

# Exam season kick-off; prospective uni students biggest concern; and prep for starting university

Student sentiment update by The Student Room

1 May - 4 June 2023



# Sharing the student voice

*As the UK's largest online student community, we are privileged to witness the support, reassurance and advice young people share with one another everyday. What we learn about their experiences and concerns guides us in the support we provide.*

*We started writing these student sentiment updates back in January of 2021, when schools were closed to most students and traditional exams were cancelled. In 2022 we shared 13 of these updates, showcasing 108 community polls, with over 23,000 votes from students.*

*We have an incredible opportunity (and responsibility) to raise the voice of students and share it with people like you who are there to support them. It's by listening to students and working across every sector together that we can make a real difference in students' lives.*

# Highlights in this update

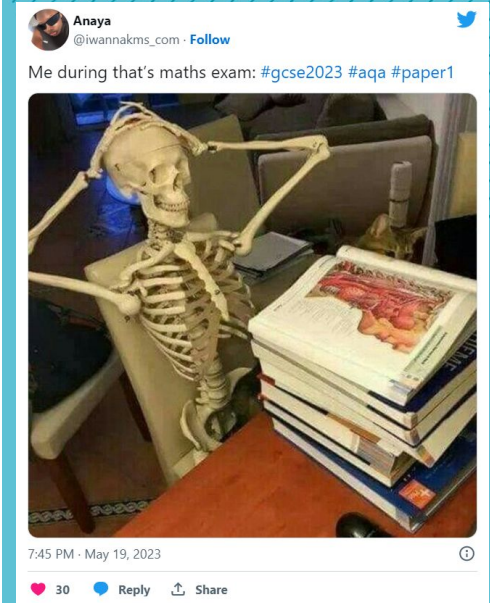
- Students are flocking to TSR to discuss exams with 3.4 million pageviews and 43.6k new registrations in the first two weeks of exams
- Making friends is the biggest concern for students starting uni in September, with almost 40% listing it as their main worry
- Students will mainly support themselves financially at university with maintenance loans, jobs and family help
- More than two-thirds (69%) of 2023 entry prospective undergraduate students planned to spend time over the summer buying the things they needed for university
- 2024 entry prospective undergraduate students were also planning to use the holidays productively though studying (70%) and spending time researching universities (64%).

# Exam season on The Student Room (so far)

Exam season 2023 is in full swing and we've got a huge number of students on The Student Room supporting one another.

In the first week of exams alone, we saw over 23,000 new registrations and over 17,000 posts in our Study Help forums.

Our [GCSE](#) and [A-level](#) exam discussions are where students can chat about every exam, before and after. Our [student reactions articles](#) after each exam are a fun way to see how students have found it.



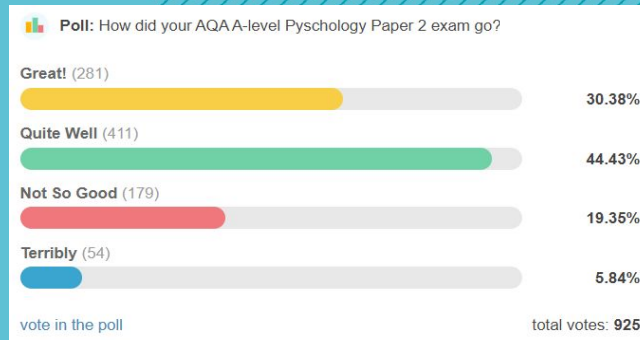



# Exam season on The Student Room (so far)

In week two of exam season we have continued to see lots of conversation in our Study Help forums (17.2k posts).


We are continuing to see an increased interest in our Humanities subjects, with our Psychology A-level exam threads the most posted in threads so far this exam season (3.4k so far in two weeks).

We've also seen some concerns about rumours of papers being leaked and we'll continue working closely with exam boards and JCQ to support students.





**Bowlby**

Badges: 4 

Rep: 

“  
(Original post by **docxo**)

Anyone know what's going to happen about the paper 1 leak?

Do you think they'll consider lowering grade boundaries?



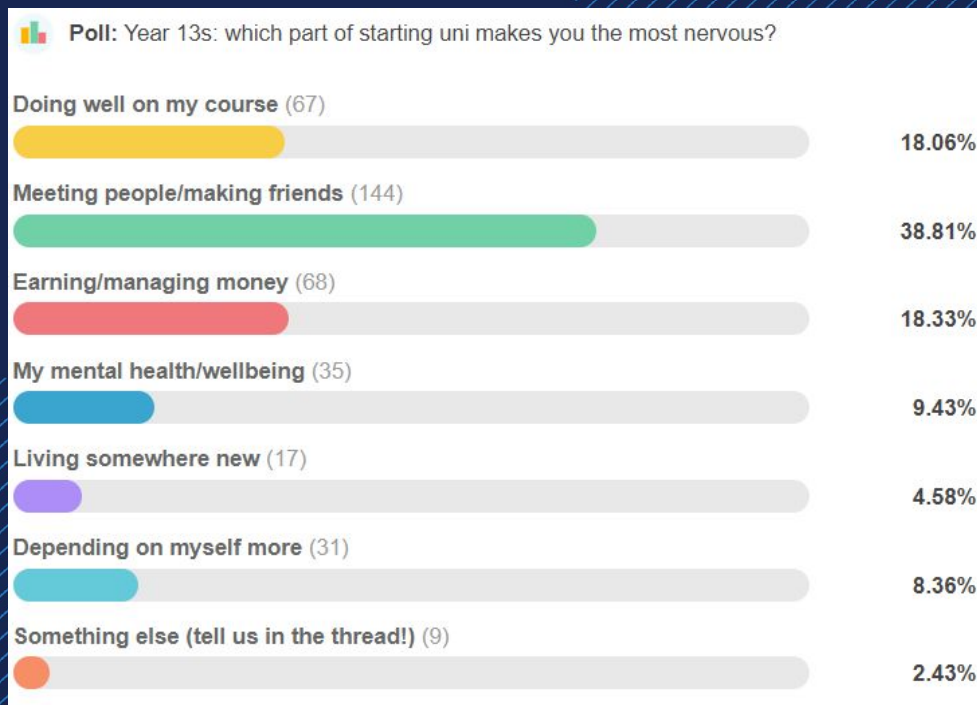
**docxo**

Anyone else juts completely run out of time for the 16 markers? Could only attempt 1

# Making friends is the biggest concern for students starting uni in September

The number one thing that makes students nervous about starting university? **Making friends**. 39% of those who responded to the poll said that's their biggest concern. Next was just over 18% who said 'earning and managing money', followed by just under 18% who said 'doing well on their course'.

Compared to 2022, 8% more students are worrying about money this year compared to 2022. But 7% fewer students are worrying about making friends. Still it remains the major concern.



# Making friends is the biggest concern for students starting uni in September

*Most: making friends, depending on myself, adapting to a new life. The problem with self-catered accommodation is the increased need to cook, which can take a lot of time, especially if you have multiple societies to go to, or you're not a very exceptional student.*

*I feel like I'm gonna be the stupid one in my course*

*I'm a little worried about how I'm gonna make friends at uni (I start first year after the summer), especially since I'll be living at home. I really wanted to move out into student accommodation as it seems so fun and such an easy way to make friends! Did anyone else stay home during uni? How did it go for you?*

*I'll be going to uni in September and I'm really excited, but I'm nervous about making friends. Im not the best with social situations so was wondering what's the best way to make some friends??*

*dunno how to properly explain it, i'm a quiet, not-so-friendly, unsociable guy until someone talks to me and genuinely wants nurturing friendships, i want more of these people around me but that's not really been the case in my uni*

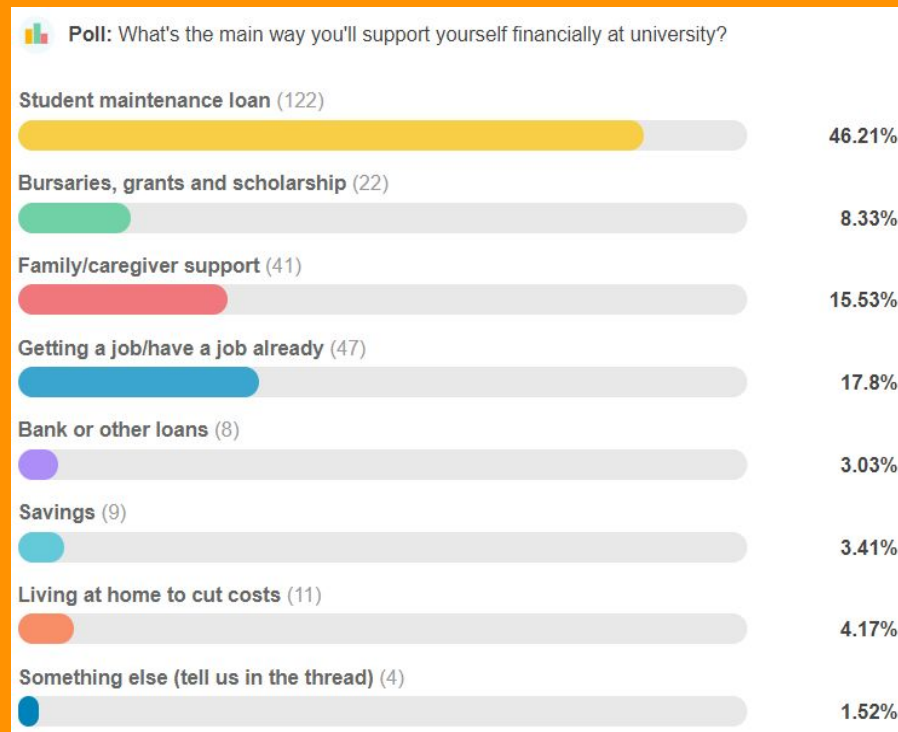
# Students will mainly support themselves financially with maintenance loans, jobs and family help



Perhaps predictably, almost half of students will be financially supporting themselves at university with their maintenance loans. Around 18% will be working jobs and another 15% will have help from their family.

However, we also know from [Blackbullion's student money and wellbeing 2023](#) report, students actually feel they need an extra £548 extra a month, which is gap that's 39% larger than in 2022. As a result, it seems likely that many students will need to supplement their maintenance loan.

Financial education and support for students starting university in September is very much needed.





# Family time and setting themselves up for the future will be keeping students busy this summer



This month, our in-house research team TSR Insight asked students what their plans are for this summer. We can see that 2023 entrants are thinking about money and being prepared for university, and current Year 12s are also prepping for the future.

**Spending time with friends and family (79%)** and **working/earning money (73%)** featured most prominently among respondents' summer plans.

More than two-thirds (69%) of 2023 entry prospective undergraduate students planned to spend time over the summer **buying the things they needed for university**.

2024 entry prospective undergraduate students were also planning to use the holidays productively though **studying (70%)** and spending time **researching universities (64%)**.