

# Student Sentiment

March 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 .....

- Student opinions on apprenticeships as an alternative pathway after their FE studies
- Students want better work experience opportunities in the career support they are given
- 34% of students had no idea how student finance worked
- Revision is top of the agenda for many students this Easter
- Two thirds of 2024 UG applicants surveyed favoured halls as their accommodation preference for their first year, with just over a fifth planning to commute from home
- The device types most commonly used for researching universities
- New TSR Insight summary on insurance choice decision making

# Year 12s: are you considering an apprenticeship?

The results of this poll reveal a mixed perspective. Approximately 22% of respondents express an active interest in pursuing traditional apprenticeships, while a similar percentage (approximately 21%) are considering a degree apprenticeship, suggesting a positive inclination towards this vocational pathway making up a total of around 43% of votes.

However, a significant portion (34%) indicated that they haven't considered apprenticeships suggesting either a lack of awareness for this route or preference for other educational routes.

Additionally, nearly 18% of respondents indicated that they have considered an apprenticeship but deemed it unsuitable for them, implying reservations or concerns about this as an option.

Notably, only a small fraction of votes (2.8%) have said that they are actively seeking an alternative to university that isn't an apprenticeship, suggesting a minority viewpoint and that the vast majority are still leaning towards either university or apprenticeships as their main choices.



What students are saying on the poll thread...

*"It would have been nice to know the advantages of a degree apprenticeship before i applied to uni"*

*"I've always wanted to go to uni and I crave 'the uni experience' so I think it's where i want to go"*



## How could careers advice be better?


The results of this poll suggest that respondents think better work experience opportunities (41%) is the main way careers advice could be better.

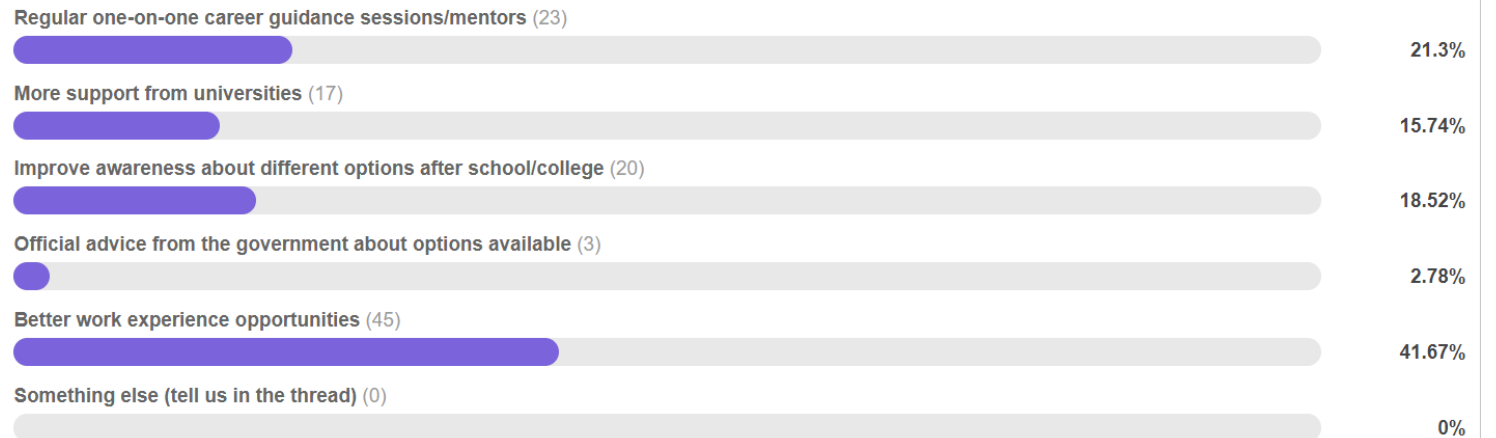
Following that, regular one-on-one career guidance sessions/mentors (21%) and improved awareness about different options after school or college (18%) were both popular options.

More support from universities (15%) would also be welcomed.

With work opportunities and one-on-one career guidance the top responses taking up 62% of the votes combined, it appears that respondents are after practical experience and personalised support that can help them test out potential careers and explore their options.



 Poll: How could careers advice be better?



**108 Votes.** Promoted 1 March – 8 March 2024

*“I find that a lot of 'career advice' sessions are quite boring as it just seems to be someone coming in and basically trying to go on about why apprenticeships are better compared to a degree.”*

*“One-on-one discussions about career guidance are good however I feel like it would just be something that would probably be forgotten about in the long term and it feels like information that I would already know about, such as how to use the UCAS website and looking at Uni courses.”*

*“For the record my school was amazing with all the resources they provided for careers advice, but they did focus very heavily on STEM and careers like law finance science and technology whereas I (and lots of other students) would have found it more beneficial had there been more information on humanities subjects/careers.”*


## 2024 applicants: do you understand how student finance works?

During the week that student finance opened for 2024-entry applicants, 34% of respondents said they don't understand student finance at all.

Additionally, 48% had an idea but could with some more information. Only 15% said they understand the process.

With student finance now open for applications, it's important to make sure students are provided with enough information to help them understand the process.

*Since 1 March 2024, our Ask Student Finance England forum has had over one million page views – and thread creation has increased 6% on this time last year.*

 Poll: 2024 applicants: do you understand how student finance works?

Yes I understand (36)



15.19%

I have an idea but could do with some more information (114)



48.1%

I don't understand (82)



34.6%

Tell us more about your answer in this thread! (5)



2.11%

237 votes. Promoted 8 March – 15 March 2024



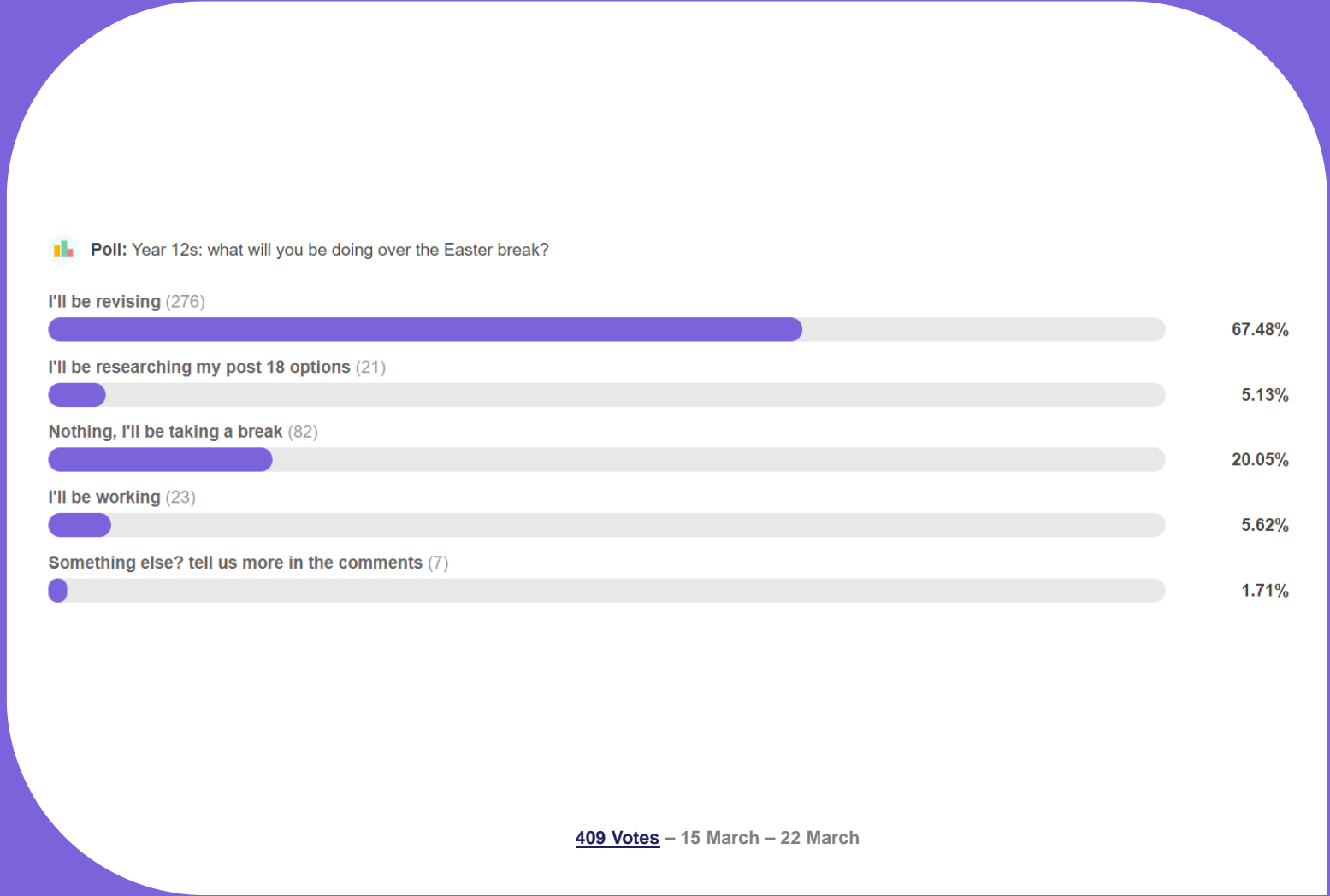
## Year 12s: What will you be doing over the Easter break?

In this poll, Year 12's plans for how they'll be spending their time over the Easter break reveal a mixed outlook.

The majority (approx. 67.5%) of respondents have said they will use their break to dedicate time to revision as we quickly approach exam season. However, another significant proportion of voters (20%) indicated that they will be opting for some downtime over the Easter break, telling us that although exam time is approaching, Year 12s are prioritising rest amidst academic pressures.

A smaller percentage (5.1%) will be researching their post-18 options, indicating some early planning for the future amongst the Year 12s on site and 5.6% plan to be working.

Overall, universities can be providing proactive support and guidance to complement how students will approach their Easter break plans, such as revision tactics and resources, researching their future options and advice on managing a healthy work-life balance throughout this period.



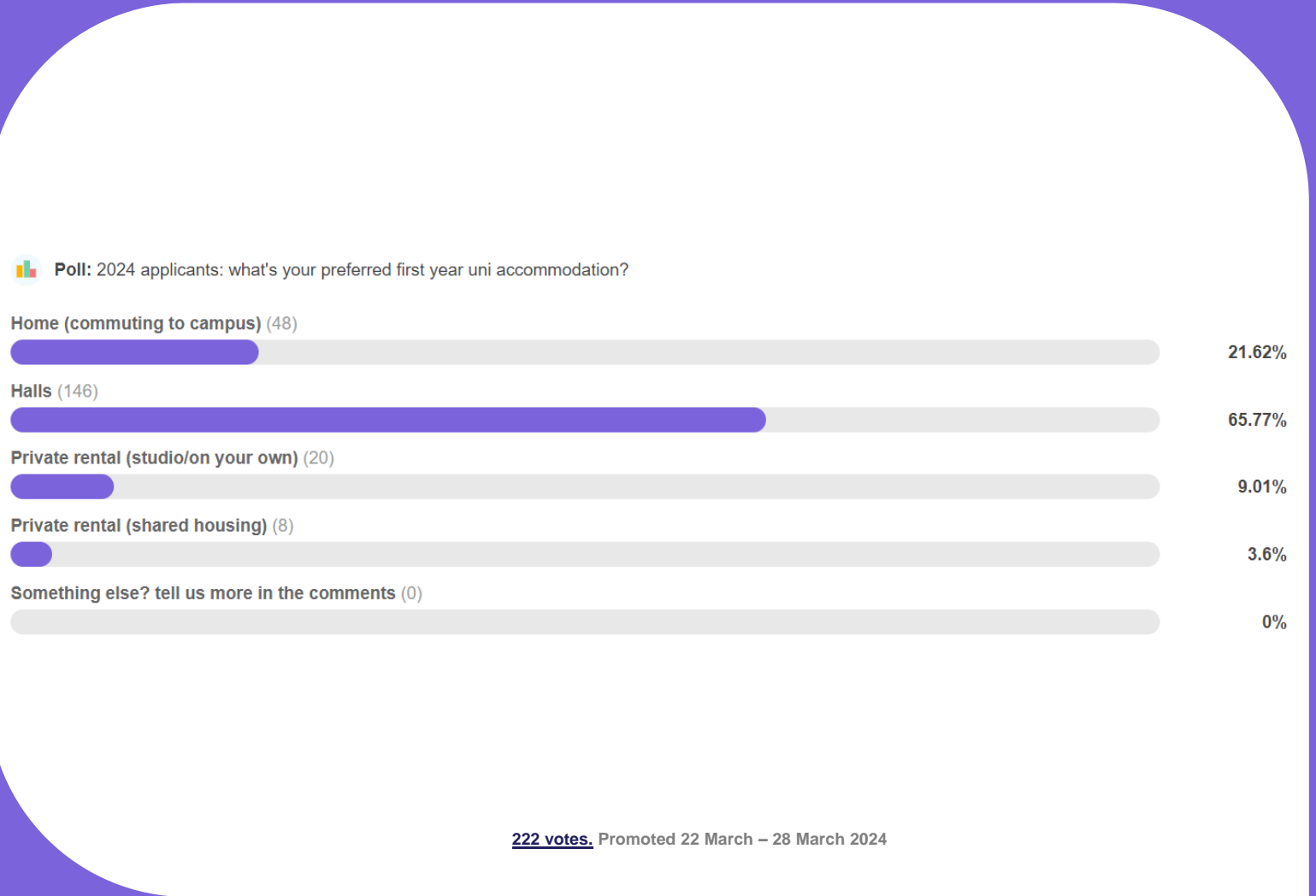
## 2024 applicants: what's your preferred first year uni accommodation?

The results of this poll show a clear preference for Halls amongst our respondents for their first-year university accommodation with approximately 66% voting for this option.

Meanwhile, a smaller percentage have opted for the private rental (studio/on your own) option, at only 9% of votes, which takes a slight lead against those who would opt for the shared housing option at 3.6% of votes; a stark difference between the vast majority that opted for communal living in university halls but are not yet prepared to commit to a shared housing situation in their first-year.

Interestingly, a significant portion of respondents (21.6%) favoured commuting from their home to campus, suggesting a desire for familiarity or decisions influenced by other factors, such as financial considerations with the rising cost of living.

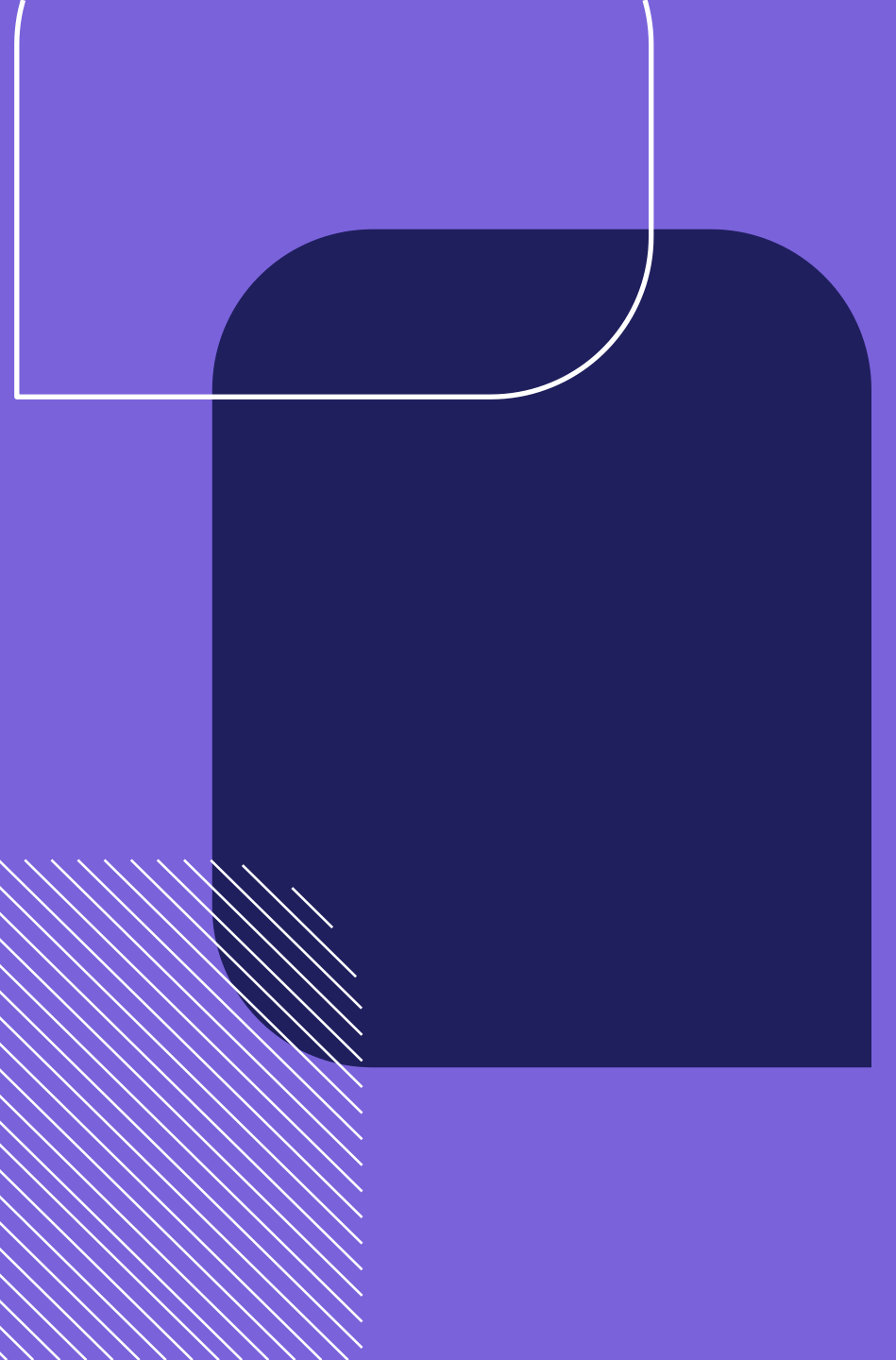
*"I have an offer to study at X but I'm worried about the cost of studying in London. It's possible for me to commute but I would much prefer living in the uni accommodation at least for the first year, but it seems really expensive and I'm worried about the overall costs."*





# The Student Room

Insight



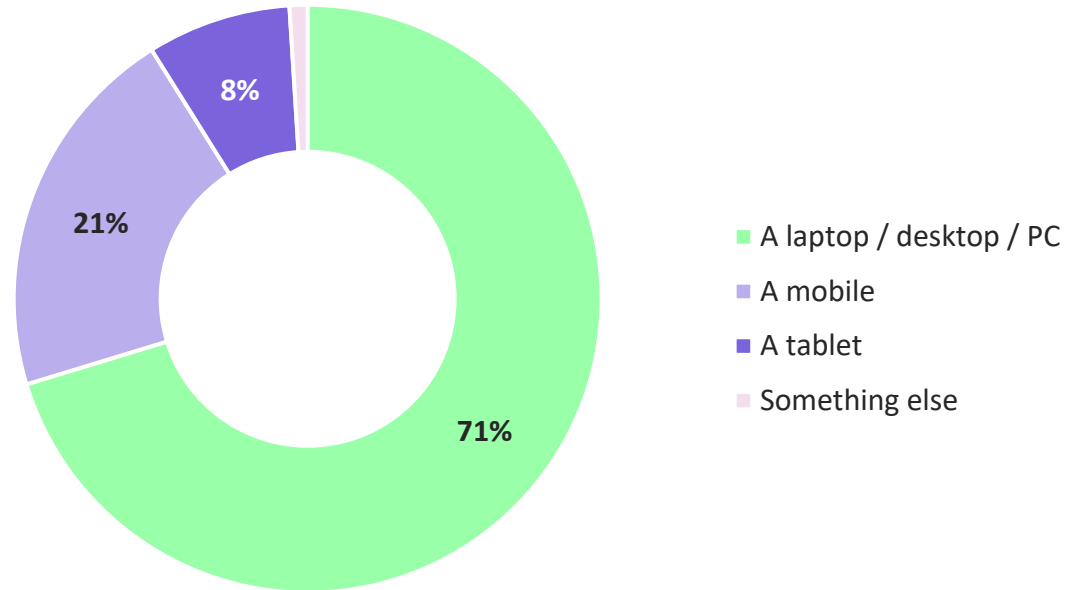
## Devices used for university research

Perhaps surprisingly, respondents were most likely to conduct the majority of their university research on a laptop, desktop or PC (71%). Almost three in ten predominantly used a mobile or tablet (29%).

While the devices used to research universities were largely consistent between 2024 and 2025 respondents, 2024 entry respondents were almost twice as likely as 2025 entry respondents to use a tablet (11% cf. 6%).

**Q: Which of the following device types do you mainly use when researching universities? Please select one answer only**

(Base: 569, 2024 and 2025 entry prospective undergraduates)



**Methodology:** Online survey  
**Audience:** 2024 and 2025 entry prospective UGs, aged 16+  
**Fieldwork:** 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024  
**Base:** 569 respondents

## Insurance choice decision making

While the majority (73%) of 2024 entry undergraduates surveyed planned to select an insurance choice with lower grades than their firm choice, more than a quarter (28%) were planning to select an insurance choice with grade requirements that were **the same or higher than their firm choice option**.

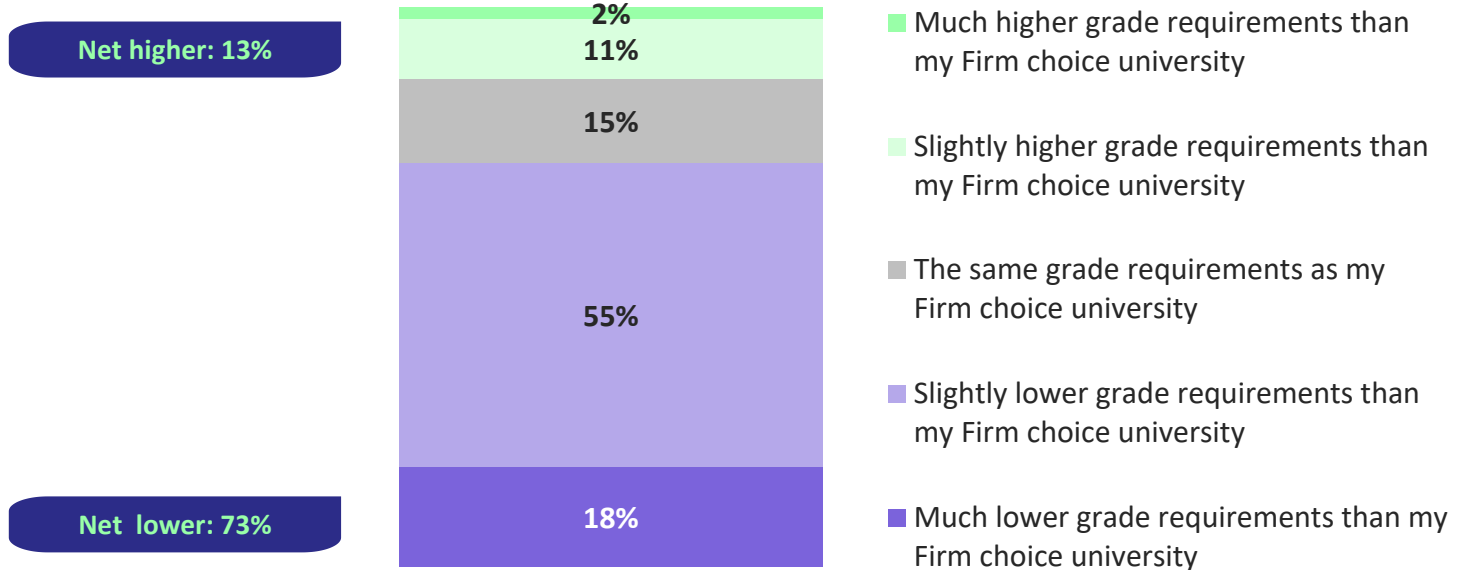
Perhaps surprisingly, those that had received information from their school/college about how to select their insurance choice university were no more likely than those who hadn't to choose universities with lower grades than their firm choice.

You can read more in our [firm and insurance choices summary here](#).

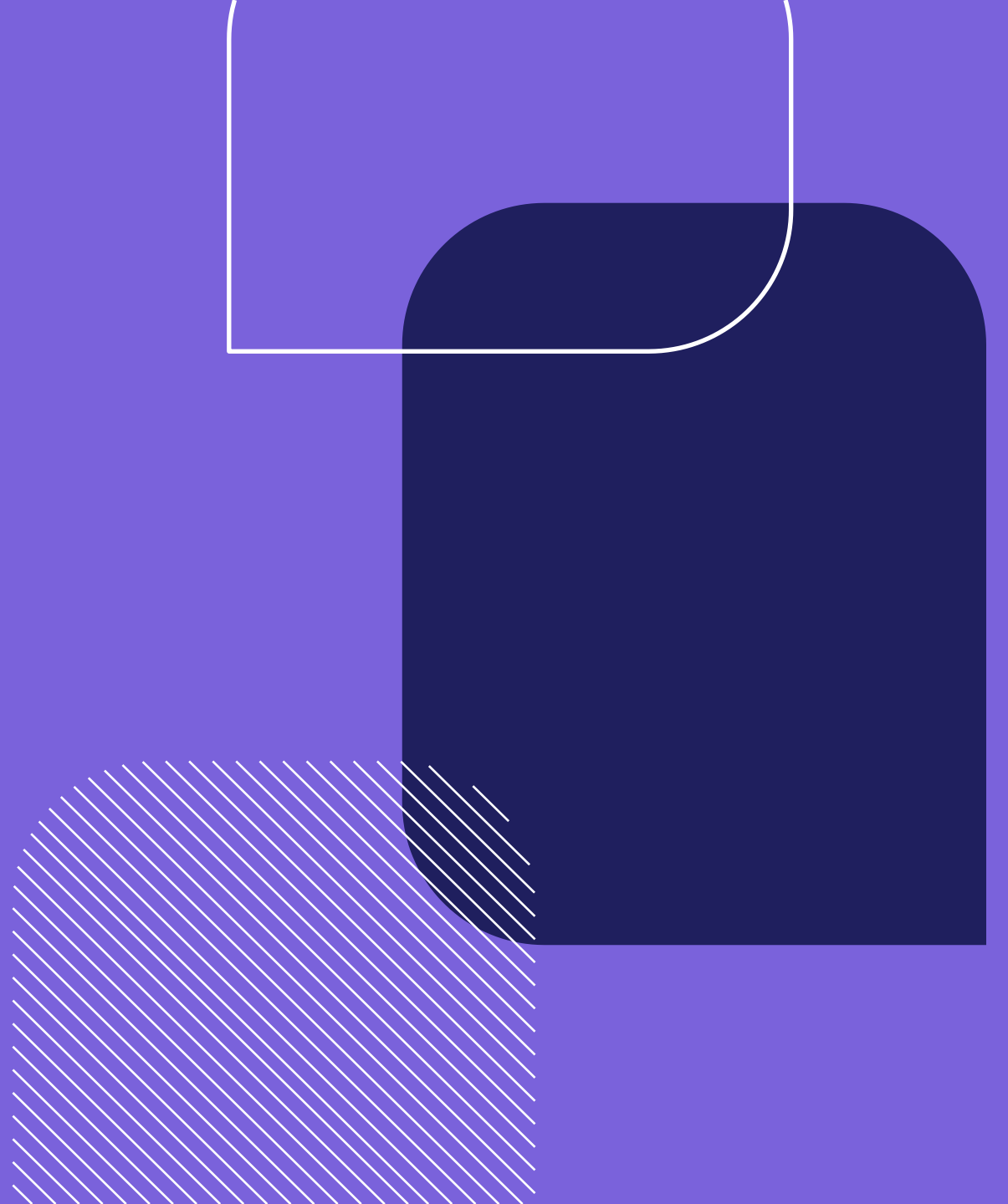
**Methodology:** Online survey  
**Audience:** 2024 entry prospective UGs, aged 16+ with an insurance choice university selected  
**Fieldwork:** 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024  
**Base:** 209 respondents

### Q: Does/will your Insurance choice University have...? (Single response)

(Base: 209, 2024 entry prospective undergraduates with an insurance choice selected)



# Product news



**March registrations  
on site**

3,276  
Year 11

5,056  
Year 12

7,754  
Year 13

## Uni Guide reviews

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.

Our incentivised competition has now closed but reviews can still be made at

<https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/dpc/uni-reviews-2024>



## NPS Survey

As always, we'd love to know how you feel we've been doing from a client-stance by completing our quick survey. Client feedback is really valuable and helps us to continue to improve and serve you better.

The survey is just a few quick questions and is anonymous.

You can also enter our prize draw to win a £50 retail gift voucher for your time (all prize draw entries are kept separate from anonymous survey responses).

**[Complete our client feedback form](#)**



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better. Book a meeting with  
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shape the future of the UPP**

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meeting](#)

