Student Opinion Survey: November 2014
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Background and methodology
The NUS Group *Student Opinion Survey* is a regular survey emailed to a sample of students from the NUS extra mailable database. This short survey gives easy access to research and insight to all departments across the NUS group, focussing on small, reactive research needs. There is a finite amount of space so content is often limited to 5 questions per department and a £150 incentive cost is shared across participating departments.
Introduction - background and methodology

**November 2014**
- Online survey with 2502 students from throughout the UK
- Survey live November 2014
- Prize draw of £150
- Survey advertised through NUS Services student database
- Throughout the reports, statistical significances per demographics are reported and highlighted on the relevant chart where applicable and to large enough base size (n>30) All those highlighted show a confidence level of 99%
- The survey took approx. 15-20 minutes to complete
Demographics
Women account for just over half of the sample (56%), and **16 to 19 year olds** account for half of respondents (50%).

**Gender**

- **Woman**: 58%
- **Man**: 41%
- **In another way**: 1%

**Age**

- 16-17: 17%
- 18-19: 33%
- 20-21: 15%
- 22-23: 7%
- 24-25: 4%
- 26-27: 3%
- 28-30: 4%
- 31-35: 5%
- 36-40: 4%
- 41-45: 3%
- 46-50: 2%
- 51+: 3%

**Base**: 2502 respondents

A1. Which of the following best describes how you think about yourself?

A2. How old are you?
89% of the respondents are **UK citizens**. The remaining 12% is evenly made up of EU and non-EU international students.

**Domicile**

- **I am a UK citizen studying in the UK**: 89%
- **I am an international student from outside the EU studying in the UK**: 7%
- **I am an international student from within the EU studying in the UK**: 5%

Base: 2441 respondents. Balance: Prefer not to say

A5. Which of the following statements best describes you?
Just **under one-third (31%)** of the sample **live with their parent(s) / guardian(s)**.

**Living arrangements**

- With parent(s) / guardian(s): 31%
- University owned halls of residences: 23%
- Privately rented house or flat - shared with friends: 20%
- In own home (mortgaged or owned): 11%
- Privately rented house or flat - on my own: 7%
- Privately owned halls of residences: 5%
- Prefer not to say: 1%
- Other: 2%

Base: 2440 respondents. Balance: Prefer not to say

Q3. And which of the following statements best describes your term time living circumstances?
Just under a quarter of respondents fell into POLAR 5. Around a fifth fell into POLAR 4 and a further fifth into POLAR 3. Only 15% fell into POLAR 1.

Polar Code

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Polar Code</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: 2115 respondents. Balance: Those without a valid UK postcode / No response

Q48. Please enter your home postcode – i.e. the postcode of your main address, or where you live whilst not at university.
The majority of the students are in **full-time** study (85%). Just over one-third of the respondents are currently in 1st year at university (35%).

**Full / Part time study**

- 85% Full-time study
- 14% Part-time study
- 1% Other

**Level of Study**

- 1st Year College/Sixth Form: 15%
- 2nd Year College/Sixth Form: 6%
- 1st Year University: 35%
- 2nd Year University: 15%
- 3rd/4th/Final Year University: 11%
- Postgraduate - studying for masters: 9%
- Postgraduate - studying for doctorate: 3%
- Graduated within the last year: 2%
- I am currently on an apprenticeship: 1%
- Other: 3%

Base: 2435 respondents. Balance: Prefer not to say

Q7. Is your study full or part-time?

A3. Which of the following best describes your current level of study?
Sex and relationship education
Three in five (62%) respondents went to a comprehensive school. Fewer than a fifth of respondents went to a single sex school. Only a tenth went to a fee paying school, an ability based school or a faith school.

### Secondary school you attend

- **The school was a comprehensive, e.g. not fee paying and not selective according to ability**: 62%
- **The school was a single gender school (e.g. girls’ school/boys’ school)**: 15%
- **The school was fee paying (e.g. private or independent school)**: 12%
- **The school was selective according to ability (e.g. grammar school)**: 12%
- **The school was a faith school**: 11%
- **It was an international school**: 5%
- **It was a boarding school**: 4%
- **It was an independent school that did not follow a curriculum**: 2%
- **I was home schooled**: 1%
- **Don’t know**: 2%
- **None of the above**: 2%
- **Other**: 2%

Base: 2015  
Balance: Prefer not to say

B1. Which of these statements apply to the secondary school you attended?
Three-quarters of the respondents found out about sex & relationships through friends. With only one-quarter saying they used NHS or other advice online to find out about it.

**Sources used to find out about sex & relationships**

- **Friends**: 74%
- **Sex and relationship education in school**: 68%
- **Family**: 43%
- **Sexual partners**: 39%
- **Magazines**: 31%
- **Pornography**: 29%
- **NHS or other advice online**: 25%
- **Prefer not to say**: 2%
- **None of the above**: 1%
- **Other**: 5%

**Females** are significantly more likely to have found out about sex & relationships from friends, family, and magazines than males.

**Males** are significantly more likely to have found out about sex & relationships from their sexual partners and pornography than females.

Base: 1981  
Balance: Prefer not to say  
B2. Which of the following sources did you find out about sex and relationships?
Friends are the source respondents rely upon the most (36%), followed by SRE in school (18%).

**Sources of SRE replied upon the most**

- **Friends**: 26%
- **Sex and relationship education in school**: 18%
- **Sexual partners**: 17%
- **None of these**: 12%
- **Family**: 10%
- **NHS or other advice online**: 8%
- **Magazines**: 5%
- **Pornography**: 3%
- **Other**: 2%

**Base**: 1918  
**Balance**: Prefer not to say

**B3. Which of these sources of SRE have you relied upon the most?**

- **Females** are significantly more likely to have relied upon friends, family and magazines the most than males.
- **Males** are significantly more likely to have relied upon their sexual partners and pornography and SRE in school the most than females.
Over four in five respondents said their SRE at school covered puberty and contraception (87%).

Males are significantly more likely to mention that consent was a topic covered in their SRE at school compared to females.
One-third of respondents say that the SRE received at school was good or excellent.

Rate the SRE you received at school

- 32% rated it good or excellent
- 27% rated it good
- 42% rated it fair
- 19% rated it poor
- 6% rated it terrible
- 2% were unsure

Base: 1353  Balance: didn’t receive SRE at school

B5. How would you rate the sex and relationship education you received at school?
Just under two thirds (62%) agreed that their teacher was knowledgeable. However, only one in five (21%) felt comfortable to ask questions in SRE classes.

### Agreement with SRE statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My teacher was knowledgeable about SRE</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobody took SRE seriously and treated it as a laugh</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The content covered the issues I needed to know about</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt I could practically apply it to my life</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It helped me feel confident to make decisions about my life</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was positive about diversity and difference’</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It didn’t seem relevant to me and my needs</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt comfortable to ask questions in SRE classes</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The information provided during SRE classes was too technical</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My teacher seemed embarrassed during SRE classes</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: 1353   Balance: didn’t receive SRE at school

B6. How far would you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your SRE at school
Three in five respondents admitted to having watched porn. Four out of five males have watched porn compared to less than half of females (45%).

Have you ever viewed porn?

- **Overall**: 63% Yes, 8% No, 6% Prefer not to say
- **Males**: 6% Yes, 85% No, 7% Prefer not to say
- **Females**: 6% Yes, 50% No, 6% Prefer not to say

Base: 2015  Balance: Prefer not to say

B7. Have you ever viewed porn online?
Just under three-quarters (71%) of the respondents agree that porn is a standard part of a young person's life. 73% agree that porn provides unrealistic expectations.

Thinking about the porn you have viewed online how far would you agree or disagree...

- **It provided unrealistic expectations**: 31% Strongly agree, 42% Agree, 14% Neither agree nor disagree, 9% Disagree, 3% Strongly disagree
- **It's a standard part of a young person's life now**: 18% Strongly agree, 53% Agree, 19% Neither agree nor disagree, 7% Disagree, 5% Strongly disagree
- **I watched it because I was curious and wanted to find out more about sex**: 14% Strongly agree, 46% Agree, 16% Neither agree nor disagree, 19% Disagree, 5% Strongly disagree
- **It made me feel self-conscious about my potential/actual sexual performance**: 14% Strongly agree, 31% Agree, 20% Neither agree nor disagree, 26% Disagree, 9% Strongly disagree
- **It made me feel self-conscious about my body**: 11% Strongly agree, 31% Agree, 19% Neither agree nor disagree, 30% Disagree, 9% Strongly disagree
- **I felt under pressure to watch it**: 8% Strongly agree, 15% Agree, 41% Neither agree nor disagree, 33% Disagree
- **It made me understand more about sex**: 8% Strongly agree, 32% Agree, 21% Neither agree nor disagree, 27% Disagree, 12% Strongly disagree

Base: 1272  
Balance: Prefer not to say

B8. Thinking about the porn you have viewed online how far would you agree or disagree with the following statements
Over half of the respondents thought that sex, contraception and consent should be taught between 11-13 year olds. Over half state that physical changes should be taught at 7-10 year olds.

At what age do you think people should learn about...

- Recognising abuse: 18% 4-6 years, 28% 7-10 years, 33% 11-13 years, 18% 14-16 years, 1% I don't think it should be taught in schools, 2% Don't know
- Porn and safety online: 13% 4-6 years, 46% 7-10 years, 31% 11-13 years, 6% 14-16 years, 3% I don't think it should be taught in schools, 2% Don't know
- Relationships: 9% 4-6 years, 20% 7-10 years, 46% 11-13 years, 22% 14-16 years, 2% I don't think it should be taught in schools, 2% Don't know
- Sex: 0% 4-6 years, 15% 7-10 years, 51% 11-13 years, 29% 14-16 years, 2% I don't think it should be taught in schools, 2% Don't know
- Contraception: 11% 4-6 years, 54% 7-10 years, 32% 11-13 years, 1% 14-16 years, 2% I don't think it should be taught in schools, 3% Don't know
- Consent: 6% 4-6 years, 17% 7-10 years, 51% 11-13 years, 22% 14-16 years, 3% I don't think it should be taught in schools, 1% Don't know
- Puberty and menstruation: 2% 4-6 years, 47% 7-10 years, 44% 11-13 years, 5% 14-16 years, 1% I don't think it should be taught in schools, 1% Don't know
- Physical changes: 7% 4-6 years, 54% 7-10 years, 33% 11-13 years, 4% 14-16 years, I don't think it should be taught in schools, 1% Don't know

Base: 2015   Balance: Prefer not to say
B9. At what age do you think young people should start learning about the following topics in school?
The majority of respondents (90%) agree that it should be a legal requirement for all schools to teach SRE to young people.

**Should it be a legal requirement for all schools to teach SRE to young people?**

- Strongly agree: 62%
- Agree: 28%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 7%
- Disagree: 2%
- Strongly disagree: 2%
- Don’t know: 0%

Females are significantly more likely to strongly agree than males.
Student Opinion Survey
November 2014