Briefing on New to UCL 2022

November 2022
Audience: Welfare & Community Zone, Student Academic Representatives

Introduction

New to UCL is an annual online survey for new UCL students at all levels of study, whether studying on-campus or remotely. That's all new undergraduate and postgraduate students (including those on a Master's or Doctoral Programme).

New to UCL is an internal survey and the anonymity of students' responses is protected. Responses are never reported in groups of less than five, and text comments are anonymised.

The UCL Student Partnership team will email eligible students with an invitation to complete the survey, which can also be accessed via
https://qualtrics.ucl.ac.uk/jfe/form/SV_eS9W8h7c0zCPqTk

Who takes New to UCL, and when?

New to UCL is taken by new students at all levels of study: undergraduates, taught postgraduates and research students. The survey is also open to students on foundation programmes, and those studying via affiliates.

The survey runs between October and December each year, with the 2022 edition opening on Monday 31 October and running until midnight on Sunday 11 December.

Why does UCL organise the survey?

New to UCL is a rich source of feedback on why students choose to study with UCL, as well as how confident and supported they feel at the beginning of their programme of study here.

Through multiple-choice questions and open text comments, students are able to describe what works well for new students and what could be improved.

What does New to UCL cover?

The New to UCL questionnaire gathers student feedback in the following areas:

- Admissions and decisions
- Arriving at UCL

- Academic welcome
- Support Services (e.g. IT support, Careers, Library Services, Student Support & Wellbeing)
- Accommodation
- Access to digital learning resources
- Settling in (e.g. joining societies and feeling part of the wider UCL community)
- Specific questions for international students and research students.

There are also a number of opportunities for participants to share their views in open-text comments. All comments will be carefully anonymised.

The full questionnaire is [available to download](#)[1].

How did UCL perform in the most recent New to UCL survey?

The 2021 New to UCL results were encouraging, with 94% of students satisfied with the overall experience of arrival at UCL. There were some significant increases from New to UCL 2020, which took place when UCL was beginning to implement blended learning in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

OVERALL EXPERIENCE	2021	vs 2020
Overall, I am satisfied with my experience of arrival at UCL	94%	+8%
I found module selection to be straightforward	79%	+2%
Based on my experience so far, I feel welcome and part of the community in my department or research unit	88%	+8%
I feel safe on campus and in the local area	94%	+1%

Perhaps unsurprisingly, new students in 2021 seemed to find it easier to make friends than in the previous year. Agreement with the statement 'I've been able to make social connections with my peers in my department or programme' rose 18 percentage points to 81%.

However, there was a significant decline in scores relating to the academic welcome questions, particularly regarding Personal Tutors and Transition Mentors:

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[1] https://www.ucl.ac.uk/teaching-learning/sites/teaching-learning/files/v7_new_to_ucl_questionnaire.pdf

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ACADEMIC WELCOME	2021	vs 2020
I have met or arranged to meet my Personal Tutor	69%	-9%
I have had the opportunity to meet my Transition Mentor (undergraduate only)	83%	-8%

Undergraduates (73%) remain more likely to have met or arranged to meet their personal tutors than students on postgraduate taught programmes (66%).

Over 7,000 students completed New to UCL 2021, giving the survey an overall response rate of 31%, matching the previous year's response rate.

Among eligible students, 30% of undergraduates, 30% of postgraduate taught students and 42% of postgraduate research students responded to the survey.

Main areas for discussion

The results from 2021 suggest that **Satisfaction with Accommodation** was in decline, with only 76% (down 2%) agreeing that 'My accommodation was clean and everything was in good working order when I moved in'. However, there was a 8% increase in students agreeing 'I am aware of all the support available to residents in my halls or house'.

Among Research students, there was a marked decrease in students agreeing they have 'been given a copy of the Doctoral School Code of Practice', with agreement declining 28 points since last year to 55%.

Other areas that may merit discussion at programme or department-level, to consider how they could be improved, include:

I found module selection to be straightforward	**79% UCL-wide**
The timetable works efficiently for me	**79% UCL-wide**

Where can I find the full New to UCL results?

You can contact your departmental administrator or the staff co-chair of your Staff-Student Consultative Committee (SSCC) and request the full results from New to UCL 2021.

What's next?

Reviewing New to UCL 2021 results at programme / department / faculty-level (depending on your role as a Rep) will help you prepare for SSCC meetings and other discussions with academic staff and student accommodation staff around improving the student experience.

For Academic Reps, it may be particularly useful to meet up with or email the staff Chair of your SSCC to discuss results from New to UCL and other surveys[2] before your first meeting.

How can I promote New to UCL 2022?

Encouraging your fellow students to take part in the 2022 edition of New to UCL will generate more feedback for discussions with staff. Students who participate in the survey will also be entered into a prize draw with a jackpot of £500, and £10 vouchers for 50 runners-up. You can find an interview with the most recent prize winner on the UCL website[3].

As a student rep, you could ask your fellow students to complete New to UCL through a post on Moodle or the Shape UCL student voice platform, or through a lecture shout-out. You'll find a range of promotional materials, and a guide to promoting the survey on the Templates and Guides[4] webpage.

Results and anonymised comments from student surveys including New to UCL have already inspired many significant improvements[5] across UCL.

Further information

If you have any questions, please contact us via Reps@ucl.ac.uk.

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[2] https://www.ucl.ac.uk/you-shape-ucl/survey-news-and-results
[3] https://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/2022/aug/human-rights-ma-student-claims-ps500-new-ucl-jackpot
[4] https://www.ucl.ac.uk/teaching-learning/student-engagement/templates-and-guides
[5] https://www.ucl.ac.uk/you-shape-ucl/your-feedback-shaping-ucl

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