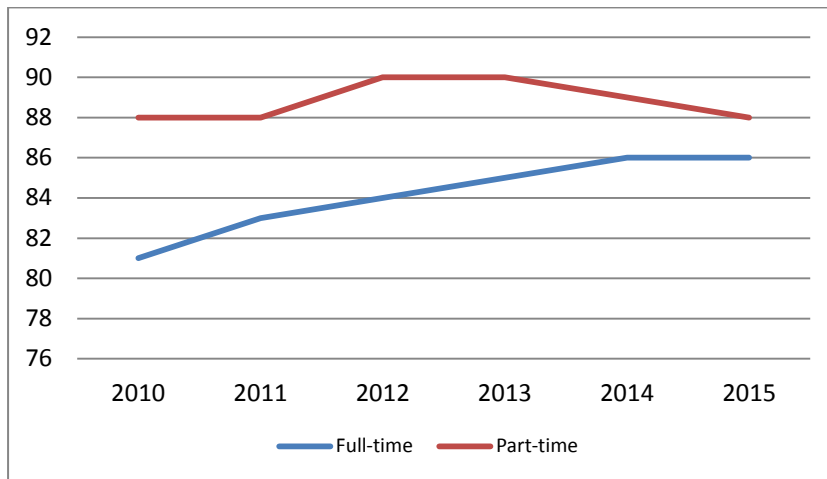
Source: National Student Survey, 2010-2015

Figure 2: International undergraduate experience, 2014
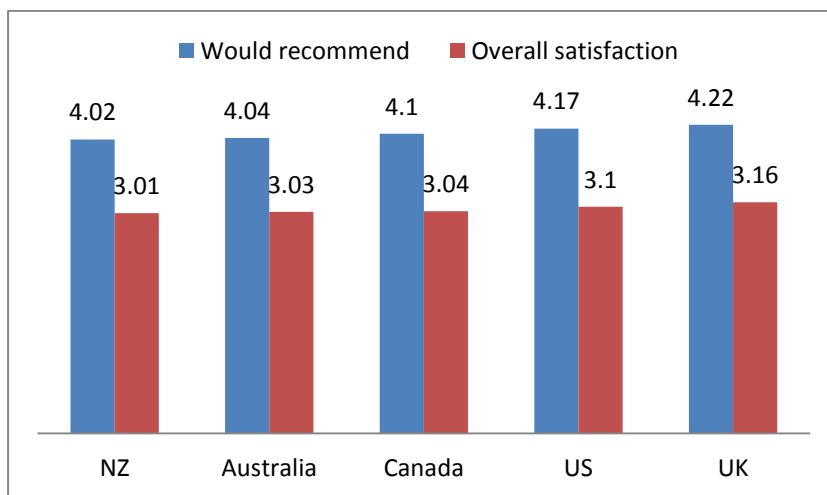
Source: International Student Barometer, undergraduate international students, 2013-14

A course being poorly organised is the number one reason (33%) for university not meeting a student's overall expectations. This is followed by the volume of contact hours, at 31%; support for independent study (29%) and teaching quality (29%). However, overall satisfaction with the course tends to outperform the extent to which students report that a course is well organised and running smoothly (77%). This suggests that overall satisfaction is based on a combination of factors.

The overall rating does not provide granular detail about how students' experience aligned with their motivations for study. Career-related goals dominate students' motivations for attending university, while teaching and learning experience is the priority while at university. However, overall satisfaction with courses is also shaped by a range of social and career-related aspects of the university experience. The following sections unpack how these elements are covered by relevant surveys and attempts to delineate between distinct components.

4. ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

Most research into the student experience focuses on aspects of teaching and learning that contribute to academic development. This gauges the extent to which students feel they have grown intellectually and can achieve academic goals. Surveys cover two broad sub-categories: teaching and learning, and learning facilities. The first of the sub-categories – teaching and learning – can be further sorted into three different groups: teacher/lecturer characteristics, teaching/learning methods, and feedback and assessment.

Table 2: Academic development

Teaching and learning			Learning facilities
Teacher/lecturer characteristics	**Teaching/learning methods**	**Feedback and assessment**	
- Teaching skills - Accessibility - Interaction/support - Enthusiasm for subject - Teaching qualifications - Academic qualifications - Practical experience - Research record	- Class sizes - Lecture content/frequency - Interactive teaching groups - Structured teaching methods - Independent learning or responsibility for own learning - Level of challenge	*From staff* - Frequency - Timing - Content - Method - Clarity/helpfulness - Clear expectations set in advance *To staff* - Frequency - Content - Acted upon	-E-library access -Library facilities -Learning spaces -Work/practice facilities -Course organisation/management (e.g. timetable organisation; communication)

Teacher/lecturer characteristics include elements that focus on individual teaching staff and teams such as skills, enthusiasm and accessibility. Teaching and learning methods, while directed by academic staff, focus on organisational and pedagogical aspects, including course organisation, class sizes and frequency, and design of classes. Contact hours sit between the two as timetabled learning (eg lectures, seminars or tutorials) and accessibility of staff.

Quality of feedback and assessment also overlap with teacher/lecturer characteristics and institutional or departmental teaching and learning strategy. Assessment allows students to test their ability to theorise, structure and produce a specific argument or output. Feedback provides students with formative markers and guidelines about how their work addresses these areas and could be improved. Assessment and feedback also enables evaluation of teaching strategies and outcomes.

Feedback, including clarification and debate, is the third pillar of teaching typically assessed by surveys. Through close engagement with a theory or topic the student is offered a deeper form of learning and the teacher can acquire a deeper understanding of their own methods. Some students and subjects benefit from live, in-person feedback that can immediately be put into practice. Others might benefit from written feedback that allows for a longer, slower process of reflection and implementation.

The second sub-category, learning facilities, is more easily defined but still incorporates consideration of availability and quality. It includes physical resources, such as libraries, learning spaces and labs, as well as IT-based learning facilities. It also includes the facilities and services that structure the academic experience, such as course management and organisation issues: registration, timetabling, departmental-level communication and so on.

4.1 WEIGHTING OF CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS

Overall, issues related to teacher and lecturer characteristics appear to matter most to students, particularly the skill, accessibility and enthusiasm of teaching staff. Building on this, teaching and learning methods, including the design of programmes, is a close second. These priorities are based on the importance students give to interaction in classes. This is viewed as being beneficial for academic development as well as supporting development of social capital and transferable skills.

A 2012 research exercise conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and National Union of Students (NUS) asked university students to rate the importance of 'a good quality teaching and learning experience.' The top three answers were lecturers/tutors' teaching skills (90.6%), interactive group teaching sessions/tutorials (83.4%) and library support (78.4%). The least important were availability of internet discussion forums (48%) and lecturer's research record (47.7%).

Figure 3: Percentage of students reporting factor is important for learning and teaching experience
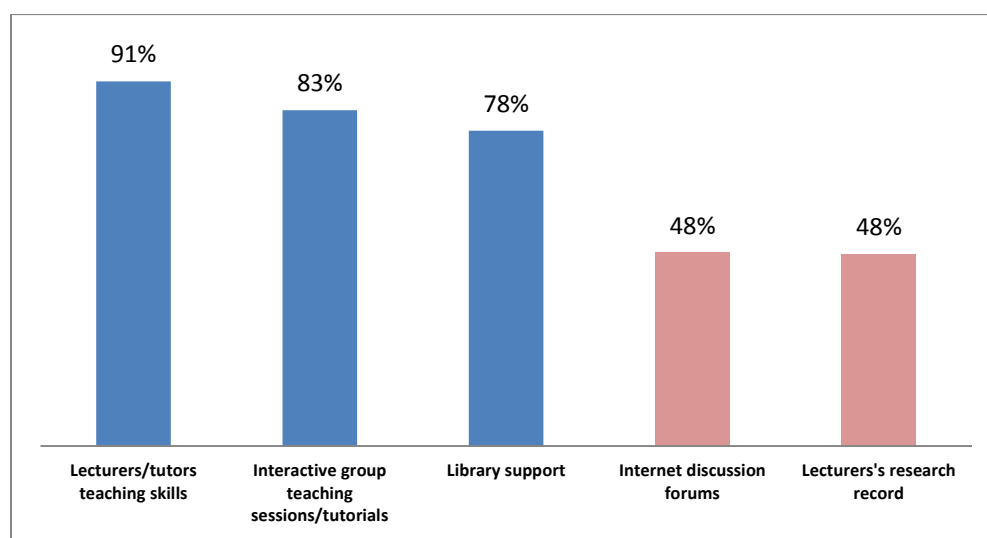
Source: NUS-QAA Student Experience Research: Teaching and Learning, 2012

The 2016 Times Higher Education Student Experience Survey similarly asked students to weigh different facets of the academic experience they characterised as 'very important'. These all fell within the 'teacher/lecturer characteristics' group, including: high quality staff/lecturers, helpful interested staff and well-structured

courses. Similarly students in the HEPI-HEA survey ranked relevant experience first (44%), followed by teacher training (39%).

The evidence presents a mixed picture on the importance of class sizes: while NUS-QAA respondents ascribed this mid-level importance, *Times Higher* respondents indicated that this was less important. Respondents to the NUS-QAA survey suggested that students primarily value interaction and staff-student interaction. Based on this, contact time and class size are given high and mid-level priority as the features that are likely to deliver these opportunities.

The UK student body is far from a homogenous entity and, reflecting on the overall challenge of fostering satisfaction within such a diverse landscape, these results vary according to student background, subject and institutional type: for example the HEPI-HEA survey indicates that 65% of maths students ranked teacher training the most important of the three staff characteristics, as compared to the 66% of creative arts and design students, to whom relevant industry experience is more of a plus, although these sample sizes are not necessarily representative.

**Table 3: Academic development: element weighting**

Heavily weighed	Mid-level importance	Less important
Teacher/lecturer characteristics - Skilled teaching staff - Enthusiastic teaching staff - Accessible and helpful teaching staff *Teaching/learning methods* - Interactive teaching in seminars/tutorials - Well-structured courses *Learning facilities* - Library support	*Teacher/lecturer characteristics* - Academic qualifications - Range of lecturers - Contact time with personal tutor *Teaching/learning methods* - Individual teaching sessions - Class sizes - Study skills training *Learning facilities* - Practical work facilities	*Teacher/lecturer characteristics* - Lecturer's research record *Teaching/learning methods* - Internet discussion forums - Small group tuition - Fair workload *Learning facilities* - Library (physical)

There is a gap in terms of specific assessment of the value placed on independent study by students. Proxies for this measure may include course organisation and learning facilities. However, while students responding to the NUS-QAA survey tagged library support as one of the most important elements, the 2016 *Times Higher* survey rated the library as 'not important'. However the interpretation of this finding may include availability of academic resources and the physical environment.

4.2 CURRENT STUDENT VIEWS

Universities perform well overall in relation to elements valued by students for academic development, particularly lecturer characteristics like enthusiasm, accessibility and structured teaching. There is less evidence on interaction in class but what is available suggests that there is some work to be done to develop more consistency across programmes. The surveys also suggest students believe they would benefit from more personal face-to-face feedback about their work and progress.

Figure 4: 'My academic experience is better/better in some ways than I expected'
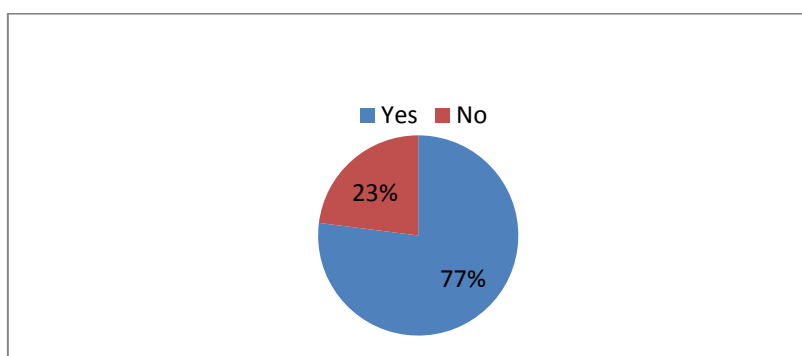
Students report high levels of satisfaction with teacher and lecturer characteristics – particularly staff enthusiasm and accessibility – and compare well with international systems. 90% of full-time students reported that 'Staff are good at explaining things' and 84% reported that 'Staff have made the subject interesting' – measures that have increased since 2010. 87% of students responded to the NSS, and 84% to a UUK survey, that they are able to contact staff when needed. International students also rate teaching in the UK higher than for New Zealand, Australia, Canada or the United States.

Figure 5: National Student Survey 2015
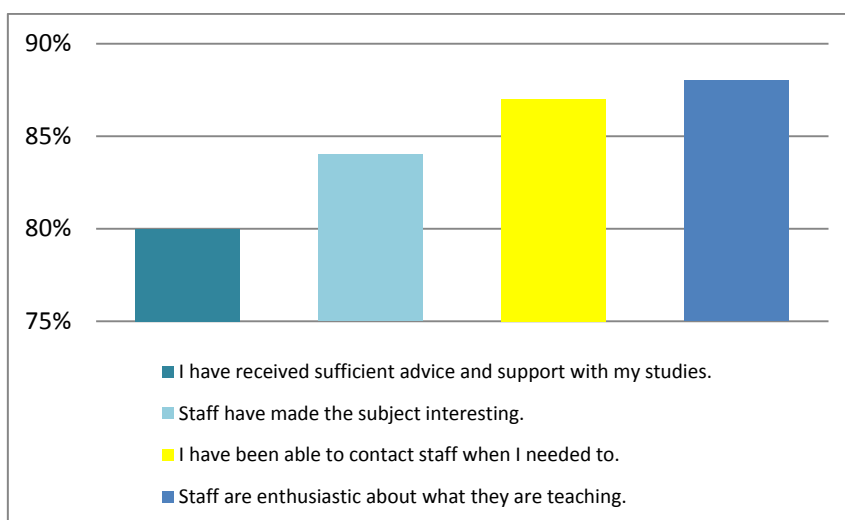
Students are also positive about other heavily weighted aspects of teaching and learning methods, but with some reservations. According to the 2015 HEPI-HEA survey 76% of students believe their courses are well structured. Similarly 68% of students reported to the HEPI-HEA survey that between half or all of their teaching staff regularly initiated debate and discussion. However, more than half of students told NUS-QAA research that they would like more interactive classes, including 42% and 43% wanting more individual tutorials or contact time with a personal tutor respectively.

Students are positive about learning facilities such as library support, which is also heavily weighted. The 2015 NSS found that 88% of students found the library resources and service 'good enough for [their] needs' and that 89% felt they 'have been able to access general IT resources' when needed; in 2010, these figures were 81% and 84%, respectively. UK universities also appear to excel on an international level: international undergraduates ranked the UK top for physical and online libraries, laboratories, and learning spaces.

Figure 6: NSS learning resources, 2010 and 2015
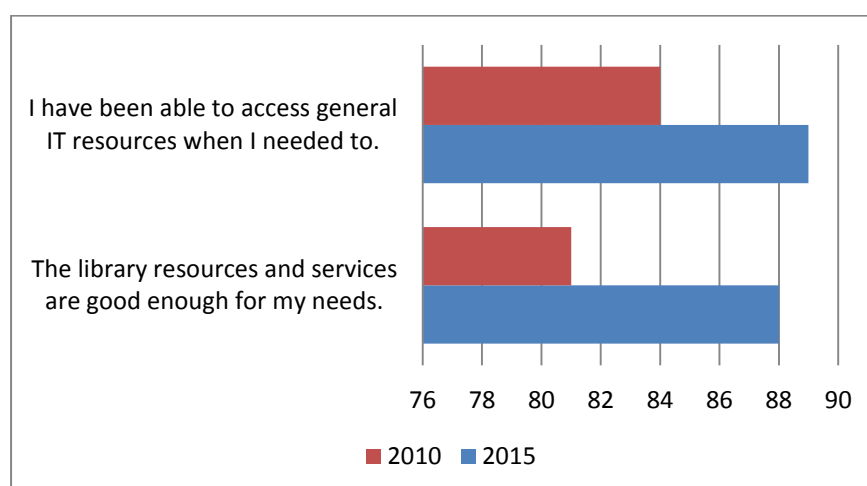
The student view of feedback and assessment that does not count toward final grades is frequently surveyed. However, students give a more mixed picture in comparison to accessibility and enthusiasm. In 2015, 77% of NSS respondents reported that assessment and marking criteria are fair and 67% reported that feedback has helped them clarify things they didn't understand. This is an area of significant improvement from 2010, when these figures were 72% and 57%, respectively. International students gave UK institutions a score of 3.03 for performance feedback, slightly below Canada and the United States, and in learning support they scored second from the top, just behind the United States.

Figure 7: NSS feedback and marking, 2010 and 2015
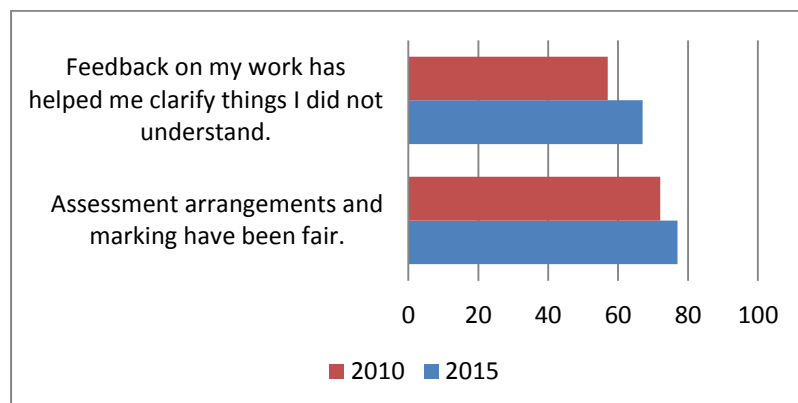
The ideal format and content of feedback is likely to vary from subject to subject, for example between courses that focus on practical or written outputs. NUS-QAA research found that 66% of students would like more verbal feedback from teaching staff, alongside over 50% who would like more individual meetings with tutors. 68% of students indicated they would like more staggered assessment, as opposed to heavily weighted essays and exams conducted towards the end of their course.

HEA UK Engagement Survey

The HEA UK Engagement Survey surveys aspects of learning that are closely linked with good learning outcomes. It assesses the amount and quality of effort students have invested in their studies, and the extent to which their institution and course have supported and encouraged them to engage. It is designed as an internal enhancement tool and individual institutional results are not made public.

Initial analysis of the 2015 survey reported the highest level of engagement in 'higher' learning activities, including responsibility for their own learning and learning things that change the way they think about issues. Students were less engaged in other areas, such as talking to staff about their career plans, contributing to a staff-student community, and working with staff to evaluate teaching and assessment practices.

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5. SOCIAL CAPITAL

The student experience is predicated on more than teaching and learning. Universities can challenge students socially and culturally, by pushing them to collaborate, socialise and often live with new people who may come from different backgrounds. These extracurricular elements of the student experience are valuable from a purely social and personal perspective. In addition university can also help to build networks that can be valuable throughout a career while also fostering skills related to leadership, teamwork, creativity, and problem solving.

To understand the extent to which an institution fosters these different elements of social capital requires an assessment of direct development opportunities and indirect development opportunities. While direct development gauges the availability of student societies, sports clubs and services, indirect aspects are typically provided through – but not directly in the control of – an institution. This includes the opportunity to make friends, engage with new cultures and engage in the broader university community.

Table 4: Social capital

Formal development	Informal development
- Student societies - Sports clubs/facilities - Students' union - Student services	-New friends -Multicultural campus -Campus atmosphere

5.1 WEIGHTING OF CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS

How important are direct and indirect opportunities for social development? Five of the nine 'very important' elements of the student experience identified by students responding to the 2016 *Times Higher* survey related to social and extracurricular activities. Two of these – personal requirements catered for and good extra-curricular activities – might be categorised as direct (student services provided and extracurricular activities on offer) while the remaining three appear indirect: good social life, good community atmosphere and good environment on campus.

Table 5: Social capital: element weighting

| Heavily weighed	Mid-level importance	Less important
Direct - Extra-curricular activities - Student Services *Indirect* - Campus atmosphere - Social life	*Direct* - Student Union	*Direct* - Sports facilities

Direct elements such as the students' union, accommodation and security are ascribed mid-level importance, while sports facilities are deemed not important. It is important, however, to consider possible variation in these findings across not only different subject areas but different types of campuses as well, highlighting the importance of institutional-level engagement with their own student bodies and alumni, in addition to national-level student research.

5.2 CURRENT STUDENT VIEWS

In terms of the elements that matter most, both direct and indirect, UK universities perform extremely well, on average exceeding their counterparts in the main English-speaking systems. When asked to rate their institution's clubs and societies on a scale of 1 to 5, international undergraduates in the UK gave their institutions an average score of 3.31, higher than those in the United States, New Zealand, Australia or Canada. UK institutions also received top scores for the campus environment, their multicultural character and generally being a 'good place to be.'

Figure 8: International students' extracurricular experience, 2014
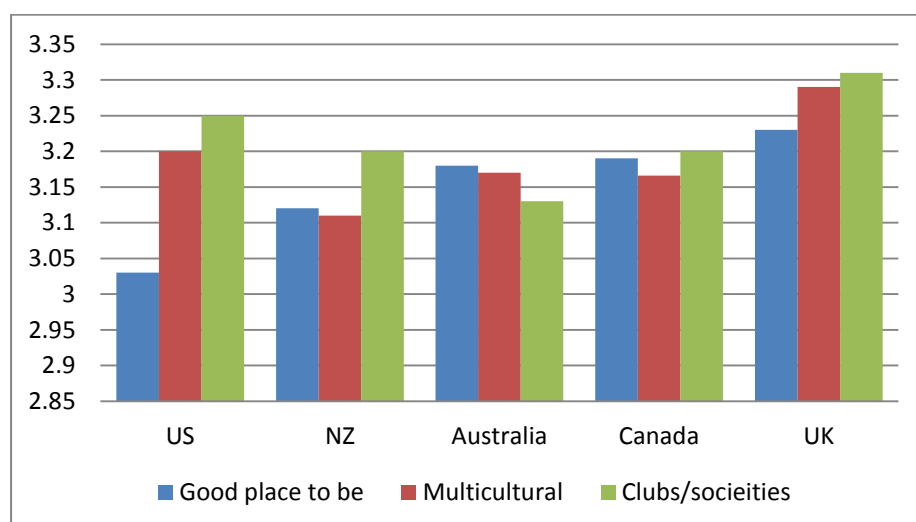
Domestic surveys provide less information on the quality or quantity of student societies and services. However, the 2016 Times Higher Education Student Experience Survey indicates that, on average, students are very satisfied with the extracurricular activities on offer at their universities: on a scale of 1 to 7 they rated these 5.7. They are also very satisfied with student support and welfare services, another highly weighted direct opportunity, ascribing these 5.6 out of 7.

Figure 9: Times Higher Education survey, 2016
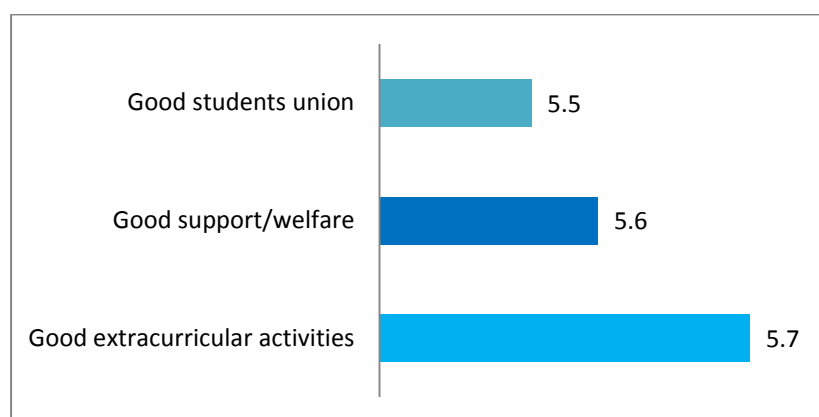
The students' union, ascribed mid-level importance by students responding to the NUS-QAA research, is ranked in the *Times Higher* survey somewhat lower: 5.5 out of 7. This is broadly in line with 2015 NSS results, wherein 69% of taught higher education institution students in England reported being satisfied, but it is significantly lower than results from a 2014 UUK survey, in which 83% of students expressed satisfaction.

Elements related to bricks and mortar, even if students weigh it low in terms of overall importance, are rated similarly highly: over 80% of university students told UUK that they were very or quite satisfied with the sports facilities at their institution, while international students in the UK rated their accommodation higher than international students in the United States, New Zealand, Australia or Canada.

6. CAREER PROGRESSION

Most prospective and current students give career goals as their main reason for attending university. Universities have direct and indirect influences on career outcomes. Direct influences include careers advice and assistance with work placements, career decisions, application processes and employment preparation. Reputational factors, which are only partly under an institution's control, might also contribute to whether or not employers will view graduates positively in their career.

Universities also support the development of skills that have a direct and indirect impact on career outcomes. These skills are developed through the academic and informal curriculum of social and extracurricular activities. These include subject-specific skills such as domain knowledge, research and analytical methods, and technical and procedural skills. In addition there are more general skills, such as problem solving, communication, team work and critical and creative skills.

Table 6: Career progression

Career services	Skill development	Reputation
- Help with work placements - Career search - CV building - Interview preparation	- Subject/practical skills - Communication - Team work - Critical/analytical - Creative – entrepreneurial - Self management - Cultural awareness - Business awareness	- Alumni employment outcomes - League table position

6.1 WEIGHTING OF CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS

There is little available information with which to weigh the importance of the above elements. In particular current students are unlikely to have a clear understanding about what will be most important to their employment goals. The *Times Higher* survey highlighted just one career-related feature of university study: industry connections, which students ranked as 'quite important.' It is notable that students, without prompting, did not mention careers services.

Focus groups conducted as part of the NUS-QAA research similarly found industry connections to be good examples of best practice, alongside work placements, networking and career fairs. The research also found that 'best practice examples were actual modules relating to employability, e.g. careers advice, professionalism, CV writing and interview training', but these were rarely integrated into the wider academic programme.

Current students do value a robust careers advisory service, including work placement opportunities. However, many students primarily value this when it is tailored or integrated into their discipline or area of interest. For example, a politics student would prefer tailored, knowledgeable advice on how to identify, apply and venture into a career in a related field, rather than general advice on CV-building. As a result it is difficult to ascribe shared priorities to students in different subjects.

The NUS-QAA research also found that non-vocational students have difficulty articulating how their skills can be translated into the workplace. Students anticipated that small group skills would be transferrable to employment but did not mention any other transferrable skills they had acquired. The report concluded that students need 'more opportunities to interact with industry in order to build up their confidence and have a better understanding of their future employment prospects in order to set realistic employment goals.'

6.2 CURRENT STUDENT VIEWS

A 2015 UUK survey found that 83% of students are very or quite satisfied with their careers services; similarly, international undergraduates in the UK rated their career services 3.26 out of five, higher than New Zealand, Australia, Canada or the United States. In addition, industry connections were ascribed a high level of importance by respondents to both the *Times Higher* and NUS-QAA surveys: in the Times Higher an average score of 5.7 out of 7.

Figure 10: Careers services: international comparisons
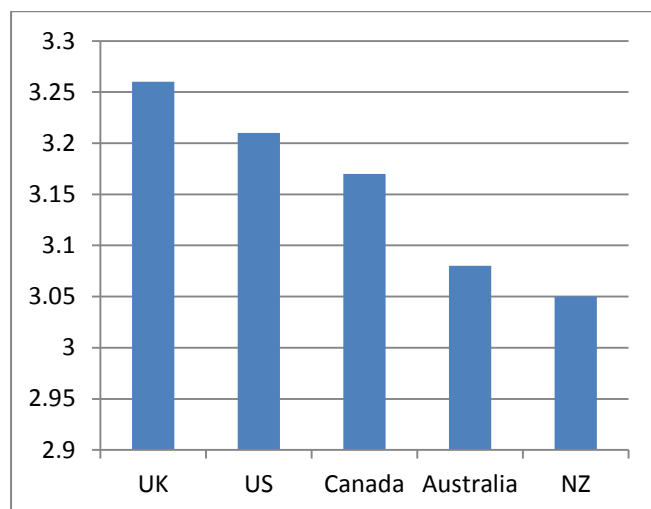
Source: International Student Barometer, undergraduate international students, 2013-14

We can also measure universities' impact on career progression in far less direct and disaggregated ways; employers who hire recent UK graduates say they have higher levels of work-readiness, core skills and employability skills than school or college leavers. The 2015 CBI Education and Skills Survey asked employers to rate their recruits according to 15 different skills and graduates significantly excelled on each of the scores.

Figure 11: Employer satisfaction with young recruits' skills (%), 2015

- Graduates: very satisfied/satisfied
- School/college leavers: very satisfied/satisfied

| Skill	Graduates	School/college leavers
Foreign language skills	46	40
Business and customer awareness	54	34
Relevant work experience	57	44
International cultural awareness	61	48
Knowledge about their chosen job/career	67	49
Self-management/resilience	67	39
Communication skills	71	51
Teamworking	74	69
Problem solving	79	57
Analytical skills	81	53
Basic literacy and use of English	83	63
Positive attitiude to work	85	61
Basic numeracy skills	86	63
Technical skills	88	69
Use of IT	94	89

Source: CBI/Pearson Education and Skills Survey, 2015

Graduates themselves are more self-critical: responding to the longitudinal Destinations survey in November 2014, 25% of graduates who left university in 2010–11 reported that their university experience enabled them to be innovative in the workplace to 'a great extent', whereas 57% stated 'to some extent'. For problem solving, these figures were 30 and 55%, respectively, and for communication they were 40% and 48%, respectively.

Graduates also end up in highly-skilled employment. For example, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills reported that in second quarter of 2015 just 17% of 21–30-year-old non-graduates were in high-skilled employment, compared to 57% of graduates and 75% of young postgraduates. This is true for workers of all ages: of those aged 16 to 64, 66% of graduates and 79% of working age postgraduates were in high-skilled employment, as compared to 23% of non-graduates.

Figure 12: High-skilled employment, 21–30-year-olds, Q2 2015
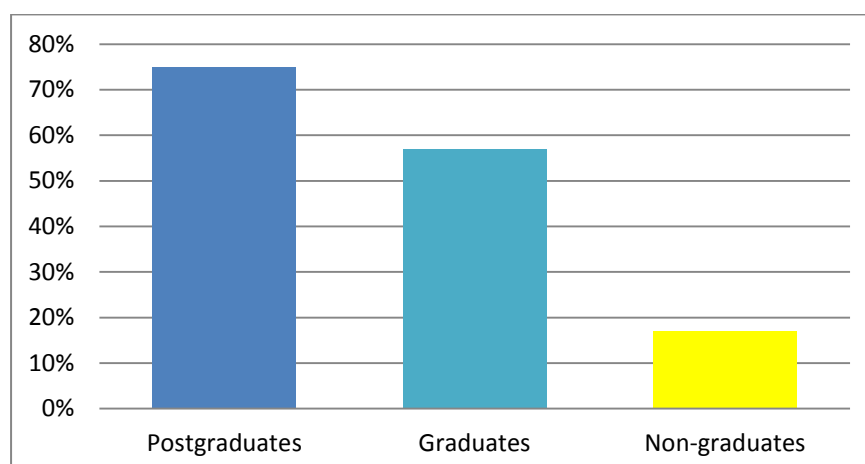
High-skilled employment, on average, translates into higher earnings: while non-graduates of all ages have a median salary of £22,000, graduate median salaries are £32,500 and £38,500 for postgraduates. Among young earners, the median salary for non-graduates is £18,000, as compared to £25,500 for graduates and £28,500 for postgraduates. Looking back at their university experience three years after graduation, over three-quarters of respondents to the longitudinal DLHE said that their higher education experience 'prepared' or 'progressed' their career aspirations.

7. THE GAPS IN INFORMATION: A LONGITUDINAL VIEW

What is missing from this analysis, however, is what students found useful in the longer term. Current surveys rightly prioritise the views of current students but as a result do not engage with outcomes. For example, the priority students place on personal feedback about progress will reflect legitimate concerns about the likelihood of achieving a final award. What is less clear is the extent to which these views and priorities may change after graduation.

This raises challenges and opportunities. Prospective students have little information about how higher education may shape or improve their skills in the long run. This also means universities have less feedback about how different aspects of the teaching and learning experience they offered has helped their graduates' development in the long run. This is particularly important given these longer-term goals are the primary motivation for students going to university.

In relation to social capital, students entering university with a clearer idea of how non-curricular activities can help to shape their personal development may be more likely to become more involved in campus life. Moreover, universities would have a better understanding of which types of societies and services are likely to produce the greatest long-term reward for their students and therefore how to support them.

Information related to careers progression can be divided into two forms: that given by students and graduates themselves, and surveys of employers and employment outcomes about income and so on. While the former is more direct and often specific,

the latter is indirect and offers little indication of which elements of the university experience provide which skills and outcomes.

Current students can rate their experience but they are likely to have only a very vague concept of what advice, experience and skills will help throughout the early stages of their careers. For example, industry connections may prove less useful than interview preparation or tailored advice. There is currently no sector mechanism through which graduates can tell their former universities – or indeed that institution's prospective students – this type of information.

LEARNING GAIN AND ANALYTICS

The development of learning analytics and learning gain is motivated by interest in ways of generating comparative insight and scalable feedback on student outcomes. Analytics track student engagement to identify patterns and provide feedback and guidance to students and teaching staff. Learning gain surveys test progress in a set of general cognitive skills over time that can potentially enable direct comparison between subjects and potentially institutions.

These types of assessments can then, in theory, be used by academics, institutions and students themselves to guide support, advice and learning design and strategies. Challenges include dealing with diversity across students and disciplines and the robustness of assessments, particularly conditioning of teaching and learning behaviour through standardised tests and analytical models. The outcomes of the HEFCE and Jisc pilots will provide further insight the potential value to students.

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8. NEXT STEPS

As we move into the landscape set out in the government White Paper *Success as a knowledge economy,* it will be important to ensure sector surveys continue to provide accurate and relevant data of interest to institutions, students and government. There also needs to be confidence in the quality of data, and consideration of how surveys are designed and administered. Any changes also need to take into account the volume of data collections that institutions already respond to.

Some steps are already underway to review existing data collections. The Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey is being reviewed to focus on other aspects of the graduate outcomes. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills is exploring HMRC data with a view toward longitudinal analysis of graduate earnings. The UK performance indicators are also being reviewed as part of an ongoing programme to ensure that they continue to meet their stakeholders' needs. This report aims to contribute to this debate.

In the longer term there is a need for further review of the objectives and delivery of the National Student Survey in light of its centrality to the Teaching Excellence Framework. In addition, learning gain assessments and use of digital learning analytics present significant opportunities to improve feedback about student progress to inform learning and teaching. However, it is also important to take into account the low priority that students place on being surveyed in support of policy goals that that they do not see as relevant to their own.

Surveys are an invaluable tool for students, institutions and public agencies. Clear, robust information allows prospective students to compare courses and institutions, and take account of those comparisons when making their educational choices. Surveys allow institutions to evaluate and compare their own performance both over time and relative to other similar providers, just as they allow public agencies to conduct benchmarked evaluations.

Surveys cost time and money to carry out, and their results can determine practice and may even colour the reputation of departments or even whole institutions. Incorporation of new longitudinal elements should be considered as part of, and to inform, a coherent approach to the sector's survey and data architecture. Potential steps include:

a. Incorporation in existing sector surveys of student weighting of different elements of their university experience as they relate to their academic, social and career development

b. Incorporation into DLHE of questions that ask graduates to identify, weigh (or both) and rate the specific elements of their university experience that they feel most contributed to their longer-term development

c. Active consideration of findings from DLHE into ongoing review of existing student surveys, including NSS and DLHE, and the HEPI-HEA Student Academic Experience survey

By considering these steps it is hoped that the sector's data can continue to focus on what matters, and that it can enable and encourage innovation and evolution in institutional teaching and learning practice.

This publication has been produced by Universities UK (UUK), the representative organisation for the UK's universities. Founded in 1918, its mission is to be the voice of universities in the UK, providing high quality leadership and support to its members to promote a successful and diverse higher education sector. With 133 members and offices in London, Cardiff (Universities Wales) and Edinburgh (Universities Scotland), it promotes the strength and success of UK universities nationally and internationally.

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