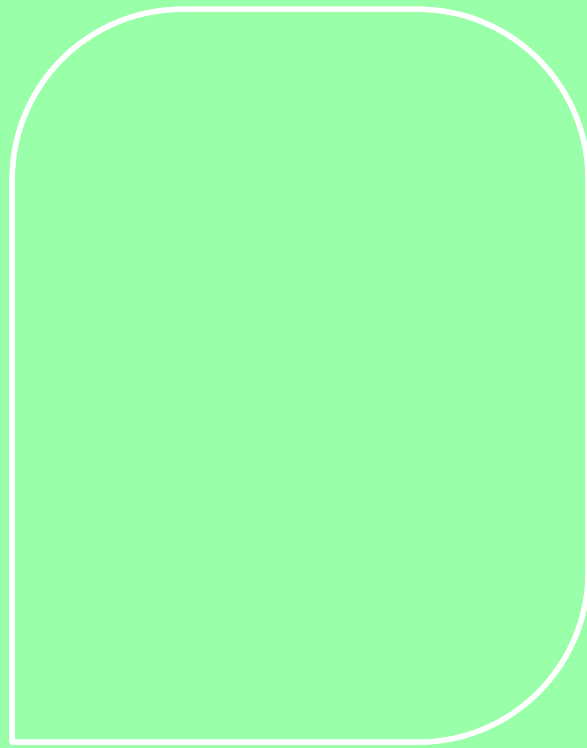




**The  
Student  
Room**



# Student Sentiment

July 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 .....

- A third of students polled found exams harder than expected
- Knowledge gaps still prevail on how Clearing works
- 56% of students feel they have met or exceeded the grades they need for their university offer
- Financial skills (such as taxes and budgeting) was cited as the top thing missing from the school curriculum by poll respondents
- Clearing is the most popular Plan B for those not making the grades this summer

## Year 11 and 13s: were exams easier or harder than you expected?

This poll offers an intriguing reveal at how students viewed their recent experiences with exams. A significant proportion (37.9%) felt well prepared, as they found their exams were 'as expected' suggesting a good alignment between study material and exam content.

However, 33% said that they found the difficulty level harder than what they were expecting, more than those that said they found exams 'easier' which sits at 25.1% of votes.

Although at this stage it is difficult to determine the split of votes between year groups, with 58.1% of voters finding their exams either easier or harder than expected, this offers some suggestion that those in year 13 and applying to university could be looking at utilising Clearing when they do receive their results if they align with their experience of difficulty.



## What students are asking on the poll thread

*"Majority of the GCSE exams were better than I expected and overall I'm pleased with how they went but there were a few papers harder than mocks but i guess we'll just wait till results day"*

*"I felt like everything really took a toll on me. And as i really really really want to pursue med in uni I don't see myself accomplishing my dreams  
(Does anyone have any career paths I can follow that are predominantly science related)"*

*"the community and the support it provided during exams was amazing and it's so comforting to find others who are feeling the same way and also provide advice and help to each other"*

## Year 13s: do you understand how Clearing works?

The results of this poll indicate a significant knowledge gap among year 13s on the process of Clearing.

Despite being a crucial aspect of university admissions, only a small proportion of voters (7.6%) said they were completely confident in their understanding of Clearing.

The majority of votes (35.7%) were for those that said they have a good understanding, enough to feel confident in not needing any further information.

However, most notably, 34.6% said they have heard of Clearing but don't understand it. This is followed by 18.6% who have not heard of Clearing at all.

Combined, that's 53.2% of voters who aren't aware or don't understand the process at a stage in the cycle where it could be a beneficial option to them.

*"Sadly I do think I'm going to have to go through clearing. I don't understand how it works. Although I spent so much time onucas, I get so worried because I don't know what's happening"*



**182 Votes.** Promoted 5 July – 15 July

## Year 13s: how are you feeling about getting the grades you need for uni?

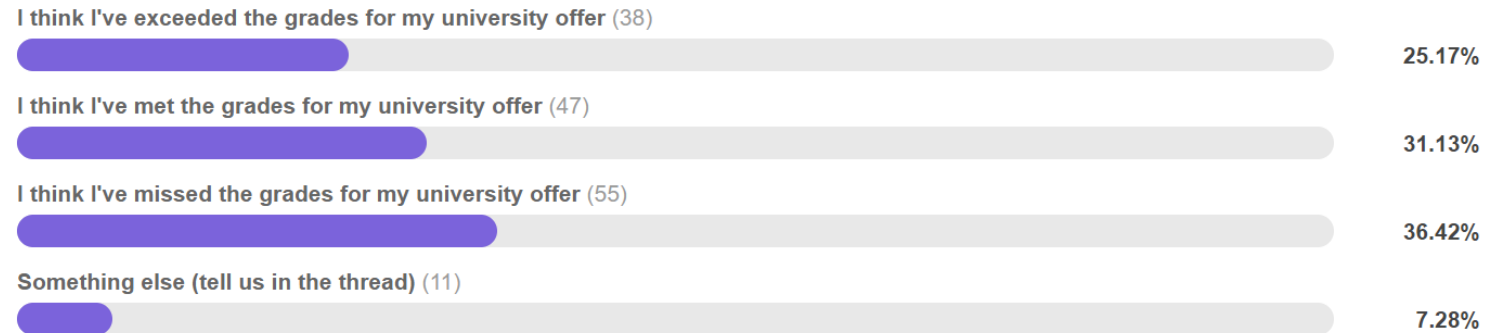
The results of this poll suggest the mixed feelings students are having about their grades ahead of results day.

The most popular response was 'I think I've missed the grades for my university offer', with 36% of the votes.

However, 31% of respondents said they think they've met their grades for their university offer.

A quarter of respondents (25%) said they think they've exceeded the grades for their university offer. This is just slightly more optimistic than the same poll we ran in 2023 when 52% responded with feelings of 'exceeded' or 'met' compared with 56% this year.

Although their actual grades might be the same or different than they were expecting, it's likely that these students will have a plan for exploring alternative options on results day if they need to.



## What students are asking on the poll thread

“I have a lower offer (ABE) and objectively I think I'll possibly meet it by ABC. However, I can never get the anxiety of missing it off my head.”

*“I need 128 ucas points which is equivalent to a bunch of combinations but ABB would be the middle ground. Im confident ill get those grades but might get a C but id still get in as the other 2 subjects im confident of A\*s in.”*

*“Still a bit stressed over results day though as tbh i just want to get the grade i deserve as i worked all year round, i never slacked really and i took every mock seriously. I want to see that hard work pay off.”*



## What is missing from the school curriculum?

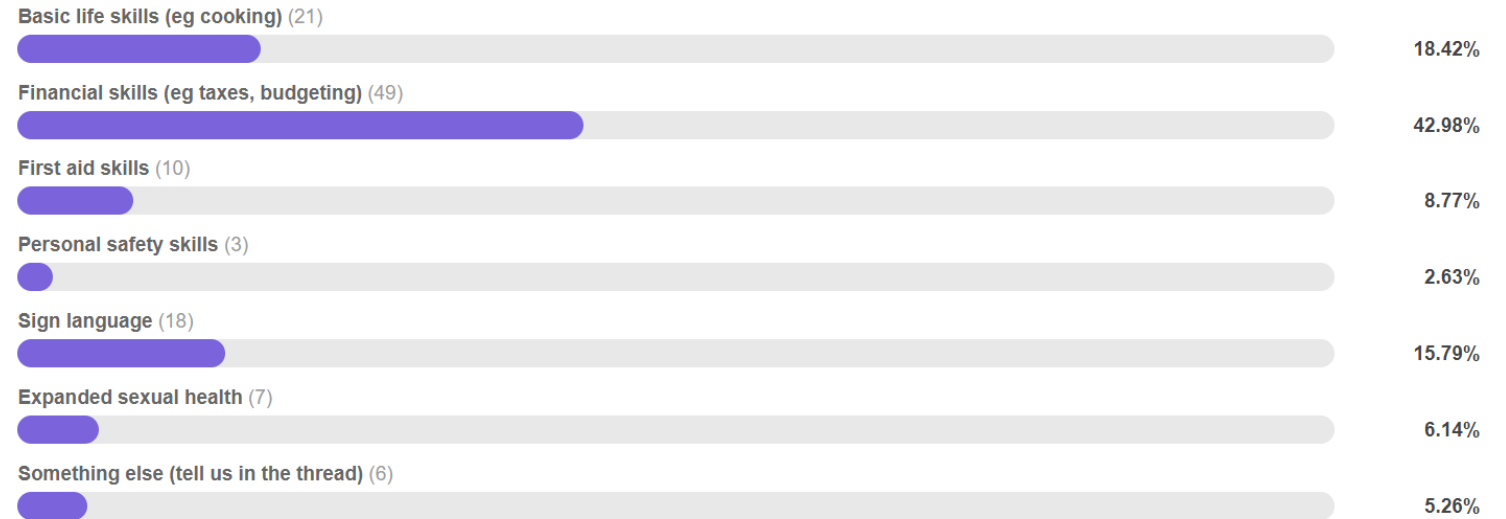
In this poll, 42% of respondents said financial skills (like taxes and budgeting) are missing from the school curriculum.

Following that, 18% voted for basic life skills (like cooking) and 16% said they thought sign language should be taught at school.

Financial skills, basic life skills and sign language were the three most popular responses, taking up a combined 76% of the votes.

First aid skills (8%) and expanded sexual health (6%) were also seen as missing from the school curriculum by some.

While there's already a lot to learn at school, adding some practical lessons – financial skills in particular - on the school curriculum could help prepare students for life after school.



114 Votes. Promoted 22 July – 26 July

*"Life skills are taught, but some unfortunately are taught too soon or in such a way that they end up being disregarded by learners."*

## Year 13s: what will you do if you don't get the grades you're after?

A recent poll surveying year 13 students on their plans if they didn't achieve the grades they were aiming for.

The leading choice 'find something else in Clearing', at 29.3% of votes, suggests a pragmatic approach, with the majority of students willing to explore new courses and universities as a viable alternative.

21.09% would look to re-sit their exams, for another shot at achieving their desired results, followed on closely by the 19.5% that would take a gap year. Taking time out of education to consider their next steps.

A smaller proportion has expressed more flexibility in their decision-making if they don't achieve their desired results with 11.3% opting to look for an alternative pathway to their career of choice, possibly looking at vocational training as an option rather than university. 13.6% are still unsure, suggesting a lack of awareness around alternative options.

All in all, Clearing is still the clear favourite back-up plan amongst year 13s on site.



256 Votes – 26 July – 2 August



# Summaries



## How knowledgeable are parent(s)/carer(s) about the university application process?

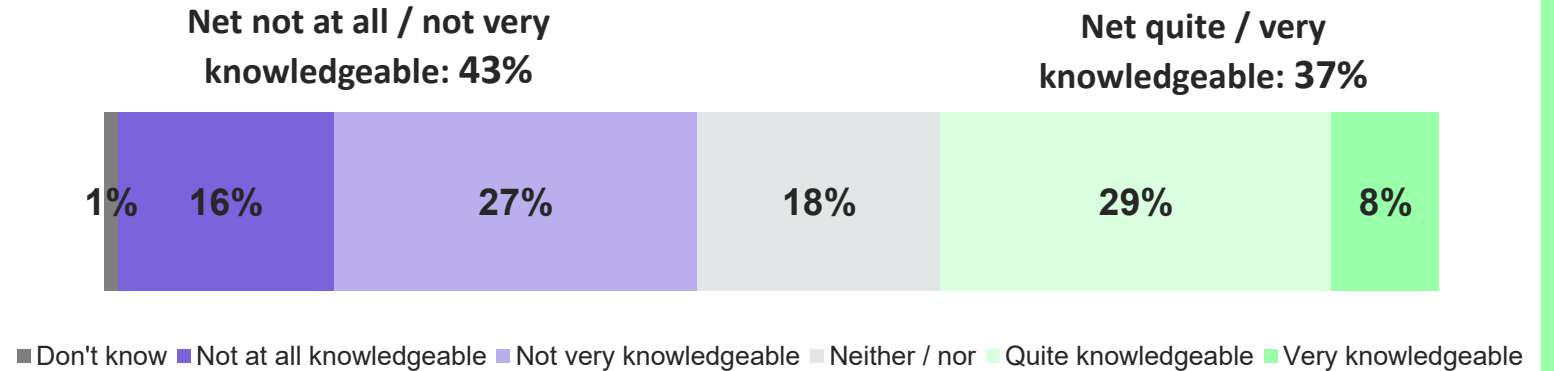
We surveyed 2024 and 2025 entry prospective undergraduates to understand how knowledgeable they felt their parent(s)/carer(s) were about the university application process.

Knowledge levels appeared to be mixed, with a slightly larger proportion feeling that their parents were either not at all or not very knowledgeable (43%) than quite or very knowledgeable (37%) about the process.

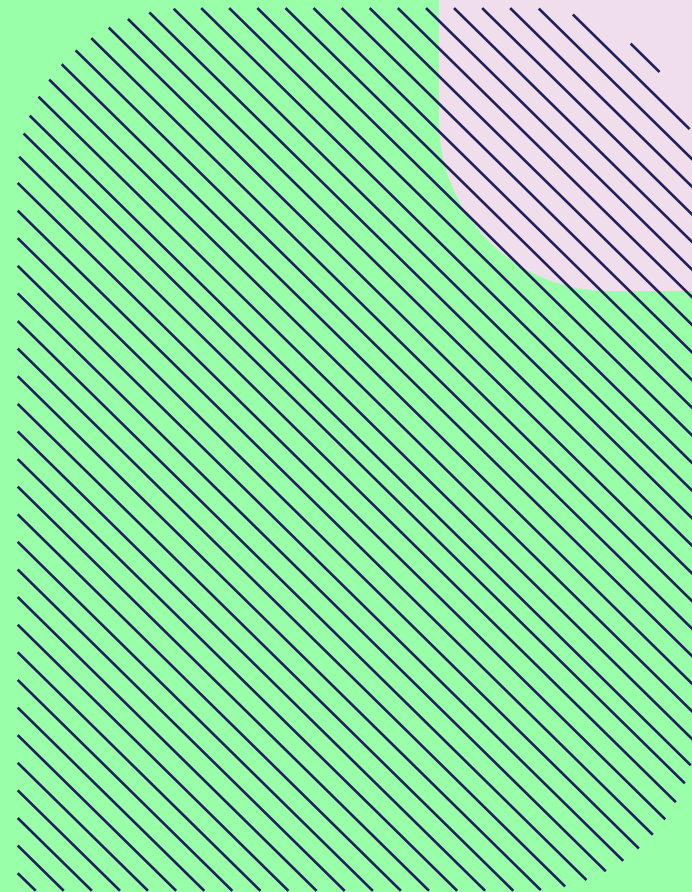
Those whose parent(s)/carer(s) went to university were more likely to feel that they would be very knowledgeable about the process (13%) than first in family respondents (3%).

Would you like to find out more about the influence parents have on university decision making? Our 2024 parents' summary is coming soon! Or alternatively, you can download the 2023 edition of our parents' research [here](#).

Q: How knowledgeable would you say your parent(s)/carer(s) were about the university application process? (Single response) (Base: 320 responses)



# Other news



## July registrations on site



1,391  
Year 11

3,100  
Year 12

2,673  
Year 13

While the past few months have been incredibly busy for universities and students alike, we've been moving fast at The Student Room too.

Before the buzz of Clearing takes hold, we wanted to remind you of the latest releases and exciting updates available to UPP Unlimited partners:

- **CAMPUS Lens** – our new live reporting dashboard powered by the advanced AI and data suite, CAMPUS Brain™. Access real-time data, including competitor comparisons and student journey insights from Year 11 to postgraduate level, providing unique and actionable insights to enhance your marketing and recruitment strategies.
- **Unlimited postgraduate leads** – similar to our UG data capture, driving more enquiries through to your university.
-  Let us know your preferred contact for PG leads if different from UG 
- **CRM integration** – seamlessly receive your UG and PG leads directly into your CRM system for more efficient follow ups.

## A snapshot of what's next to come for UPP Unlimited partners:

- **International leads** – expanding your lead generation to include international prospects alongside UG and PG leads.
- **Profile listings on The Uni Guide** – you'll have clear ownership of your profile and course listings with prominent lead buttons to drive data capture and conversion.
- **Owned discussions** – an evolution of our roadblocked forums, providing brand presence across even more forums where your university is being discussed.
- **Official Reps enhancements** – you'll be able to have even more Reps on site, supported by a new dedicated community hub, best practise templates and resources.