

Students' Union UCL's Active Bystander Programme

Term One Evaluation Report, 2022-2023

where **more** happens





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Content Warning

The following report includes information about the prevalence of sexual assault, rape, racial harassment and hate crimes.

Foreword

Every student should be able to have a safe university experience where they can study without facing unacceptable behaviours; I believe that our Active Bystander Programme plays a really central role in making this a reality for the students of UCL.

For too long, students have been ill-equipped to safely and effectively intervene when they witness unacceptable behaviours. To combat this, our programme trains UCL students to recognise and challenge problematic behaviours, such as bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct both on- and off-campus. Whilst the programme is only one part of our journey towards social and cultural change, it is incredible to see how many students are engaging with the training in such a meaningful way.

This report offers an overview of the work that has come before us, the journey that we've been on as a Students' Union, and an evaluation of where we are now. I hope that it provides people both within and outside of the UCL community with a thorough understanding of what it takes to run an active bystander programme, and some insight into where we are going next.

There is still a long way for us to go, but I am really proud of our Active Bystander Programme's impact in this space.

Seyi Osi
Equity & Inclusion Officer



Background: **Prevalence of Unacceptable Behaviour**

Many students in higher education (HE) encounter instances of unacceptable behaviour, such as bullying, harassment, and sexual misconduct. In fact, statistics show that students might be more vulnerable to certain behaviours than people in other occupations. For example, in 2020 full-time students were more likely to have experienced sexual assault in the previous year than people in other types of occupations, with 11.6% of female students and 4.2% of male students having an experience of sexual assault.¹ Meanwhile, a study at the University of West London reported that 25% of student participants had previously experienced cyberbullying.² Lastly, a 2019 inquiry into racial harassment in higher education in England, Scotland and Wales found that 24% of ethnic minority students had previously experienced racial harassment on their campus.³ Taken together, these findings shed light on the endemic scale of the issue within HE.

This alarming national issue is also reflected in reports of unacceptable behaviour at UCL. Between February 2020 and February 2021, UCL's reporting platform Report + Support received 234 reports of bullying, 155 reports of harassment and 56 reports of sexual misconduct.⁴ Given that the vast majority of incidents of unacceptable and unlawful behaviour in the UK go unreported, these figures likely represent a fraction of the problem. For instance, less than 40% of hate crimes in England and Wales are reported to the police, and only one in six women and one in five men who are raped report it to the police.^{5,6}

To help tackle the prevalence of unacceptable and unlawful behaviours, Students' Union UCL has developed and implemented a two-part Active Bystander Training Programme.



Background: **Prevalence of Unacceptable Behaviour** CONT.

The Power of Active Bystanders

An 'active bystander' is someone who witnesses harassment, bullying, microaggressions, or other harmful or inappropriate behaviour and chooses to intervene to stop the behaviour and help the person or people affected regain composure or get away from the harmful situation.⁷ The concept of being an 'active bystander' is not a new one. Since the 1960s, researchers have been seeking to understand human attitudes towards taking responsibility. A 1968 ground-breaking study by Darley and Latané found that when people believe there are other people around, they are less likely or slower to help a victim because they believe someone else will take responsibility.⁸ People may also assume that others are more qualified, or that their intervention will be unneeded or unwanted. Consequently, equipping students with the skills and confidence to intervene is vital if we are to see these unacceptable behaviours safely challenged.

All individuals have an important role in challenging unacceptable behaviour in their communities. Over the last two decades, several bystander training programmes have emerged and been implemented on college and university campuses in North America and the UK. Rather than treating students as potential perpetrators or victims, these programmes emphasise their role as members of the community with the power to prevent and challenge unacceptable behaviour. Although each bystander programme is unique, many share the same elements, such as teaching students to identify unacceptable behaviour and showing them how they can safely intervene if they encounter it. Evaluation of bystander programmes has shown that they can have a variety of positive outcomes on students' attitudes, beliefs and behaviours, including:

- Increased intent to help those who have been targeted⁹
- Increased confidence to helpfully intervene when witnessing unacceptable behaviour¹⁰
- Increased knowledge of intervention strategies¹¹
- Increased self-reported bystander helping behaviours¹²
- Increased pro-social attitudes¹³
- Decreased rape-supporting attitudes and acceptance of rape-myths¹⁴

Moreover, campuses where bystander training has been implemented have shown reduced rates of violence victimisation and violence perpetration by males compared to campuses that have not implemented training.¹⁵ Bystander training programmes can thus have a positive impact on campus culture by changing students' attitudes and beliefs and decreasing the prevalence of incidents of violence.

It is important to point out that research on the effectiveness of bystander training programmes has largely been done at colleges and universities across North America and there is currently a gap in studies examining the effect of these programmes across higher education institutions in the UK. However, studies conducted in North America can be used to inform the way we design, implement, and evaluate bystander initiatives in the UK.

Background: **Prevalence of Unacceptable Behaviour** CONT.

Looking to the future, HE institutions in England may have no choice but to implement and evaluate bystander initiatives. In February 2023, the Office for Students (OfS) proposed to impose a substantial condition of registration on providers in England in relation to harassment and sexual misconduct.¹⁶ The proposed condition of registration builds on the 2021 statement of expectations, and would see HE institutions be required to, among other things, deliver mandatory training.¹⁷ It is hoped that this will create a greater level of consistency across the sector. According to the OfS, this training should include guidance for potential witnesses to raise awareness of and prevent sexual misconduct. In the consultation, the OfS write:

“We have particularly emphasised that this training should be underpinned by credible evidence and evaluation which demonstrates measurable changes in attitudes and behaviours as a result of the training. Given the complexity of these issues, we would expect there to be an appropriate amount of time dedicated to mandatory training as well as an opportunity for attendees to ask questions.”

They also write that:

“A short online session at the beginning of a student’s higher education career that does not allow for questions and discussion, is unlikely to be sufficient to meet our proposed requirements.”

This report offers a complete overview and evaluation of Students’ Union UCL’s Active Bystander Programme.





Students' Union UCL's Active Bystander Programme

“I never used to think about what I would do if I ever witnessed any misconducts due to being scared that I might get myself in trouble, but now I feel more confident and comfortable in taking actions.”

Students' Union UCL's Active Bystander Programme empowers UCL students to identify and challenge unacceptable behaviour, helping to create a safer and more inclusive culture. Since launching, the programme has trained over 35,000 students and student staff.

The Programme's History

The Active Bystander Programme is now a core part of students' induction, aiming to ensure all students understand a range of unacceptable behaviours, including bullying, harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct, and are able to practically intervene if they witness or experience any of these unacceptable behaviours on campus or beyond. The programme consists of two parts – an online module available via the Students' Union website and a live workshop that is typically organised in collaboration with UCL's departments.

We are incredibly proud of the journey that we have been on over the last decade. But how did we get here?

2012

- UCL's first full-time Women's Officer passes the Students' Union Zero Tolerance to Sexual Harassment Policy

2013

- 'Hollaback! ULU Report Cross-campus sexual harassment research' released
- Students' Union UCL launched small-scale programme of consent workshops for students

2014

- Students' Union UCL launched the Zero Tolerance campaign, Zero Tolerance Pledges for clubs and societies, and Active Bystander workshops

2015

- Awarded funding from the UN to run a smallscale programme of consent workshops
- The Women's Officer presented 'Challenging Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence at UCL' paper to the Provost leading to the creation of a Provost backed three-year Action Plan to End Sexual Harassment and Violence

2016

- UCL and Students' Union UCL match-funded the programme. Students' Union UCL led on the delivery, whilst UCL reviewed policies and procedures
- Zero Tolerance pledges launched for departments.

2017

- Students' Union UCL introduced peer-facilitated workshops
- Students' Union UCL worked with UCL's EDI team to develop complementary staff training

2018

- Pledges became mandatory for clubs and societies
- The workshop became increasingly interactive and practical

2019 - 2021

- The programme became a 'core' part of the student induction timetable
- The online module was launched, and workshops moved online due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Pledges were discontinued to allow for efforts to be concentrated on reaching under-engaged departments

Students' Union UCL's Active Bystander Programme CONT.

The Current Programme

Students first complete the online module within their own time. This takes around 20-30 minutes and allows students to familiarise themselves with the definitions of common unacceptable behaviours, introduces them to the 4D framework of safe bystander intervention, walks them through example scenarios that illustrate how these behaviours might occur and provides them with information about support services available both on- and off-campus. At the end of the module, students take a short quiz to test their knowledge of the topics discussed in the training. Students must complete the online module sequentially.

“The live workshop was very straightforward and interactive. It was useful to go through the main points we also looked at in the self-taught module.”

After completing the online module, students attend a live workshop that is organised within their department and lasts around 75 minutes. In-person workshops are limited to 30 students, and online workshops are limited to 50 students. These workshops are peer-led; we employ and train students as workshop leaders to deliver in-person and online training sessions. The workshops build on the knowledge gained in the online module and teaches students practical skills that will allow them to safely intervene should they ever witness a situation where someone is being mistreated. These sessions also offer a chance for students to ask questions and discuss the content with their peers: “The scenarios at the end allowed us to critically apply the methods we learned earlier in the lesson and was a good way to hear other perspectives and ways of approaching issues.”

The 4Ds are four different types of action that individuals can take to deescalate a situation whilst remaining safe.

Direct Action: Individuals can choose to directly intervene in a situation, for example by asking the perpetrator to stop. Individuals should ensure that they do not escalate a situation further; they should remain calm and not engage in aggression or violence.

Distract: This intervention involves distracting either the person who is being targeted or the perpetrator with something unrelated to the situation. For example, if someone looks uncomfortable, an individual could deescalate the situation by interrupting and asking for directions or coming up to the person who is being targeted and pretending that they know them.

Delegate: If an individual is unsure about how they should approach the situation, they can delegate to someone more skilled or in a position of authority.

Delay: If an individual does not want to insert themselves into the situation, they can wait for it to pass and then check in with the person who was targeted and make sure they are okay.

Students' Union UCL's Active Bystander Programme CONT.

Managing the Programme

The current programme is run by Students' Union UCL's Policy and Research department. The team is comprised of four full-time staff members and one member of student staff. Moving forward, the union intends to grow the programme's reach both within UCL and externally. To aid in this the union has identified that an additional full-time member of staff is needed to support the running and expansion of the programme.

Workshop Leaders

Workshop leaders delivered over 300 workshops in one term.

Workshops are typically delivered in pairs.

Over the summer, 10 student workshop leaders were recruited.

Workshop leaders are paid the Real London Living Wage.

Given that the benefits of peer learning are widely recognised – with multiple studies finding that peer-led academic workshops result in improved grades, retention, and attitude – all general workshops are delivered by trained, student workshop leaders.^{18,19} This approach has been central to the programme's effective delivery and positive reception; without workshop leaders, successfully scaling up the programme would have been impossible.

Research has also shown that training and supervision of peer facilitators is essential to their effectiveness, both in terms of successful integration of programmes and peer facilitator confidence.^{20,21} Consequently, we have ensured that workshop leaders are provided with:

- Comprehensive training.
- Comprehensive workshop materials and guidance documents.
- Ongoing support where they can provide feedback, discuss concerns and challenges, and receive feedback from staff supervisors.

By employing students as workshop leaders, Students' Union UCL is also able to provide student workshop leaders: 1) Real Living Wage jobs; 2) personal development opportunities; 3) experience with public speaking.

“[I have liked] the opportunity to improve my public speaking skills! All my professors and tutors have remarked this, it's been endlessly helpful.”

Before delivering workshops, all workshop leaders undergo training. For the 2022/2023 academic year, this training included:

- An introduction and history of the programme (provided by Students' Union UCL)
- A half day workshop on facilitation skills (provided by Rape Crisis South London)
- Responding to disclosures (provided by UCL's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion team)
- An introduction to Report and Support (provided by UCL's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion team)
- A 'train the trainer' session (provided by Students' Union UCL)
- A half day workshop on handling difficult conversations (provided by Equality and Diversity UK)

All workshop leaders were also offered the opportunity to practice delivering the workshop with staff members.

Students' Union UCL's Active Bystander Programme CONT.

On average, workshop leaders rated the training sessions 4.3/5 (N = 8). The 'train the trainer' session on how to deliver the content was considered the most useful part of the training. Practice sessions were also well received, with all workshop leaders who attended finding them useful (N = 5).

"All of [the training sessions] were overall very engaging and feedback orientated, which I found super useful."

"I found the feedback provided by the trainers was very insightful. There was constant support and encouragement."

"I really liked interacting with everyone. [Introduction to Facilitation Skills] felt like a safe space that was secure enough to productively carry the heaviness of these topics."

In addition to seeking their feedback on training sessions, we also asked workshop leaders to provide general feedback on their role and the programme. Because of the amount of time workshop leaders spend directly interacting with students throughout the year, they often have valuable insight into how the programme is being received and what improvements could be made. Furthermore, being proactive in seeking their feedback helps workshop leaders feel supported in their role and empowered to contact us with any issues or queries.

"[I like] being able to engage in pertinent discussions on social responsibility: learning to adapt to a wide range of opinions and having productive discussions even if they included conflicting opinions."

"[I like] being able to contribute to making the campus a safer/ more inclusive place."

"The ABT team is very supportive and flexible and I am grateful for having managers who have understood my pressures as an MA student with so much empathy and kindness."

As a quality assurance measure, we observe each workshop leader facilitating a session. These observations are done by our student Project Assistant, who provides short, face-to-face feedback to all workshop leaders after observing their sessions. This also provides workshop leaders with the opportunity to ask any questions about the content of the training or discuss situations that they have encountered while running sessions.



Students' Union UCL's Active Bystander Programme CONT.

Evaluating the Programme

After completing the online module and live workshop, students are invited to complete feedback forms. There is one feedback form for each component. In both, students are asked to rate how useful they found the training, to rate their agreement with the statement, "I understand what constitutes as bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct both on campus and online", and to provide additional open text responses about what they found most useful, and what could be improved. For the live workshops there are additional questions regarding the quality of the workshop leader(s).

As part of this feedback, students are also asked to provide demographic data (level of study, department, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and disability). This information is collected to enable us to see if there are difference in participants' experiences based on their personal characteristics. Providing this information is optional for students.

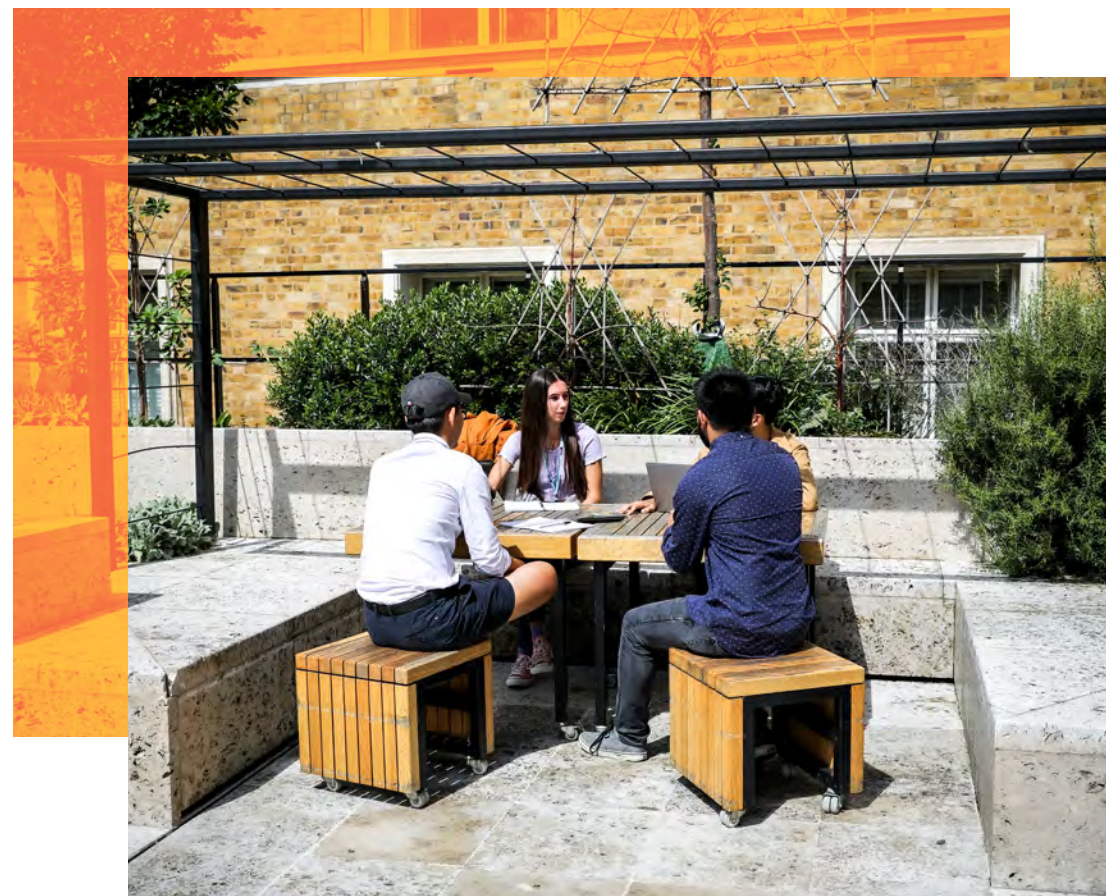
This evaluation has been central to monitoring the programme's impact and its ongoing development.

Bespoke Workshops

"She introduced lots of interesting discussions and allowed us to open up to each other about experiences [in our department]"

In summer 2022, we started working more closely with several departments and research groups to run bespoke workshops. These bespoke workshops were aimed at departments which had either shown low engagement in the programme previously or who had raised particular concerns or issues within their department. For example, environmental investigations undertaken in the Bartlett School of Architecture and the Slade School of Fine Art resulted in us developing and delivering bespoke training for their students. Bespoke training was also created for certain educational contexts (such as academic fieldwork) and

certain student demographic groups (such as postgraduate research students). The bespoke workshops cover topics that are particularly pertinent for their students – such as staff on student misconduct, misconduct in academia or misconduct during fieldwork. These workshops have enabled us to deliver high quality, targeted training to undergraduate and postgraduate students alike.





Online Module: Evaluation

Between September and December 2022, 4004 students completed the online module. This equates to 8% of all UCL students (N = 4004/51058).

52% of participants were undergraduate, 43% postgraduate taught, and 5% postgraduate research. Given that postgraduate taught students only make up 36% of the UCL student population, and that data from the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) 2022 shows that overall engagement for postgraduate taught students is down by 3.0 percentage points since 2016, their engagement with the programme is particularly impressive.^{22,23} In comparison, postgraduate research student engagement continues to be a challenge.

Completion varied between faculty and departments.

The five faculties with the highest percentage of students completing the online module based on the total number of students per faculty were:

1. Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment → 15% (N = 614/4172)
2. Laws → 13% (N = 180/1343)
3. Medical Sciences → 12% (N = 471/4073)
4. Brain Sciences → 11% (N = 414/3924)
5. Mathematical & Physical Sciences → 9% (N = 475/5536)

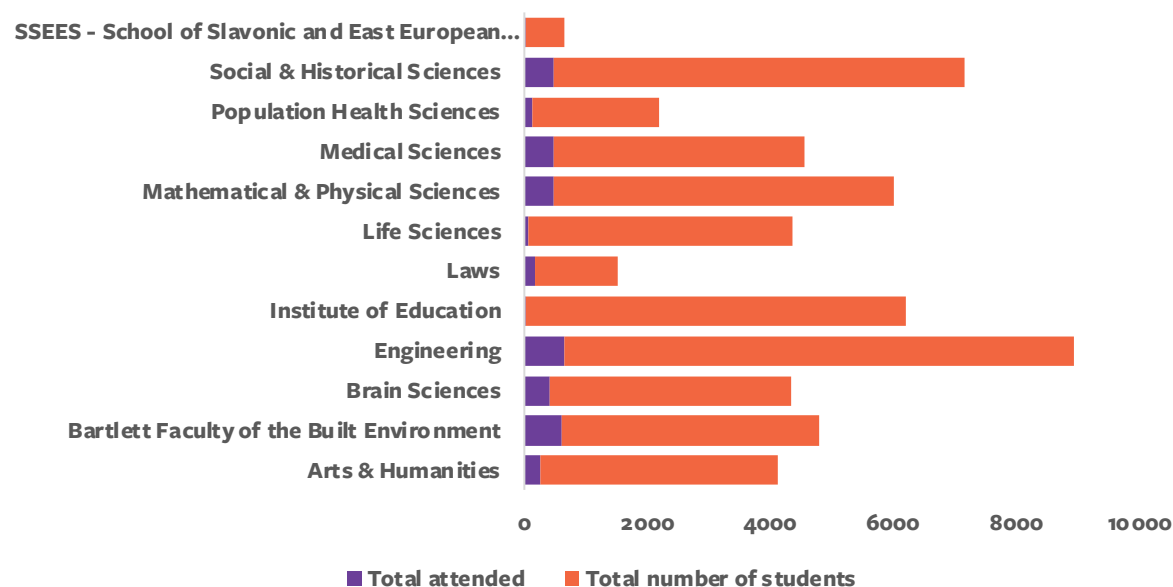


Figure 1: Bar chart showing responses to the question: 'Overall, how useful was the online module?'. N=4004

Online Module: **Evaluation** CONT.

After completing the online module:

- 78% of respondents agreed that the online module was useful (N = 3037/3895).
- 96% of respondents agreed that they understood what constitutes as bullying, harassment, and discrimination (N = 3724/3895).

For both questions there was no significant difference between demographics (including ethnicity, gender, level of study and fee status).

Overall, how useful was the online module?

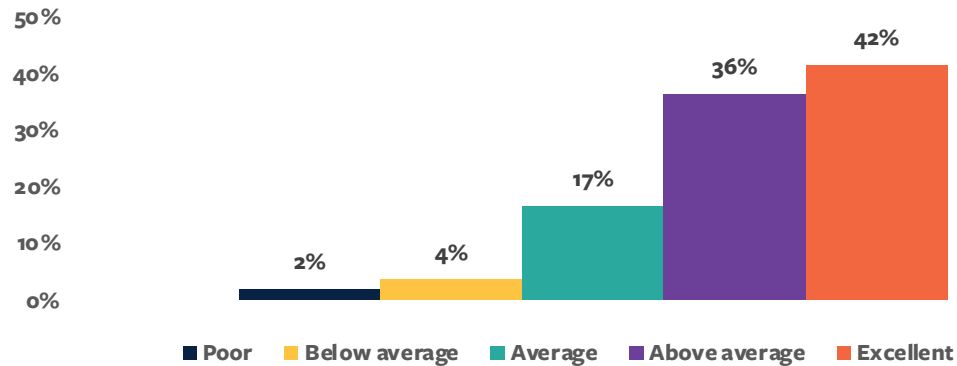


Figure 2. Bar chart showing responses to the question: ‘Overall, how useful was the online module?’. N=3895

In addition to providing quantitative feedback on the module, students also provided qualitative feedback. Students were asked “What did you find most useful about the online module?” and “What could be improved about the online module?”. They were also given the opportunity to provide any additional feedback or comments. Based on these responses we have identified six key themes.



Online Module: **Evaluation** CONT.

Programme Structure

“The way that the online module was structured, it allowed you to proceed at your own pace to fully understand each of the definitions and how to react rather than my feeling rushed.”

The programme is structured in two parts: an online module and a live workshop. Although the programme is not considered mandatory, UCL supports Students' Union UCL through positioning it as a core part of a students' induction to UCL.²⁴ Many departments also support the programme through incorporating it into their departmental induction programme. Most students who complete the training have followed this path. In their feedback, many students expressed that knowing their peers have completed the training makes them feel safer on campus, and that it suggests the university cares about them. Some students also felt that it should be mandatory for all students at UCL.

“Make this course mandatory for all students; it seems not everyone has done or intends to do it.”

“[I like] the fact that all students have to take it which ensures that no one will be ignorant towards these issues on campus/online.”

“I genuinely appreciate this great initiative, and this module has strengthened my faith that we can all contribute to a better society and world in general. I suggest that a module like this should be established in every workplace, business, institution, university etc. worldwide!”

If the programme is to effect real culture change, it is imperative that as many students as possible partake in the training; if all students are aware of what constitutes as unacceptable behaviour, then the cultural norms on campus will shift, resulting in a safer community. Overall, students rated the two-component structure of the programme positively. They appreciated that the module is online, self-paced and freely accessible for them to revisit the content if necessary. Whilst some students expressed discontent at duplication between the online module and live workshop, the majority of students reported that completing the online module prior to attending a workshop allowed them to become

familiar with the content of the programme and engage better with the live session: “I can learn the knowledge in advance and conduct the face-to-face course better.”

“[I like that] I can work through it at my own pace, and it is very informative and interactive.”

“[It was] Easy to follow through at your own pace.”

Most students indicated that it took them between 15-30 minutes to complete the online module. Analysis found that increased time spent completing the training did not correlate with an increased understanding of what constitutes as bullying, harassment, and discrimination. This may be due to a combination of factors. For example, students who spent less than 10 minutes may have sped through due to an existing confidence in their understanding of unacceptable behaviours, whereas students who spent more than 30 minutes may have taken longer because they struggled to comprehend the content. It is therefore useful to ask students how long they spent so that future students/ departments can be given an accurate guide, but it should not be used to measure student understanding.



Figure 3: Stacked bar chart showing responses to the question ‘How long did it take you to complete the online training?’. N=4004

In their responses, students were divided on the time taken to complete the module. Whilst some commented that the module was “extremely quick and easy to understand” while “covering all the necessary information” and increasing their understanding of unacceptable behaviour, others remarked that it was “too extensive” and “could be shorter”. These negative comments often intersected with a desire for the training to be more interactive. On balance, comments relating to the programme structure were weighted 54% positive to 43% negative.

Online Module: **Evaluation** CONT.

Presentation

The module is divided into four sections. Each section includes a mixture of text, videos, short quizzes, and other interactive activities. These interactive elements have been incorporated to keep students engaged and to prompt them to effectively engage with the content presented in the module. Students appreciated the use of different types of media and the interactive nature of the module, with many feeling that it helped consolidate their knowledge: "I like the quiz which helps consolidate your knowledge at the end." 227 students spoke positively about the inclusion of videos, and 172 found the quiz the most helpful aspect of the module.

"I really like the interactive flow of the online module"

"The videos were very helpful for me to understand and remember certain key points by visual representation rather than just reading about bullying and harassment."

"The online module is interactive which allows students to stay focused. The information shared is clear, concise and useful."

"Really clearly laid out and straight to the point which made it easier to remember key information. Enjoyed the mixed media elements and quick quizzes to check I was retaining the information."

When giving suggestions for improvement, students asked for additional interactive elements to replace some of the text-heavy sections of the module. In particular, students asked for more videos, quizzes, and scenario-based activities to make the module more dynamic and impactful: "More interactive videos would make the course more visual and impactful than reading." This feedback will be incorporated into the module moving forward.

Definitions

"I found it very helpful to have the specific definitions of each type of misconduct (harassment, bullying, sexual misconduct... etc). This made it clearer and easier to distinguish between them and understand what each one consists of."

Students appreciated the inclusion of clear definitions including bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, microaggressions, hate crimes and hate incidents. They indicated that the definitions were clear and easy to grasp: "[I liked] How clearly defined the terms were and how common misconceptions were clarified." Students specifically commented on how the module clearly explained differences between behaviours which might seem similar, such as bullying and harassment or hate incidents and hate crimes.

"It helped me become familiar with definitions and words I previously confused or didn't know. It also opened my eyes on micro-aggressions and situations I previously didn't think were offensive."

"[There were] clear definitions and delineations about behaviours that are sometimes treated interchangeably."

"I found the definitions useful as it illustrates the difference between the different topics explored (harassment, bullying, sexual consent, etc)."

Students also found it useful that the module covered the 2010 Equality Act and provided an outline of the nine legally protected characteristics. This information was especially useful to international students who might not have been familiar with UK law prior to engaging with the module: "[I liked] The way it clearly outlines the legislation that is in place to prevent discrimination."

Importantly, providing students with clear definitions gives them a basis for common understanding; it is through this common understanding that they can join together as a community to combat unacceptable behaviour.

Online Module: **Evaluation** CONT.

4Ds

The module introduces students to the 4D framework. This framework provides students with four methods of intervention that they can use if they witness unacceptable behaviour. Throughout the framework, safety is always prioritised; being an active bystander is the goal, but not at the expense of an individual's safety.

Students praised the 4D framework for being “memorable”, easily actioned, and providing them with “choices”.

“The 4Ds are memorable, allowing a bystander to easily recall what options are available to them.”

“I found the four methods given to intervene against the negative conducts described very useful.”

“The acts that I can conduct when I witness unacceptable behaviours, now I have more choices and could handle them properly.”

Consistently, students appreciated that the module emphasises that there are multiple ways to intervene and that they don't have to engage in a direct confrontation with a perpetrator in order to help another person: “[The module] helped me to understand the methods I could use to diffuse the situation instead of direct intervention and that it is not always necessary to directly intervene if other methods are available.”

Students also indicated that learning about the 4Ds has encouraged them to take action if they witness inappropriate behaviour in the future and that the module has prepared them to use the strategies in practice: “I learnt more about how to deal with situations regarding bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct. I feel prepared to put these skills into action.”

“The 4D's [were most useful]. It's difficult to know how to react or take action against certain situations, but these methods were easy to understand and felt effective.”

Scenarios

“I loved the example scenarios, they were really engaging.”

After learning about the 4Ds, students are presented with various interactive scenarios and asked to consider what method of intervention they would use. The scenarios are provided to help students understand what inappropriate behaviour might look like in real life. Many students expressed that these examples prepared them to identify unacceptable behaviours in their own lives: “The difference between the different terms and how various scenarios were provided to understand the terms better [was most useful].”

Students indicated that the scenarios allowed them to reflect on inappropriate behaviour more deeply and to use the knowledge they gained throughout the module in a practical context: “I found the explanations and the examples very useful and I think that the scenario exercises built nicely on the theoretical part by allowing us to reflect more deeply on how we would react in a real-life situation.”

“I really liked the fact it was interactive and actually presented me with scenarios. It's easy to get lost in legal jargon and get ‘tunnel vision’ regarding what harassment and bullying ‘should’ or ‘typically’ look like, so the scenarios were really useful to me!”

“The scenarios walking us through what we should do if we were to encounter any of these in our day-to-day lives [were useful]. They were very informative and engaging and allowed us to realise that there are multiple approaches to the situation and how we should put these into practice.”

When asked to consider what improvements could be made to the module, students suggested there should be more scenarios, with a specific focus on disability, hate incidents and hate crimes. Students also asked for more complex or grey-area scenarios where ‘solutions’ seem less straightforward. This aligned with feedback on the quizzes used throughout the module, with students wanting to be further challenged “where the answer is less obvious”.

Online Module: **Evaluation** CONT.

Empowerment

“[The module] has equipped me with crucial information on what I can do if I am faced with a scenario that is seen as discriminatory and what I can do to report the behaviour/act or what I can do to intervene with the situation without escalating it.”

In addition to providing theoretical and practical knowledge, students indicated that the module has made them realise the impact they can have as bystanders: “You are reminded of the impact you can have on a daily basis by actively observing your environment and taking action when needed.”

Students also reported that the module has made them feel more empowered and confident to challenge unacceptable behaviour: “The module helped me to clearly differentiate the terms bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, hate crime and hate incident. It also awaked me to observe if these things are happening around me and give me the confidence to raise the voice if something wrong is happening around me.” This ties in with a key aim of the training which is to give students the confidence and skills to identify and challenge unacceptable behaviour in their communities.

“The online module was really insightful, giving clear definitions of hate crime, bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct. It also taught me different ways to intervene if I ever witness a person being mistreated, depending on the situation. I now feel I know more about how I can report such behaviour if I witness it or experience it myself.”

The module provides students with information on how they can report unacceptable behaviour and where they can get support on campus. This has made students feel more confident to ask for help if they are faced with a situation of inappropriate behaviour: “It really helps me become familiar with the policy against bullying, harassment, discrimination and hate crime in the UK and actually makes me feel safer and free to ask for help and consult about those tough things.”

“It’s good that we are being made to inform ourselves. I want to be able to ensure that I can avoid harassment and bullying etc., but also be active in preventing it from happening to others, and a course like this being made is really helpful, so thank you :)”





Live Workshops

In term one, 3535 students attended a live workshop. This equated to 7% of all UCL students (N = 3535/51058). 50% of participants were undergraduate, 45% postgraduate taught, and 5% postgraduate research. As with the online module, postgraduate taught student engagement was above expected levels. Completion varied between faculty and departments.

The five faculties with the highest percentage of attendees based on the total number of students per faculty were:

1. Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment → 19% (N = 778/4172)
2. Laws → 15% (N = 188/1343)
3. Arts & Humanities → 12% (N = 431/3853)
4. Medical Sciences → 10% (N = 397/4073)
5. Social & Historical Sciences → 8% (N = 456/6672)

After completing the in-person live workshop:

- 82% of respondents agreed that the live workshop was useful (N = 2170/2650).
- 86% of respondents agreed that they feel more prepared to intervene after attending the workshop (N = 2295/2650).

After completing the online live workshop:

- 82% of respondents agreed that the live workshop was useful (N = 720/885).
- 85% of respondents agreed that they feel more prepared to intervene after attending the workshop (N = 756/885).

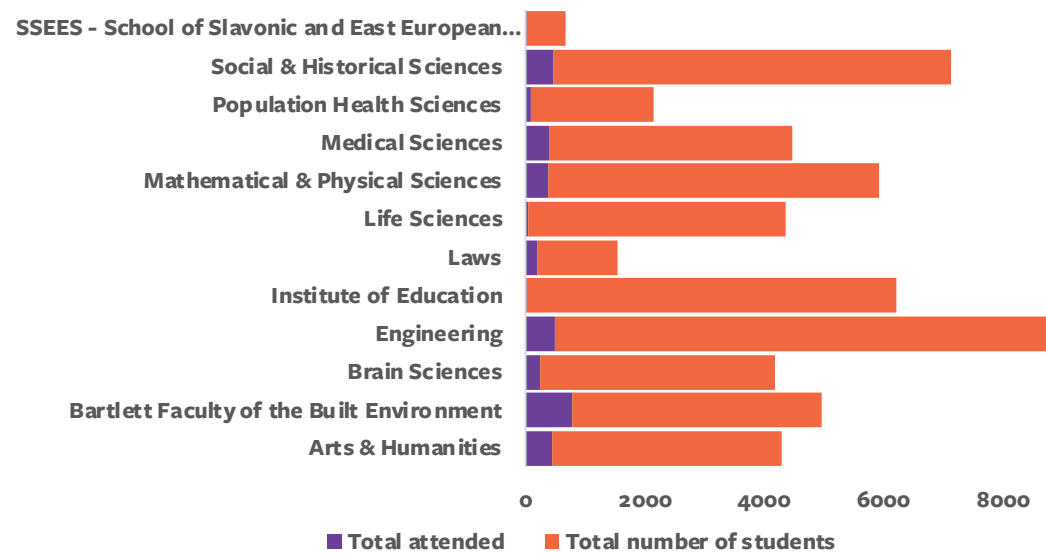


Figure 4. Stacked bar chart showing student engagement by faculty.

Live Workshops CONT.

Figure 5. Clustered column bar chart showing responses to the question: 'Overall, how useful was the online module?'. N = 3535

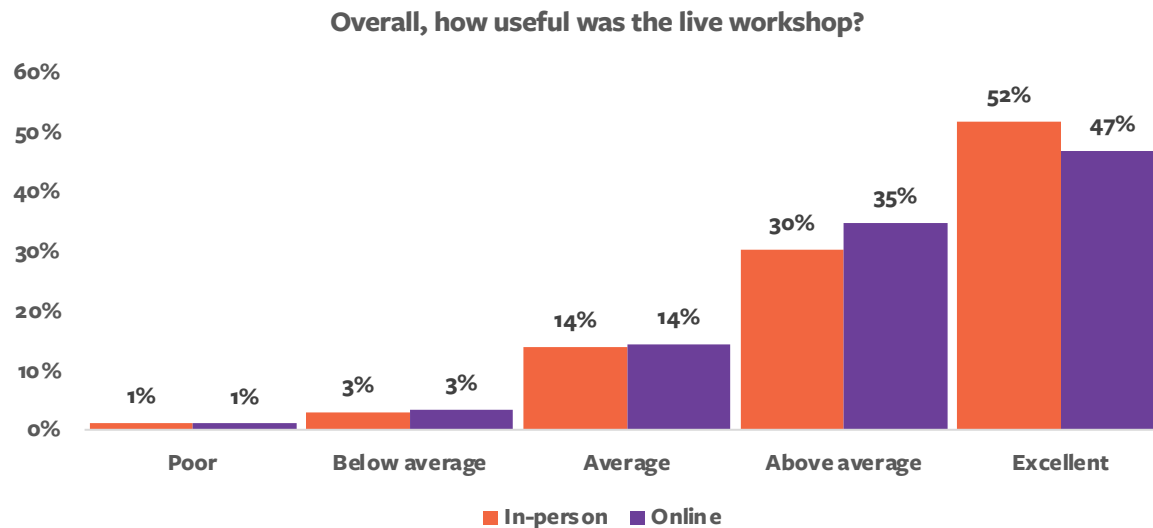
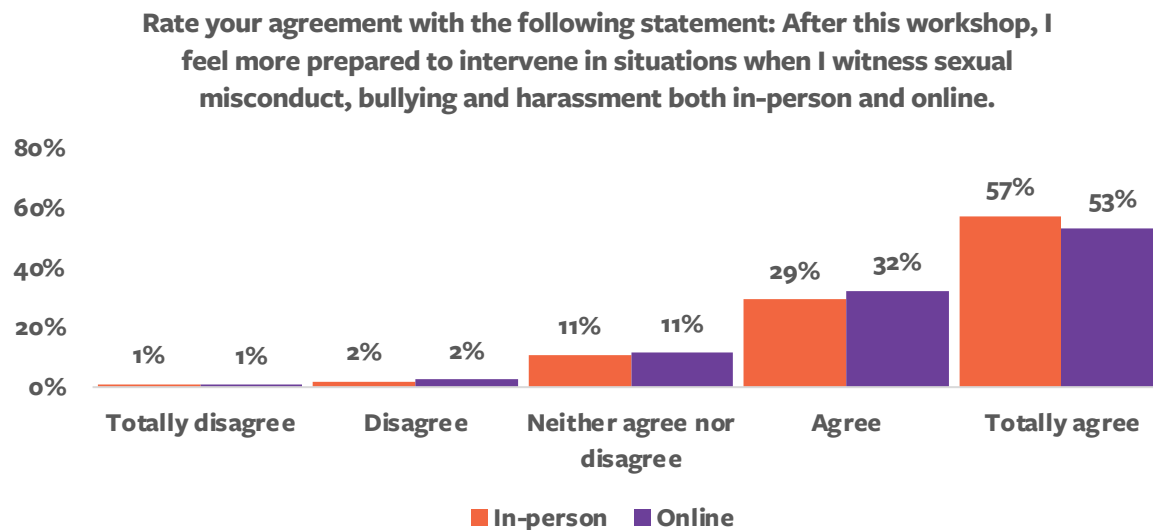


Figure 6. Clustered column bar chart showing agreement to the following statement: 'After this workshop, I feel more prepared to intervene in situations when I witness sexual misconduct, bullying and harassment both in-person and online'. N = 3535



Live Workshops CONT.

Demographic Differences

Demographic feedback was collected to see if there are differences in participants' experiences based on their personal characteristics. Where significant differences were found, they are shown below.

Postgraduate taught students were more likely to rate workshop leaders highly than both undergraduate and postgraduate research students ($p = <0.001$).

Postgraduate taught students were more likely to find the workshop useful than both undergraduate and postgraduate research students ($p = <0.001$).

Postgraduate taught students were more likely to feel more prepared to intervene after attending the workshop than both undergraduate and postgraduate research

Women were significantly more likely to rate their workshop leader highly than men ($p = <0.001$).

International students were significantly more likely than Home and EU students to find the workshop useful ($p = <0.001$).

International students were significantly more likely than Home students to feel more prepared to intervene after attending the workshop ($p = <0.05$).

International students were significantly more likely than Home students to feel more prepared to intervene after attending tAsian students were significantly more likely than White, Black, and Mixed-ethnicity students to find the workshop useful ($p = <0.001$).

Asian students were significantly more likely than White and Mixed-ethnicity students to feel more prepared to intervene after attending the workshop ($p = <0.001$).



Live Workshops CONT.

Figure 7. Means plot showing mean response by ethnicity to the following statement: 'After this workshop, I feel more prepared to intervene in situations when I witness sexual misconduct, bullying and harassment both in-person and online'. N = 3535

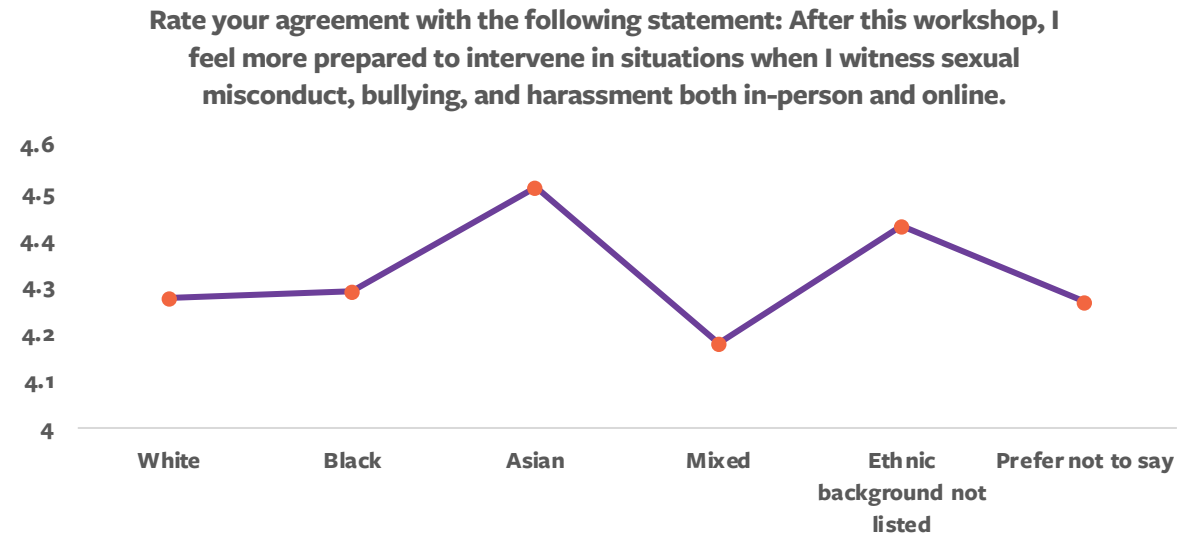
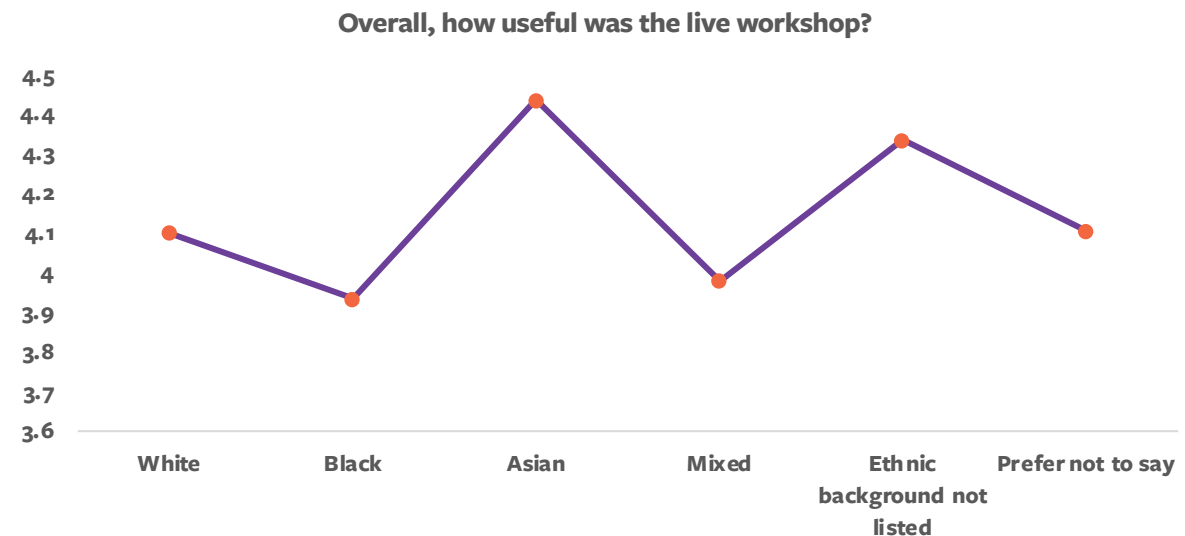


Figure 8. Means plot showing mean response by ethnicity to the question: "Overall, how useful was the live workshop?" N = 3535



Live Workshops CONT.

In addition to providing quantitative feedback on the module, students also provided qualitative feedback. Students were asked “What did you find most useful about the live workshop?” and “What could be improved about the live workshop?”. They were also given the opportunity to provide additional feedback for the workshop leader who led their session, or to provide any general feedback or comments. Based on these responses we have identified five key themes.

Scenario Discussions

“Through the discussion of real-life scenarios provided in the workshop, I learned what should I do to be an active bystander and effective strategies to tackle issues such as harassment, bullying or other issues that might happen in daily life.”

In the live workshops, students receive a brief summary of the content that was covered in the online module. The summary covers the definitions of unacceptable behaviours, the 4Ds and support resources available to students at UCL. This summary is particularly helpful for students who might not have completed the online module before attending a workshop. Students then spend the majority of the session discussing real-life scenarios in small groups.

Students commented on the fact that the scenarios helped them understand how different intervention strategies could be implemented in real life situations: “The breakdown of what bystanders can do (the 4Ds) is useful, but things are usually more nuanced or blurry in real life so talking about real life scenarios was helpful.” Moreover, students appreciated discussing scenarios and intervention strategies with their peers as this gave them the chance to hear a range of opinions and consider various intervention strategies: “Running through and discussing the given scenarios was very useful.

“It was helpful to know how other people would respond to each situation.”

“There was opportunity to discuss some scenarios with other people and hear their opinions, which I think is helpful for expanding our own perspective/views

and allows for more open-minded thinking.”

Example Scenario

One of the students in your course – Ben – communicated to the other students and staff early in the year that their pronouns are they/them. Most of the other students were happy to use the correct pronouns, however there is one student on your course – Claire – who was less accepting.

Claire often rolls her eyes when she hears other students using Ben’s correct pronouns, and never uses the correct ones herself. A few weeks ago, one of the staff members politely corrected her, and she apologised and said it was accidental. However, she has since continued to use the incorrect pronouns and you can tell it is making Ben feel uncomfortable in the group.

- What type of unacceptable behaviour is happening here? Could this be considered bullying?
- What method of bystander intervention could you use and why would you use that method?

While discussing the scenarios, students are given prompts to guide their conversations, such as what type of behaviour the scenario is describing and what intervention strategies they could use. As a result of this, students felt that the scenario discussions gave them a chance to integrate the knowledge they have gained from the module and the workshop: “The scenarios put together everything learnt on the online course well.”

“The scenarios at the end allowed us to critically apply the methods we learned earlier in the lesson and was a good way to hear others’ perspectives and ways of approaching issues.”

Students also reported that discussing scenarios with their peers has made them feel more confident in challenging unacceptable behaviour: “The different scenario discussions made me more confident about approaching these situations.” They generally agreed

Live Workshops CONT.

that the scenarios were applicable to “everyday university life”, “realistic” and “relatable”. Moreover, students indicated that the discussions made the workshops more engaging and interactive.

“The scenarios that we discussed in groups were very engaging and people could relate to them to different extents.”

When asked what could be improved, students commented on the fact that they were interested in covering more scenarios and that overall, there was not enough time dedicated to scenario discussions. This could be due to the fact that workshop leaders sometimes spent more time on summarising the online module content rather than discussing scenarios: “We ran out of time in the end not being able to go through all the case scenarios.”

Moreover, students suggested the workshops could cover a more diverse range of scenarios: “Perhaps a slightly more diverse range of scenarios would allow for further and more developed discussions on a wider range of potential incidents.” Finally, some students reported that the scenarios “were not realistic”. These issues could be related to which scenarios were chosen by the workshop leaders delivering the session. Workshop leaders have the option to choose from a collection of eleven scenarios, some of which cover similar topics as well as some that might not be relatable to all students. In the future, workshop leaders could be instructed to choose a variety of scenarios in order to allow students to discuss a wider range of unacceptable behaviours.

“A few more interactive scenarios, or for example choosing various interventions and seeing the impact each would have in one situation.”

Peer Engagement

“Both [workshop leaders] were great! Engaging and informative, felt nice to be speaking with peers instead of professors.”

Each live workshop must be attended by at least five students to increase engagement and make group discussions possible. Due to constraints with the size of bookable rooms, we have set the capacity of in-person workshops at 30 students, while offering a slightly larger capacity of 50 students for online workshops. While workshops in term one were generally well-attended, attendance decreased in term two. This resulted in a considerable number of workshops being cancelled.

Nevertheless, students reported that learning as a group improved their experience of the workshop, making it “more realistic” and “practical”. Similarly to the online module, knowing that their peers have taken part in the training has made students feel safer in the community: “Seeing other people taking part and feeling more safe that this issue is brought up as important.” Students also expressed that hearing from others was “helpful for expanding their own perspective”, and that this mutual sharing of perspectives allowed for “more open-minded thinking”.

When commenting on peer engagement, students suggested that the workshops should be attended by more students in order to increase engagement: “[It] would be better if groups were bigger and more people attended for discussion, but that cannot be helped.”

“[The workshop would be better] if there was a bigger group of people to have more nuanced discussions perhaps and to hear more views.”

It was also suggested that the workshops should include activities where the group interacts as a whole rather than just activities in smaller groups, such as the scenario discussions: “Maybe more chance for larger interactive things, rather than just in small groups.”

Lastly, although many students rated the group discussions positively, some felt that there should be more facilitation throughout as “it can get a bit awkward”. This could be achieved by encouraging workshop leaders to check in with the groups and offer additional prompts to guide their discussions. Additional training may also be necessary to ensure that workshop leaders have the confidence and skills to do this effectively.

Live Workshops CONT.

Signposting

“I didn’t realise there were that many support services available.”

During the workshop, students are given an overview of the support services available at UCL. These include UCL’s reporting platform Report + Support, the Students’ Union’s Advice Service, or SafeZone, a safety app that allows students to call UCL security to their location.

Anecdotally, we found that most students were not aware of Report + Support, even if they had studied at UCL for multiple years. As such, students appreciated being introduced to the platform and being made aware of their reporting options: “I learned important information especially where to report any harassment and how to report it.”

“[The workshop] enabled me to understand how to deal with different situations and who I can contact if I experience any of these situations.”

Similarly to Report + Support, most students were either unaware of SafeZone or unsure of how to use it:

“The explanation of the SafeZone app was very useful because I personally didn’t know I had access to such resources.”

Overall, student feedback suggests that the live workshops successfully raise awareness of support resources available to students at UCL and teach them how to engage with them. Notably, most students seem to have been unaware of UCL’s support resources prior to attending a workshop, suggesting that there is a need to improve the way these resources are currently marketed to students.

“[I] downloaded the SafeZone app which makes me feel better prepared to handle different situations.”

“The speakers gave a list of useful resources for being able to report or deal with misconduct or bullying or harassment.”



Live Workshops CONT.

Duplication

“I liked the interactive discussions, but I was aware of most of the material from the online course already.”

Throughout the feedback, duplication was a contentious issue. Whilst some students felt that the live workshop spent too long echoing material from the online module, others valued the opportunity to consolidate their learning.

“The live workshop was very straightforward and interactive. It was useful to go through the main points we also looked at in the self-taught module.”

“I felt that the live workshop repeated a lot of what was covered in the online session and could’ve benefitted from more interactive exercises and a short summary of what was covered in the online workshop.”

“The first portion was covering the same information as the online quiz; it would be better if this was shorter, and more focus was on the scenarios and conversations.”

Based on this feedback, workshop leaders have been encouraged to check – via a show of hands at the start of the session – who has completed the online module. If the majority have completed it, they are instructed to use the slides as a steppingstone for students to ask questions, rather than reiterating the same content. Through taking this approach, students are provided with the opportunity to recap their learning, whilst also allowing for additional time to cover the interactive scenarios in more detail - something which participants consistently asked for.

Workshop Leaders

“The workshop leader was very interactive, kind and approachable which made the whole experience and workshop even more interesting and enjoyable.”

Students who attended an in-person live workshop were significantly ($p = <0.001$) more likely to rate their workshop leader(s) highly than those who attended an online workshop (73%, $N = 1932/2646$ vs 65%, $N = 579/885$). Although this could raise concerns regarding the continuation of online workshops, given that there was no significant difference found for usefulness or understanding, online workshops should still be considered as effective as in-person workshops. Rather, this difference may reflect students’ preference to return to in-person learning and directly engage with the lecturers and content.²⁵



Live Workshops CONT.

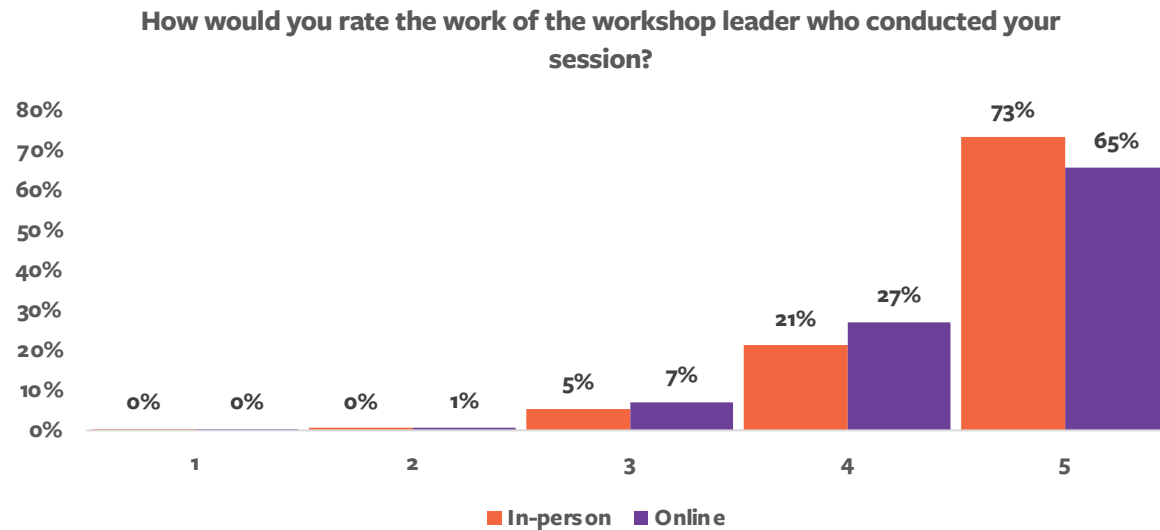


Figure 9. Clustered column bar chart showing response to: “How would you rate the work of the workshop leader who conducted your session?” N = 3535

Based on the qualitative responses, the most reported reasons for satisfaction with workshop leaders were quality of delivery and their ability to answer questions. When discussing the quality of delivery, students often remarked that the workshop leaders discussed topics with clarity, offering clear, concise explanations.

“The workshop leader did a really good job of explaining and had a good understanding of the field.”

“The workshop leaders created a great space. [They] were very knowledgeable, clear and concise.”

Workshop leaders were also praised for their ability to create a “friendly and safe environment” where students felt that they could meaningfully engage with the content. Central to this was the workshop leaders’ approachability, as well as their ability to manage and participate in discussions as and when they arose. Given the content of the workshops, these discussions often had the potential to cause participant’s distress. Consequently, being adept at confidently handling these situations was imperative.

“He was really nice and skilled and able to prevent a possible escalation about racism.”

“They kept the good energy and managed tense situations properly.”

Live Workshops CONT.

When students were dissatisfied with workshop leaders, it was often due to a lack of interaction: “It didn’t feel very interactive. We answered a couple of questions and did a rushed scenario at the end where hardly anyone spoke.” This dissatisfaction fits into a wider piece regarding how we can enhance the interactivity of the workshops. It also raises questions regarding how we can ensure that workshop leaders have the confidence to go ‘off-script’ and engage the room beyond the set content.

When workshop leaders did go beyond the content, this was consistently well received:

“The hosts were very engaging, gave their own opinions and insights and helped foster discussion.”

“The two workshop presenters were brilliant - they took time to read chat responses and responded to questions quickly.”

“[The] workshop leader was very nice and charismatic and elaborated on the points well.”

To help develop the workshop leaders’ ability to do this, members of our team have undertaken external Train the Trainer training from Equality and Diversity UK to ensure that we are equipped as a team to support the personal development of the students undertaking these roles.²⁶

Organisation and Management

“The room changed last minute with no notice so [it] wasn’t organised the best.”

Based on qualitative comments, organisation and management were the weakest aspects of the programme. Issues included workshop timetabling, communication, and the location (online versus in-person delivery) of the workshops.

When delivered in-person, certain rooms presented an issue because they were hard to find, changed at the last minute with inadequate communication, or not suited to effective workshop delivery/ engagement.

“Needs a better room, it made the session very difficult to listen to.”

“Better space – in a less spread-out room.”

“It is a very valuable space, the information is relevant. Selection of venue can be improved.”

“Please make sure the space booked is a private room where everyone can sit and discuss comfortably.”

When delivered online, technical issues caused disruption to a small number of workshops. This was often because technical instructions were not followed and so breakout rooms did not function as intended: “I could not see the scenario [on-screen] in the breakout room”. When breakout rooms were set-up correctly, participants felt that the scenario discussions were “useful to apply what [they] had learnt”.

Interestingly, students remained divided on whether they wanted the live workshop to be in-person or online. For some, they felt that “online would be better” due to time and financial constraints, whilst others felt that it is “easier to discuss things in person” and that in person is “more likely to stick with an individual”. Given that workshops will continue to be offered both in-person and online going forward, this divide in opinion does not present an issue, but it does ask the question of whether students should be given a choice of location rather than allocated an in-person or online workshop by their department.



Where Next?

Over the last seven years, more than 35,000 students have engaged with the Active Bystander Programme. Considering the lessons that we have learned and the feedback that we have received from students, we hope to continuously improve the programme and increase its impact, both at UCL and in HE more broadly. There are several steps that we plan to take in the upcoming year to achieve this, including:

Workshop Leaders

- Employ more workshop leaders.
- Develop a programme of ongoing personal development for workshop leaders.
- Train all workshop leaders to use UCL's audio-visual equipment.
- Empower workshop leaders to feel able to go beyond the content and answer questions with confidence.

Organisation and Management

- Improve communication channels between Students' Union UCL, UCL departments, and students.

Programme Evaluation

- Ongoing evaluation and improvement of the programme.
- Develop and distribute a pre-training questionnaire for all students.

Content

- Review the module and workshop content to reduce duplication.
- Improve the interactivity of the online module and live workshop, taking all learning styles into account.
- Develop additional workshop scenarios.

Sharing Best Practice

- Support other institutions in developing Active Bystander Training, sharing the expertise of the team.





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Students' Union UCL's Active Bystander Programme

Term One Evaluation Report

2022-2023



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