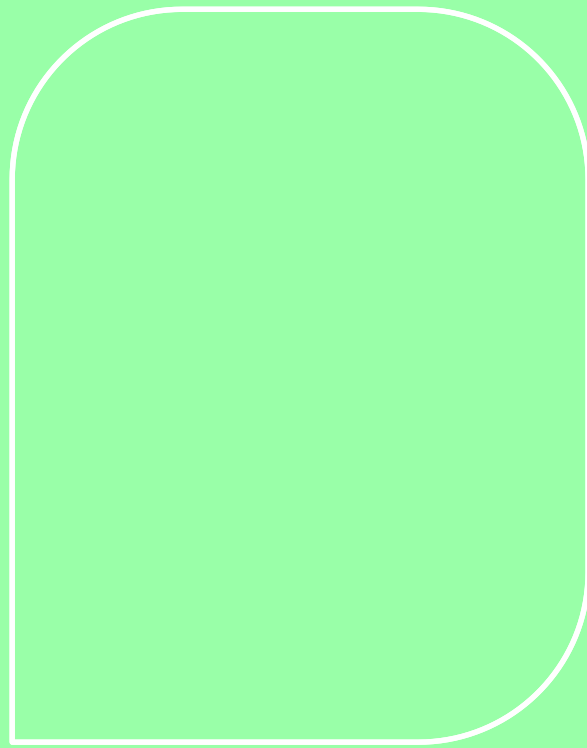# Student Sentiment

February 2024

As the UK's largest online student community, we witness daily the valuable exchange of support and advice among young people. Learning from their experiences guides us in providing meaningful support.

We have the opportunity and responsibility to amplify students' voices, sharing their perspectives with those like you who aim to support them. By listening to students and collaborating across sectors, we strive to make a genuine impact on their lives.

Highlights in this update .....

- Year 12 students tell us about the help they need with making uni decisions

- Year 12 plans to attend Ucas fairs

- Over half of poll respondents still waiting to hear from some of their choices

We also share findings from TSR Insight on topics including

- How 2023 HE fair attendees rated the events

- Who do prospective students trust to provide peer-to-peer support?

- How can universities support applicants in the run up to results day?

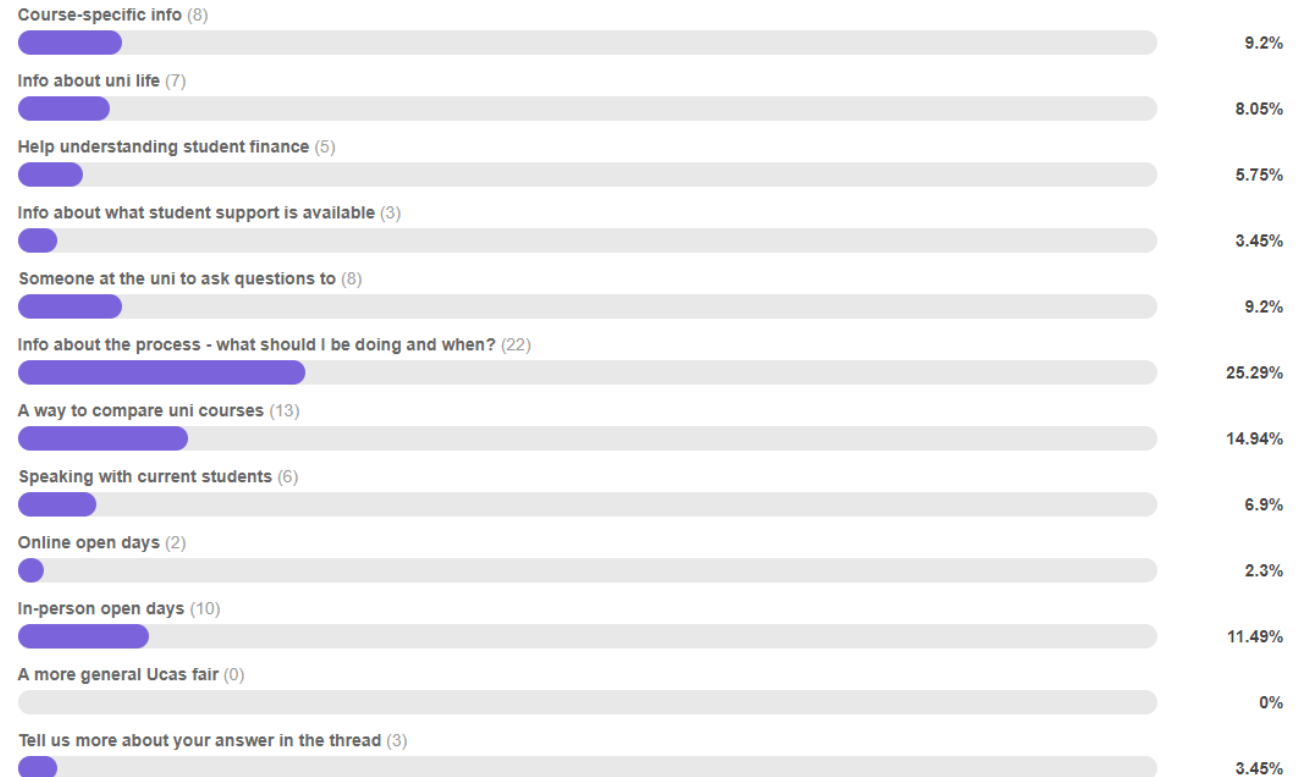# Year 12s: what help do you need with making uni decisions?

Information about the application process (including what they should be doing and when) was the biggest area that year 12s need help with to make university decisions, taking up 25% of votes.

A way to compare courses was second with 15% and in-person open days was third with 11%.

Course-specific information and asking questions to someone at the university both got 9%, while 8% were after information about university life.

These responses reflect that year 12s are in the early stages of thinking about university. As they start considering their options, they will need more details about the application process as well as what each course and university has to offer.

We share further insight from UG 2025 prospective students including information they need from uni's in our recent webinar – access it on-demand here

Course-specific info (8)   9.2%

Info about uni life (7)   8.05%

Help understanding student finance (5)   5.75%

Info about what student support is available (3)   3.45%

Someone at the uni to ask questions to (8)   9.2%

Info about the process - what should I be doing and when? (22)   25.29%

A way to compare uni courses (13)   14.94%

Speaking with current students (6)   6.9%

Online open days (2)   2.3%

In-person open days (10)   11.49%

A more general Ucas fair (0)   0%

Tell us more about your answer in the thread (3)   3.45%

87 votes. Promoted 1 Feb – 8 Feb 2024

What students are asking on the poll thread

"How important is going to a good uni (e.g oxbridge, london, russel)? Is it more important than a good course?"

"Depends on what career sector you're interested in, but 96% of the time: no it doesn't matter in the slightest whether you go to uni that people believe is one of the best. What is important is the course and your preference. Not whether your Auntie Sharon thinks it's a good uni or not."

"I think just visiting any universities that u might like and get the overall feel of it will help u the most deciding which one u can go to and see urself there 🙂
obviously courses differ through the unis so just look through each one and find what your most interested in
U can still do brilliantly at one that isn't a Russel group so just depends what u want really

Year 12s: Are you going to a Ucas fair?

At this point, 60% of year 12 poll voters said they don't plan to visit a Ucas fair.
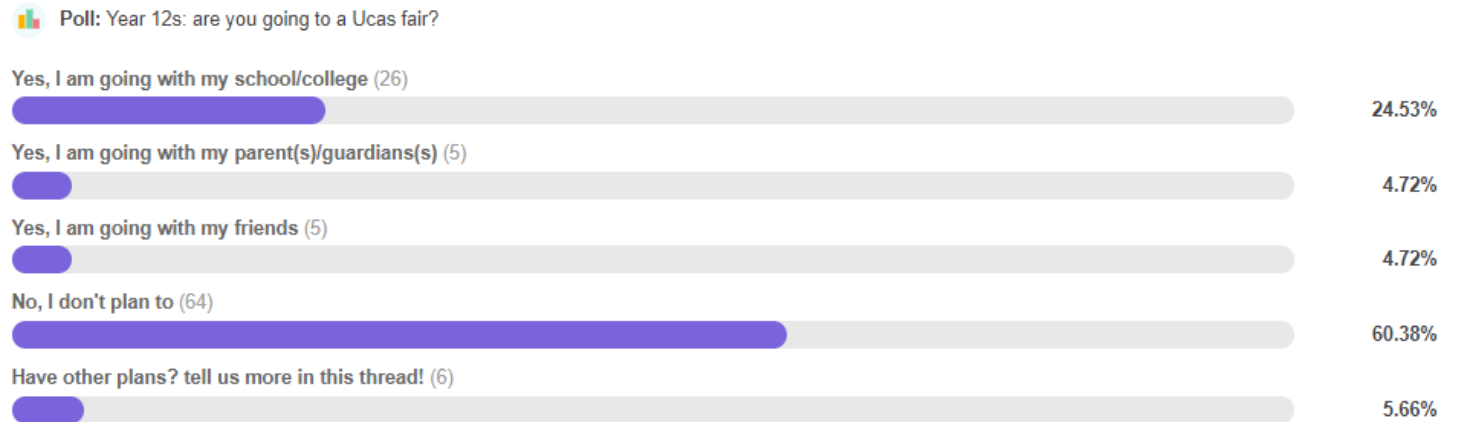
Of the 33% that are visiting a Ucas fair, 25% are going with their school or college, while 4% are going with their parents and another 4% with their friends.

It's still early in the application cycle for year 12s and this poll shows that thinking about university may not be a top priority right now.

As most schools and colleges do plan trips to Ucas fairs, this current sentiment can be a comparison point for later in the cycle when awareness around options should start increasing.

Further reading: Later on we share our TSR Insight summary from June 2023 looking at how HE fair attendees rated the events they went to.

> "It would be nice if more schools could let students know about this! I have no idea what a UCAS fair is and it could have been useful during my application"
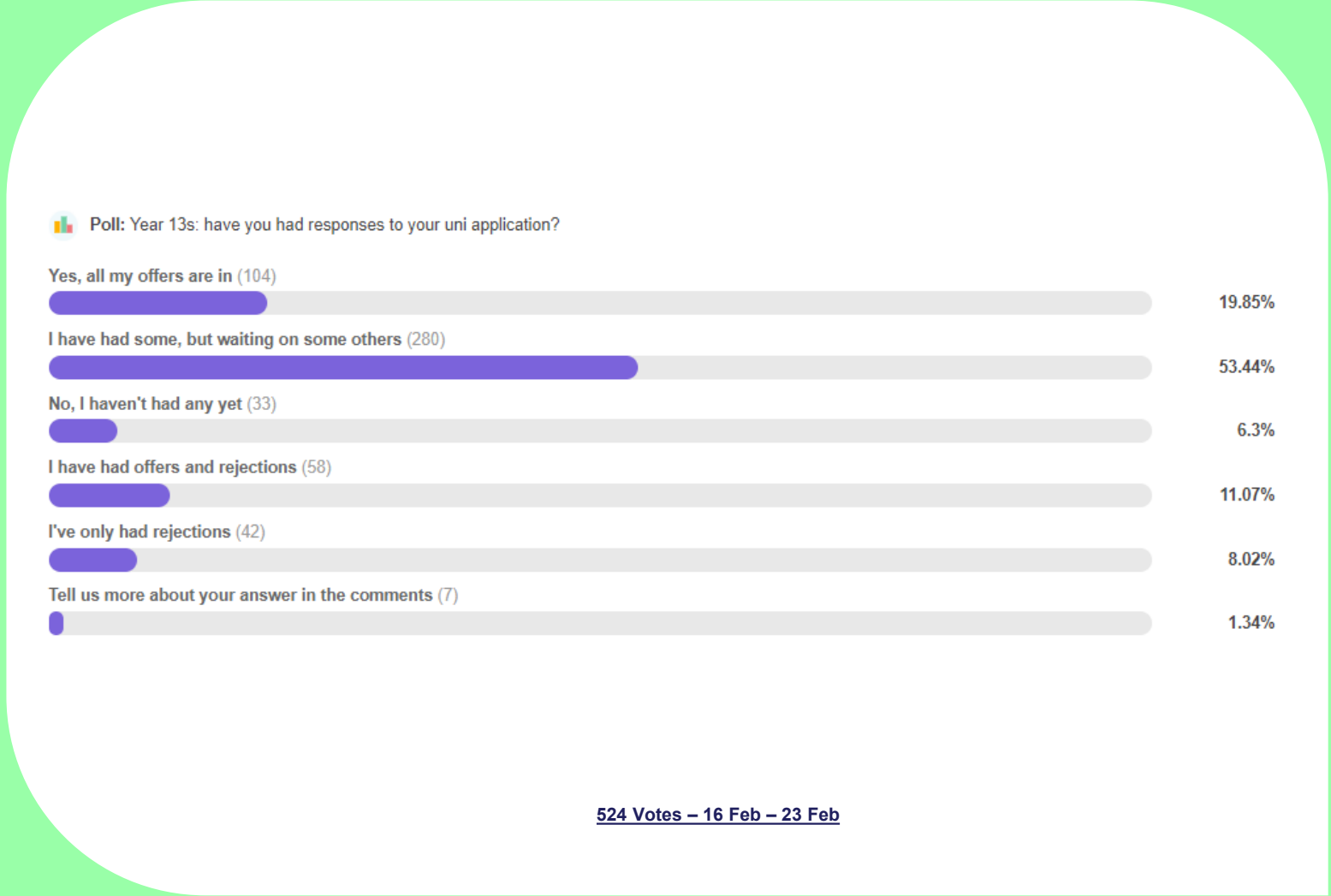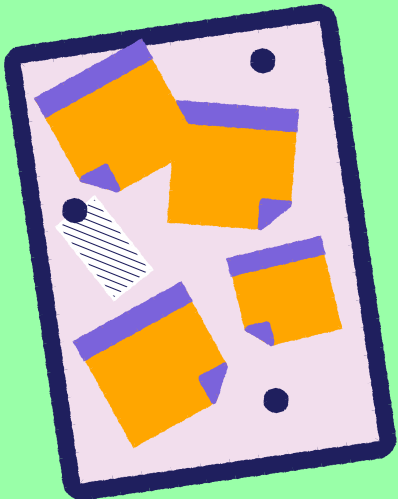
📊 Poll: Year 12s: are you going to a Ucas fair?

Yes, I am going with my school/college (26)

24.53%

Yes, I am going with my parent(s)/guardians(s) (5)

4.72%

Yes, I am going with my friends (5)

4.72%

No, I don't plan to (64)

60.38%

Have other plans? tell us more in this thread! (6)

5.66%

106 Votes – 8 Feb – 15th Feb

Year 13s: Have you had responses to your uni application?

This poll shows a mixed outcomes in the university application process at this stage for the year 13s that have taken part. 19.8% of votes indicated that all their offers are in, whilst a vast number of votes (53.4%) have said that they have received some offers but are still waiting to hear on others.

A small number (6.3%) have said that they haven't received any at this stage, telling us that the majority have had some sort of response to their application. 11% have had both offers and rejections and a further 8% have received only rejections.

The indication from 14% of voters, either receiving no responses or only facing rejections, suggests a period of heightened stress. Alongside potentially unexpected application results, this may lead to growing concerns and a consideration of alternative options for these individuals.

📊 Poll: Year 13s: have you had responses to your uni application?

Yes, all my offers are in (104)

19.85%

I have had some, but waiting on some others (280)

53.44%

No, I haven't had any yet (33)

6.3%

I have had offers and rejections (58)

11.07%

I've only had rejections (42)

8.02%

Tell us more about your answer in the comments (7)

1.34%

524 Votes – 16 Feb – 23 Feb

What students are saying on the poll thread

"I have heard from 4 universities and I am waiting on one still (even though I applied in September). I applied for Computer Science at all of the 5 institutions I put down on my UCAS form"

"I can't blame teachers and others for wanting us to be realistic, but to have no faith in us to this extent is just worse. Hearing the whole "there's other unis out there" speech before I've gotten rejected really annoyed me. At the end of the day why should I apply for something I don't want just to increase my chances? For me, I can never bring the same passion into history, the way I can for politics."

"I applied all the way in Oct and still have heard back from only 3 unis 🙁 my unis are ignoring me
Then again, I don't care anymore, because I have gotten the two offers I most cared about and thus have my firm and insurance ready in mind."

The Student Room
Insight

Summaries
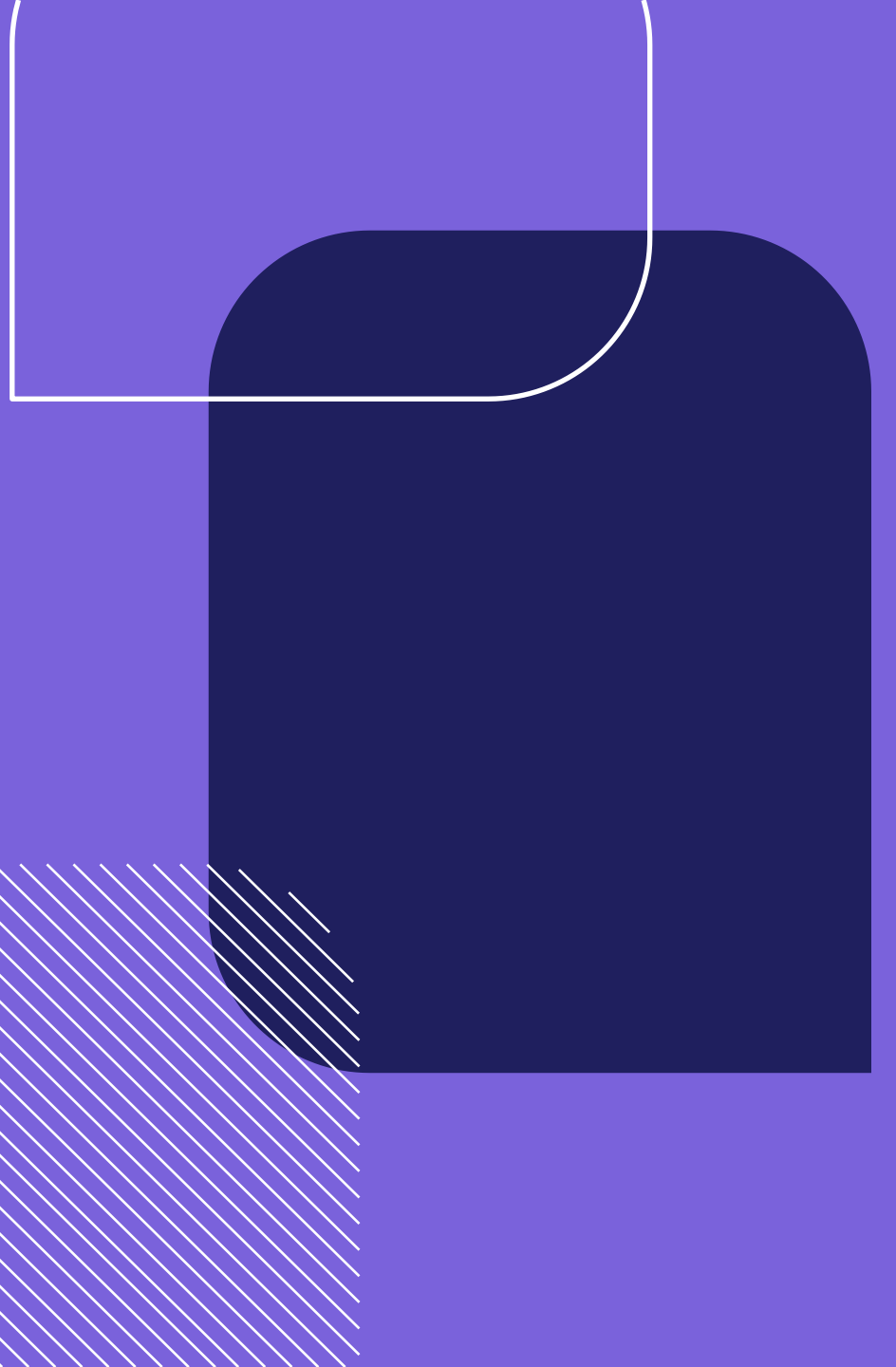
How did 2023 HE fair attendees rate the events?

As discussed above, HE fairs are a current priority for universities.

We surveyed 2024 entry respondents in June last year to understand their experiences at the HE fairs they attended. Positively, two-thirds found the event they attended useful.
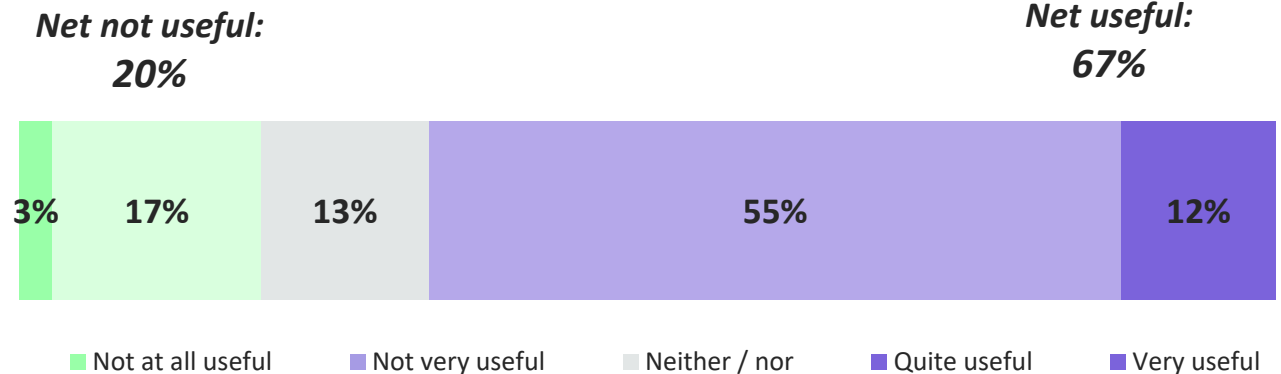
"It gave me an overview of all unis I could be interested in so I can now narrow down which ones are best for me as well as look for alternative ones."

"It allowed me to ask loads of different unis and students questions without the stress of having to travel to each different site or send an email and wait for a response."

You can read more in our 2023 HE fairs summary here.

Methodology: Online survey
Audience: 2024 entry prospective UGs, aged 16+
Fieldwork: 3rd – 5th June 2023
Base: 560 respondents

Q: How useful did you find the UCAS fair / discovery exhibition? (Single response) (Base: 187 respondents who had attended)

Net not useful: 20%

Net useful: 67%

| 3% | 17% | 13% | 55% | 12% |

- Not at all useful
- Not very useful
- Neither / nor
- Quite useful
- Very useful

The Student Room
Insight

Got questions? To find out **how we can meet your research needs** or to add your own confidential ad hoc or tracking questions to our monthly TSR Asks surveys, please contact us: hello@tsrinsight.com

Who do prospective students trust to provide peer-to-peer support?

We asked prospective 2024 and 2025 entry undergraduates respondents what peer-to-peer channels they would trust to provide information about a university they're considering.

Current student voice appears to be trusted.
Almost all respondents (95%) trusted at least one of the peer-to-peer information channels listed to provide information about the universities they were considering.

Student ambassadors at open days were the most trusted source, selected by almost three fifths (59%), closely followed by official university student representatives online, selected by 57%.

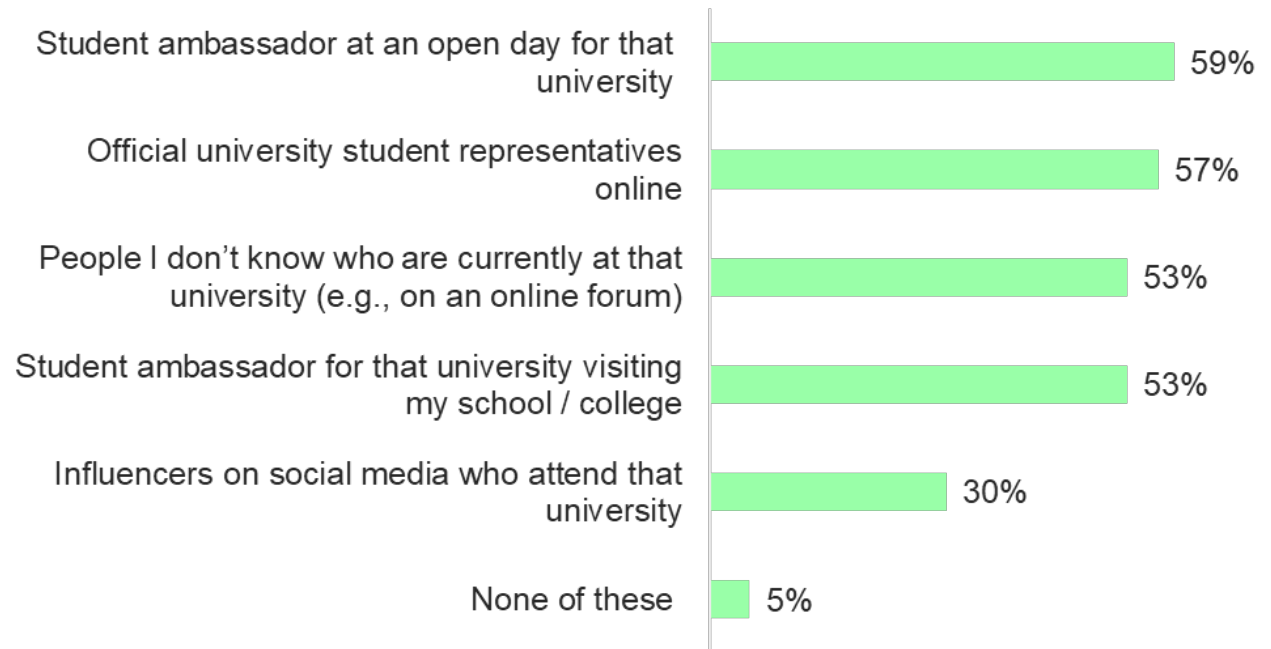You can read more in our new summary on the influence of peers in undergraduate decision making, here.

Methodology: Online survey
Audience: 2024 and 2025 entry prospective UGs, aged 16+
Fieldwork: 5th – 8th January 2024
Base: 734 respondents

Q: Who would you trust to provide information about a university you're considering? (Multiple response)

Channel	%
Student ambassador at an open day for that university	59%
Official university student representatives online	57%
People I don't know who are currently at that university (e.g., on an online forum)	53%
Student ambassador for that university visiting my school / college	53%
Influencers on social media who attend that university	30%
None of these	5%

The Student Room
Insight

How can universities support applicants in the run up to results day?

Now that the majority of 2024 entry prospective undergraduates have submitted their UCAS forms their focus shifts to selecting firm and insurance choices, coursework and revision.
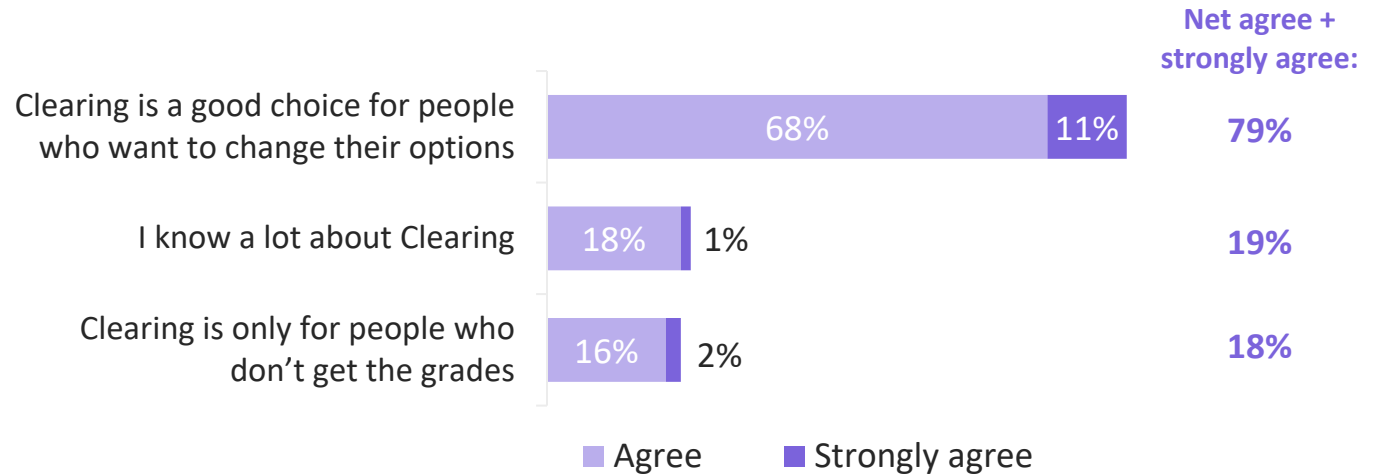
We surveyed 2023 entry undergraduates in the run up to results day last year to explore how they felt about the next stages in their journey and found a lack of knowledge and a desire for support from universities. Last year's Y13s felt nervous, stressed and apprehensive.

Around a third (34%) said they didn't have enough information about what to do on Results day and fewer than one in five (19%) felt they knew a lot about Clearing
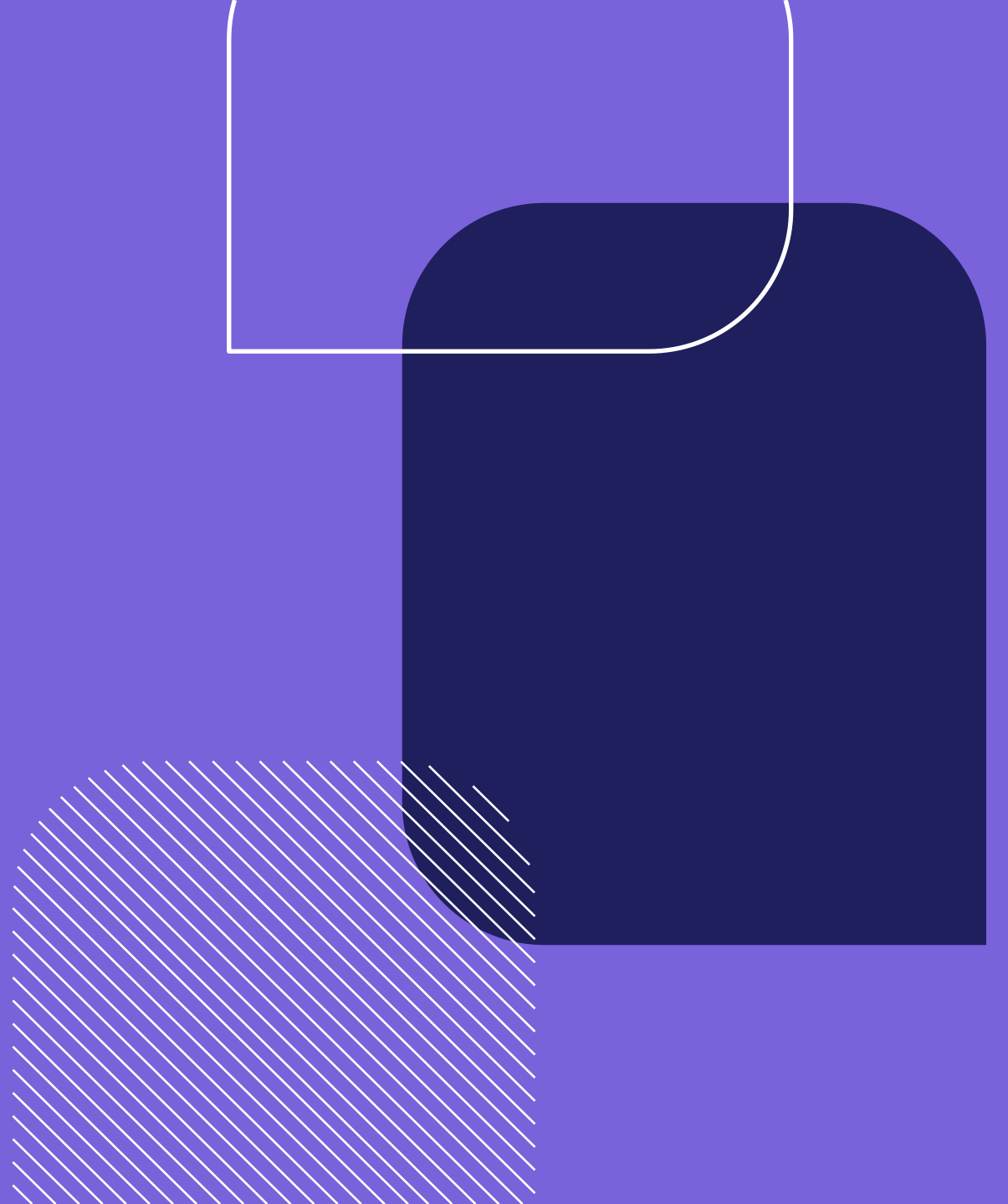
Almost all (97%) wanted support from universities to help then feel more confident about starting university

You can read more in our summary about Results Day and Clearing here

Methodology: Online survey
Audience: Year 13 (or equivalent) students aged 16+
Fieldwork: 1st – 3rd July 2023
Base: 150 responses from Year 13s

Q: To what extent to you agree or disagree with the following statements about Clearing? (Single response grid)

Net agree + strongly agree:

Statement	Agree	Strongly agree	Net
Clearing is a good choice for people who want to change their options	68%	11%	**79%**
I know a lot about Clearing	18%	1%	**19%**
Clearing is only for people who don't get the grades	16%	2%	**18%**

■ Agree ■ Strongly agree

The Student Room
Insight

Got questions? To find out **how we can meet your research needs** or to add your own confidential ad hoc or tracking questions to our monthly TSR Asks surveys, please contact us: hello@tsrinsight.com

Product news

February registrations on site

3,485
Year 11

4,554
Year 12

7,619
Year 13

App news

While the app is still in its early stages with comms to students still to be fully rolled out, downloads, daily users and pageviews continue to grow and from a diverse range of hard-to-reach markets outside of the UK.

With mandatory sign up, we're capturing more explicit first party data from these high intent prospective applicants than ever before.

Incredible app!   16 Feb
★★★★★
So happy with this app! The notifications are really useful to keep up to date with discussions

Downloads in last 90 days:

- UK
- India
- South Africa
- USA
- Kenya
- Pakistan
- Nigeria
- Philippines
- Hong Kong
- Burkina Faso (West Africa)
- China
- Singapore

- UAE
- Malaysia
- Germany
- Korea
- Canada
- Thailand
- Australia
- Taiwan
- Ireland

Introducing
The Student Room
APP

Your personalised home feed
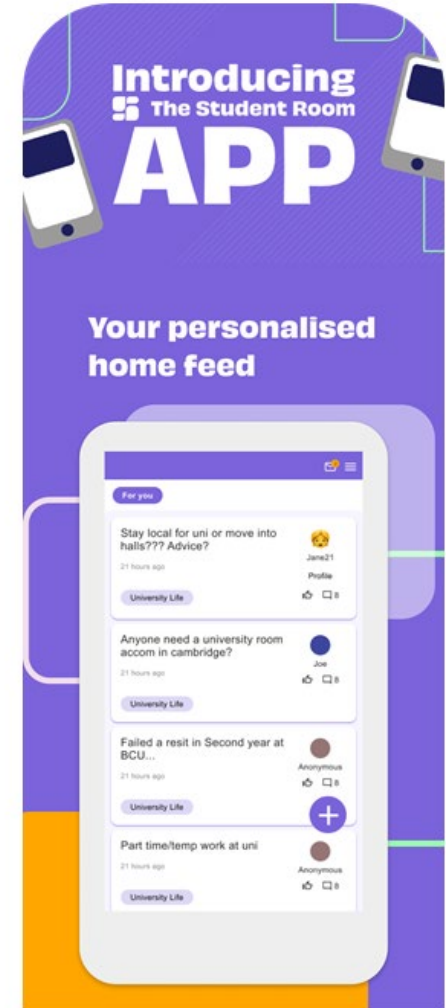
Conversion tracking

What is happening?

1. To continue to improve end user privacy and part of the deprecation of third party cookies (more information <u>here</u>), Google will be removing the ability for publishers like The Student Room to track conversion activities.
2. We will see this take effect from 22nd February 2024

What will be impacted?

From 22nd February 2024 we will no longer be able to report on Click through and view through conversions from:

1. Your University Partner Pack
2. Display Activity ran on The Student Room

What The Student Room is exploring:

We are committed to ensuring that you get the most out of your campaigns and alternative solutions are being investigated, including but not limited to:

- Data Clean Rooms
- Capabilities within GA4
- Alternative ad serving methodology

What next?

- You can remove TSRs conversion pixel from your site
    - If we have access to your GTM we will do this on your behalf
- Speak to your digital/ad agency specialists around plans for deprecation of third party cookies and impact on visibility of conversions
- As third party cookies disappear and remarketing becomes harder, direct relationships with key partners are vital. So be it ourselves, UCAS or IDP…keep close to your partners
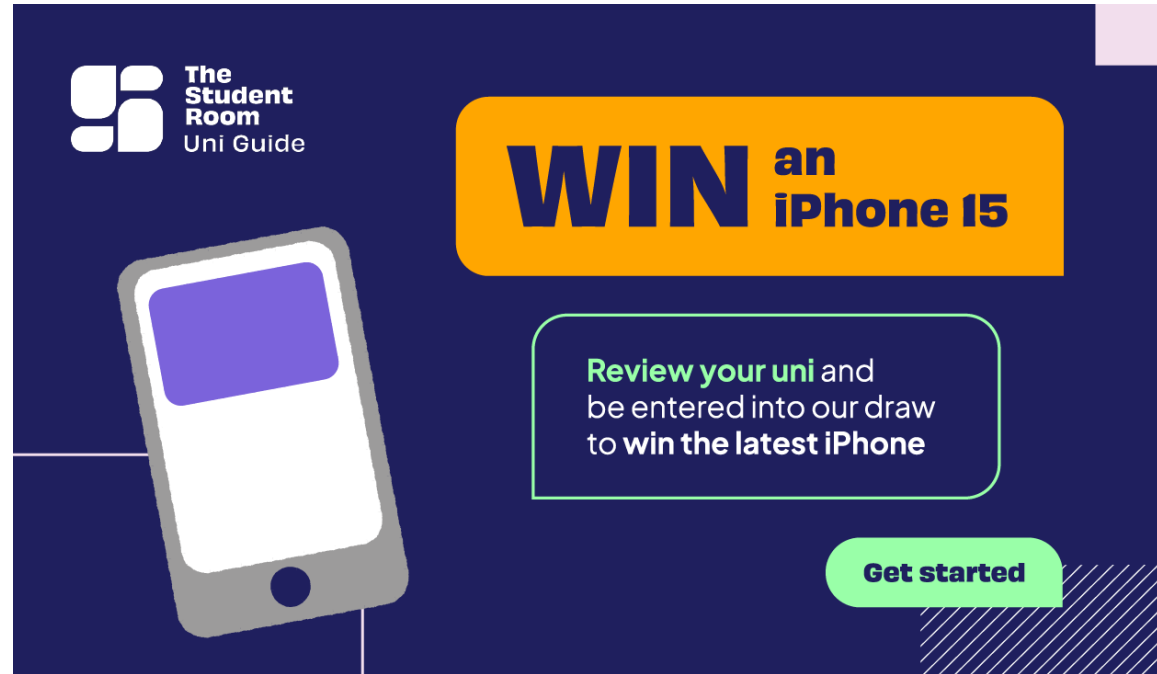- Prepare for a first party data world

Uni Guide reviews
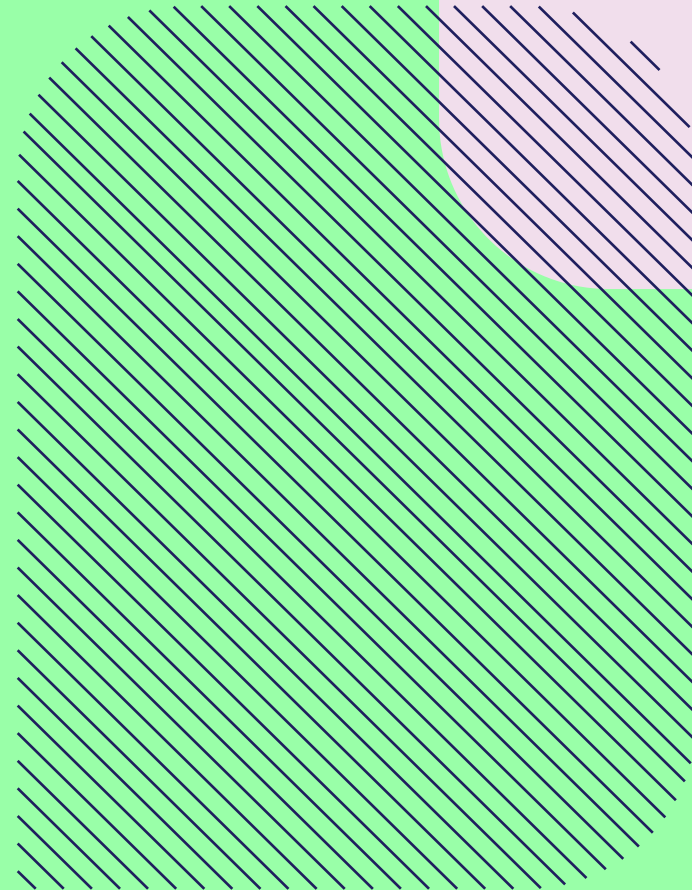
Uni guide – reviews now open

Throughout the year, whether it be in the application window, conversion window or Results season, student voice plays a major part in supporting applicants with their uni decisions.

Student reviews offer some of the most authentic descriptions of life at a particular university. That's why we are requesting new reviews to be made on our sister site, the Uni Guide, so current students and recent graduates can help a whole new cohort of future undergraduates. And that's where we need your help...

One university who shared it via their own 'What's on' email last year received over 1000+ reviews or ratings across the different review areas! Assets available here:

https://tsrmatters.com/product/uni-guide-reviews-2024/

CAMPUS Lens

CAMPUS Lens™
by **The Student Room**

- 📊 Dashboard
- 👥 Members
- 🔻 Leads
- 📋 Content
- 💬 Posting
- 😊 Sentiment
- 👥 Ambassadors

Registered members ⓘ

University of Sussex ▾

From 10/15/2023 To 01/22/2024

■ Registrations   ╱ % of competitors registrations

364 registrations

Nov 2023 — Dec 2023 — Jan 2024
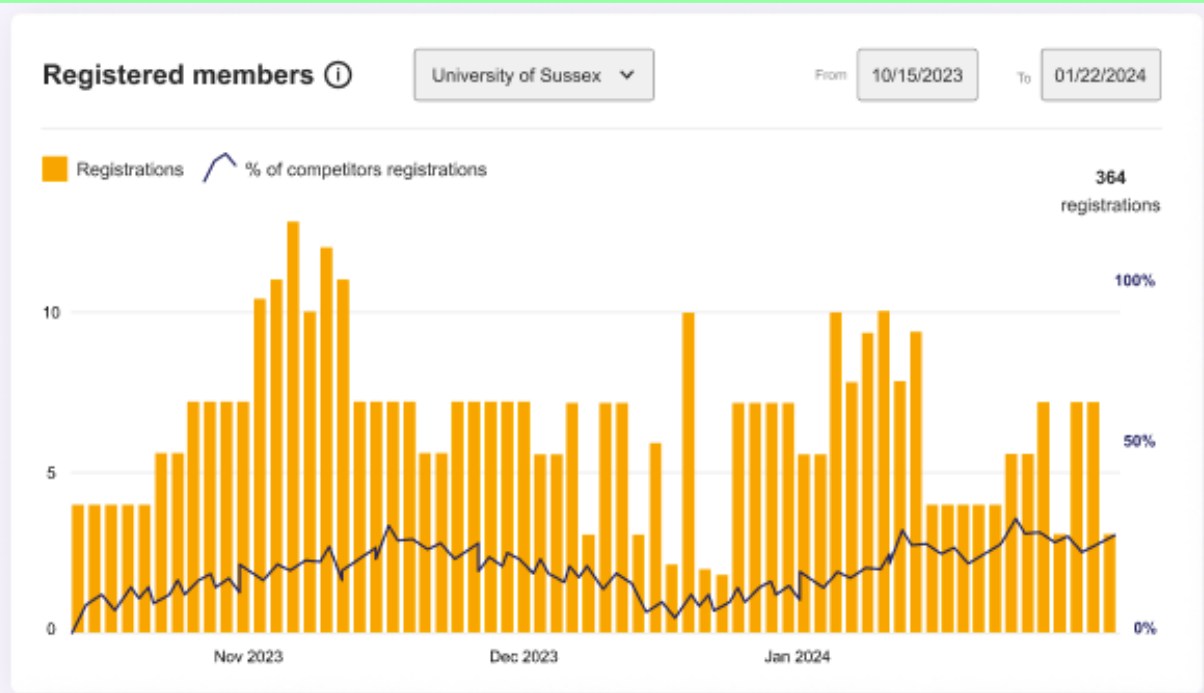
Rank	Learning provider	Registrations	
1	King's college London		2949
2	University of Manchester		2663
3	University of Exeter		1308
4	University of Southampton		1005
5	University of Sussex		1005
6	University of Southampton		1005
7	University of Southampton		1005
8	University of Southampton		1005
9	University of Southampton		1005

Subject ▾

Subject	Registration	Growth potential
Psychology	106	14
English literature	50	17
Psychology	15	14
Psychology	50	14
English literature	50	17

Qualification ▾

Qualification	Registration	Growth potential
A - level	106	14
Post graduate	60	14
Undergraduate	50	14
Post graduate	14	14
Undergraduate	70	14
Undergraduate	90	14

Country ▾

Country	Registration	Growth potential
England	106	14
India	60	14
Pakistan	25	14
London	30	14
Nigeria	55	14
Germany	80	14

Year group ▾

Year group	Registration	Growth potential
13	50	14
12	60	14
11	20	14
0	10	14
9	5	14
10	2	14