

# Students' Union Annual Survey 2007

## Survey Results

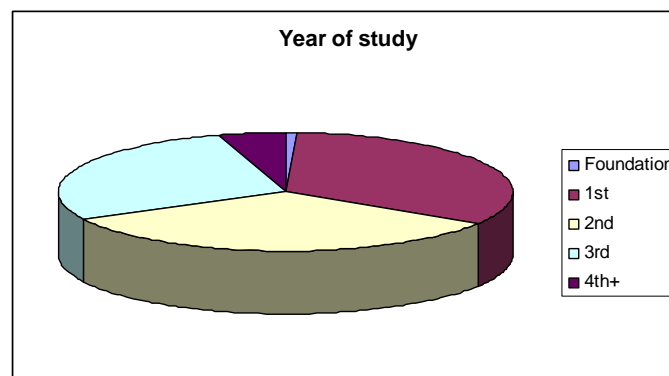
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### Introduction

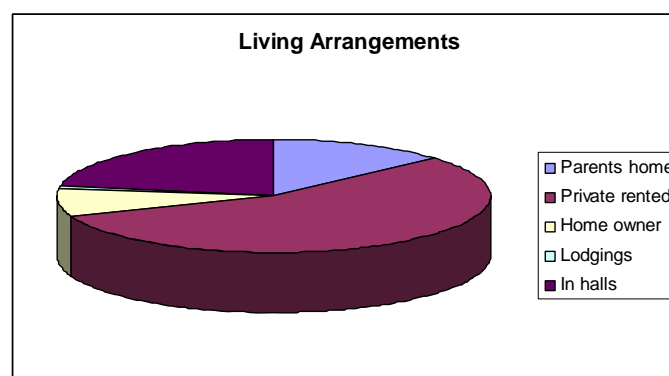
All students at York St John University were invited to take part in an online survey about their experiences and views of York St John University and York St John Students' Union. Students were also asked some questions about their work and social lives. 405 students responded to the survey which was kept open for 4 weeks in May 2007. All responses received were put into a prize draw for the chance to win a ticket to the Summer Ball.

### Section One: General Demographics

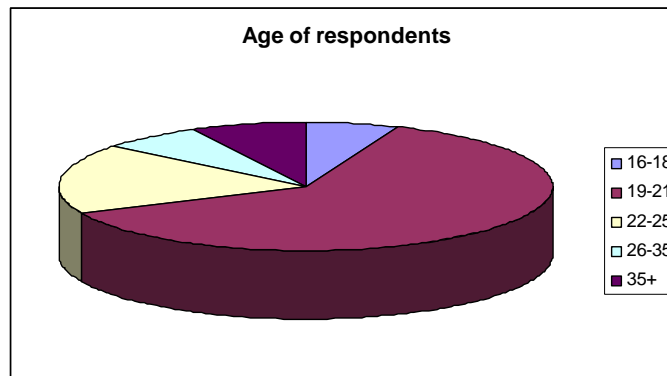
Of the 405 students who responded to the survey, 0.7% were Foundation students, 33.1% were 1<sup>st</sup> years, 33.6% were 2<sup>nd</sup> years, 27.9% were 3<sup>rd</sup> years and 4.7% were 4<sup>th</sup> years.



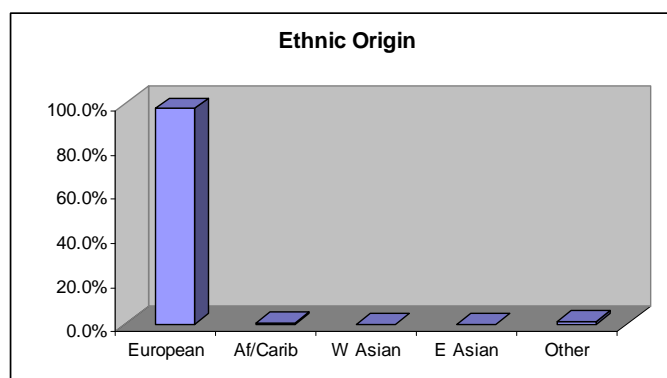
The majority of students who responded live in private rented accommodation (55.8%). 22% live in halls; 13.3% live with parents, 8.2% are homeowners and 0.7% live in lodgings with a family.



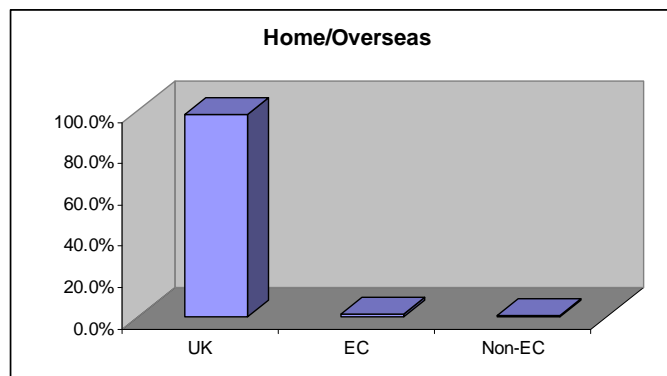
The majority of students who responded were aged 19-21 (62%). 17.8% were aged 22-25; 7.4% were over 35; 6.7% were aged 26-35 and 6.2% were aged 16-18.



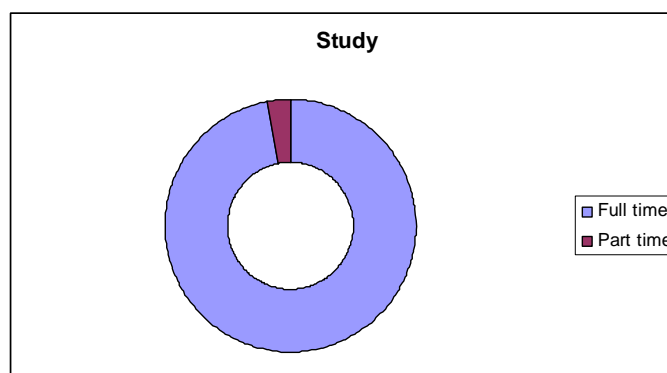
Almost all students who responded described their ethnic origin as European including UK/Irish (98.7%); 0.7% were African/Caribbean; 0.5% described themselves as "Other". No-one described themselves as either West Asian (e.g. Indian) or East Asian (e.g. Chinese).



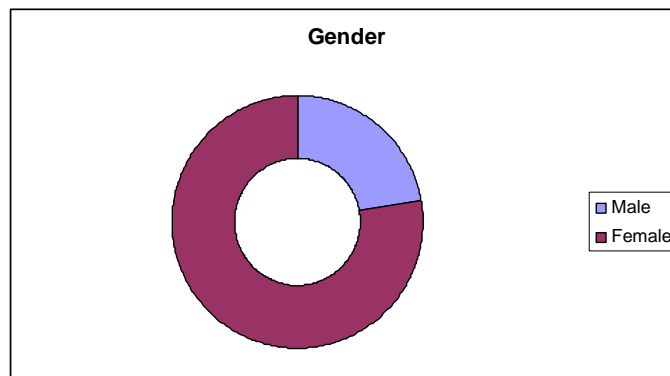
Almost all students who responded were UK students (97.8%). 1.5% were from the EC and 0.7% were from a non-EC country.



Almost all students who responded studied full time (97%). 3% studied part time.

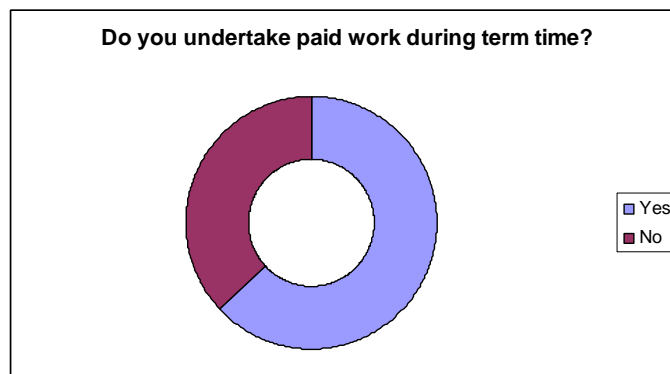


The majority of the students who responded were female (77.7%). 22.3% were male.

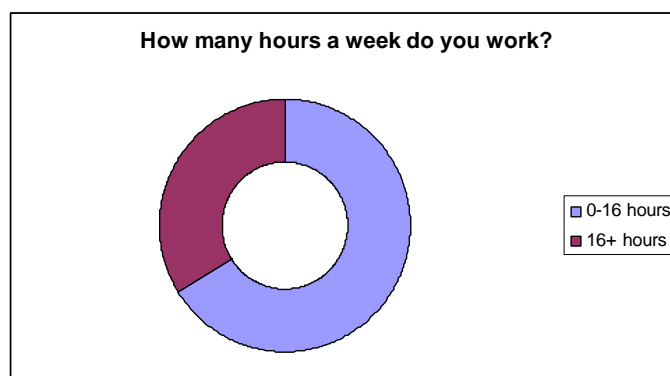


## Section Two: Work during Term Time

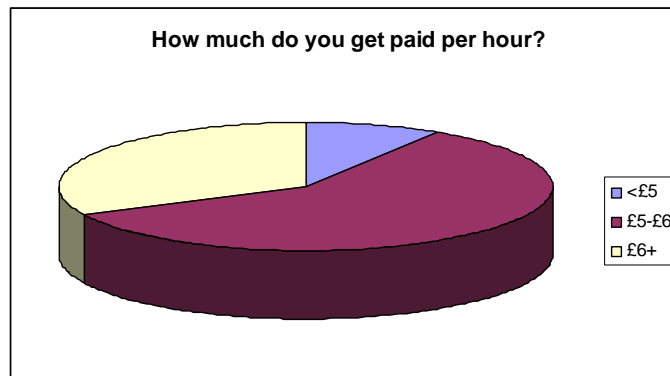
Students were asked if they undertook paid work during term-time. 63.1% replied yes. 36.9% said no.



Of the students who said that they undertook paid work during term time, the majority of them (72.1%) worked from 0-16 hours per week. 27.9% worked 16 hours or over.

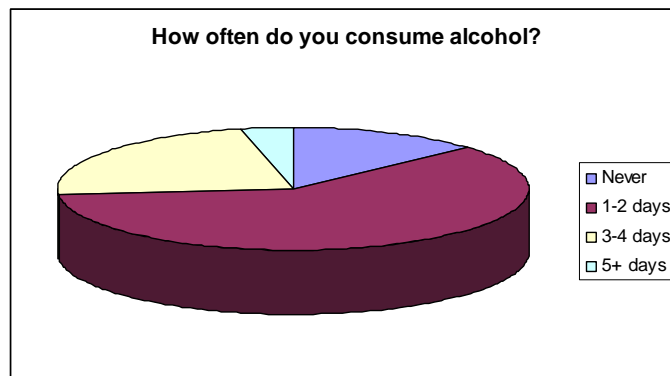


Of the students who undertook paid work during term time, 58.8% were paid between £5 and £6 per hour; 9% were paid under £5 per hour and 32.2% were paid £6 and over.



**Section Three: Alcohol**

Students were asked how often they consumed alcohol. Of the 402 who responded to this question, 13.2% said they never consumed alcohol; 60.2% consumed alcohol 1 or 2 days a week; 22.9% consumed alcohol 3 or 4 days a week and 3.7% consumed alcohol 5 or more days a week.

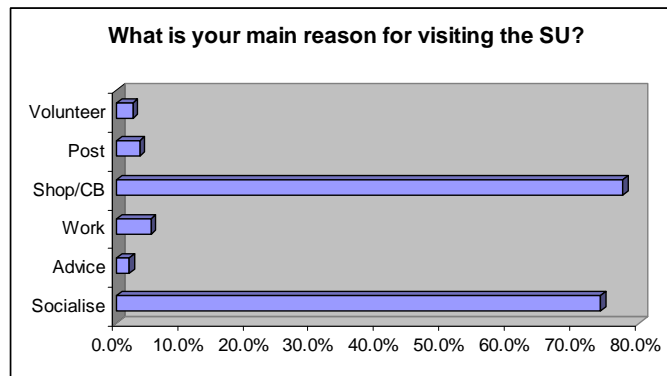


Of the students who said that they consumed alcohol, 47.8% said they spent no more than £15 a week on alcohol; 31% said they spent between £15 and £30 each week; 15.9% said they spent between £30 and £45 per week and 5.3% spent over £45 a week.

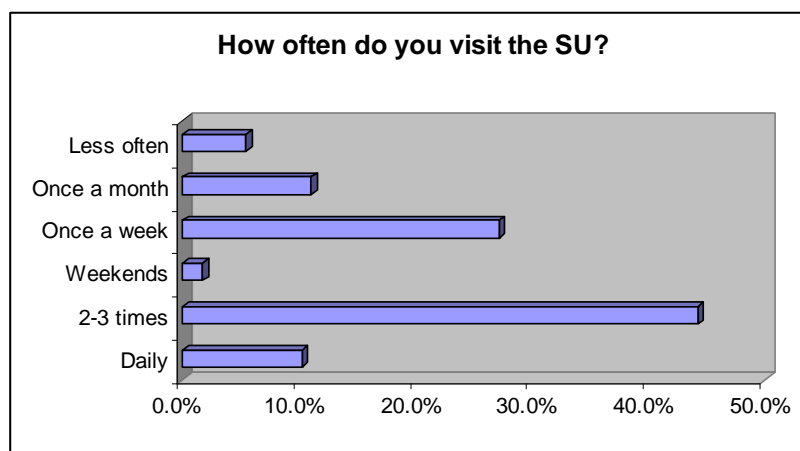


**Section Four: The Students' Union in General**

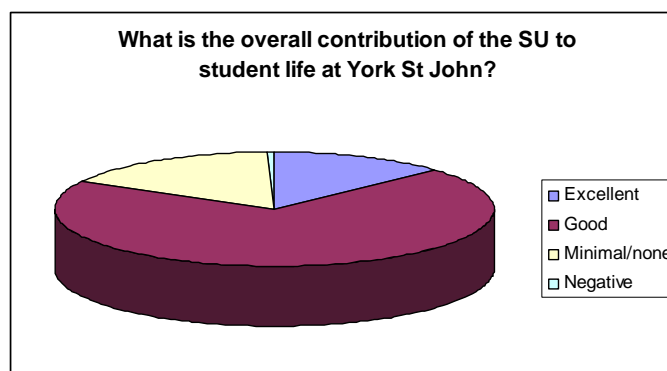
Students were asked why they mainly came into the Students' Union. Most students (77.6%) came in to use the shop or coffee bar; 74.2% came in to socialise; 5.3% came in to work; 3.6% came in to collect post; 2.5% came in to volunteer; and 1.9% came in for advice.



Students were asked how often they visited the Students' Union. 44.3% visited the SU 2 or 3 times a week; 27.2% visited once a week; 11.1% visited once a month; 10.3% visited daily; 5.5% visited less often than once a month and 1.7% visited at the weekends only.



Students were asked what they thought of the contribution the Students' Union made to student life at York St John. 70.1% thought that it was good; 13% thought it was excellent; 16.3% thought it was minimal or made no contribution; 0.6% thought it made a negative contribution. This is excellent news that 83.1% think that the Students' Union make a good or excellent contribution to student life. However, we will need to investigate what needs to be done to improve our contribution for the 16.9% who disagreed.



Students were asked to rate the Union's various services in terms of importance. Below is a list of the services in order of importance from most important to least important:

1. Bar
2. Shop
3. Coffee Bar
4. Entertainments
5. Taking issues to the University
6. Clubs and Societies
7. Campaigns
8. RAG
9. Volunteering opportunities
10. START
11. We'll Fix It
12. The Saint
13. Representation
14. Programme Reps
15. YSJSU.co.uk
16. Advice and welfare
17. Reception

### Section Five: Students' Union Activities

Students were asked if they agreed or disagreed with a variety of statements as follows:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The Union is too commercialised and places a higher priority on profit than students.	5.8%	16.6%	<b>68.5%</b>	9.1%
The Union is somewhere I feel I could turn to for help and advice.	6.9%	<b>56.5%</b>	30.6%	6.1%
In general, the Union effectively represents my interests and concerns.	5.2%	<b>65.7%</b>	23.8%	5.2%
It is easy for me to be involved and have a say in the running of the Union.	4.7%	41.9%	<b>42.7%</b>	10.7%
I could talk to a Sabbatical Officer if I needed to.	10.2%	<b>59.8%</b>	24.9%	5.0%
On the whole, the Union provides a good service for YSJ students.	18.3%	<b>69.5%</b>	10.5%	1.7%
Being involved in SU activities enhances students' job prospects (e.g. committee work, volunteering)	18.8%	<b>62.0%</b>	16.9%	2.2%
The Union prioritises the welfare of students.	10.2%	<b>75.4%</b>	11.3%	3.0%

Breaking this down:

- 77.6% of students disagree or strongly disagree that the Union is too commercialised and places a higher priority on profit than students.

- 63% of students either agree or strongly agree that they can turn to the Union for help and advice.
- 70.9% of students either agree or strongly agree that the Union effectively represents their interests and concerns.
- 53.4% disagree or strongly disagree that it is easy for them to be involved and have a say in the running of the Union.
- 70% of students agree or strongly agree that they could talk to a Sabbatical Officer if they needed to.
- 87.8% agree or strongly agree that the Union provides a good service for YSJ students.
- 80.8% of students agree or strongly agree that being involved in SU activities enhances students' job prospects.
- 85.6% of students agree or strongly agree that the Union prioritises the welfare of students.

Overall this is very encouraging but we will need to put a plan of action in place to address the concerns of those students who think we are too commercialised; and that we don't effectively represent their concerns; and who can't talk to a Sabbatical Officer etc.

The result of most concern is that more people think that it is difficult to get involved and have a say in how the Union is run than those who think it is easy. We will need to change this.

Students were then asked a variety of questions with the possibility of answering "yes" or "no" only. The results were as follows:

	Yes	No
Do you know how to make a complaint or suggestion about the Union?	25.5%	<b>74.5%</b>
Did you know that the Union is totally separate to the University?	43.9%	<b>56.1%</b>
Do you know who the Sabbatical Officers are?	<b>51.0%</b>	49.0%
Do you know who the Union Councillors are?	16.9%	<b>83.1%</b>
Did you know that the Union represents students to the University on any issue?	<b>61.6%</b>	38.4%
Have you participated in a RAG event?	23.3%	<b>76.7%</b>
Do you participate in a sports club?	30.7%	<b>69.3%</b>
Are you a member of a society?	35.2%	<b>64.8%</b>
Have you volunteered through the SU?	14.4%	<b>85.6%</b>
Do you know who your Programme Rep is?	<b>51.1%</b>	48.9%
Did you vote in the SU elections this year?	43.5%	<b>56.5%</b>

Have you ever been to a START session?	10.8%	<b>89.2%</b>
Have you ever taken part in a We'll Fix It activity?	4.7%	<b>95.3%</b>

The results of this section seem to show a lack of knowledge about the Students' Union. The majority of students do not know how to make a complaint or suggestion and they don't know that the Students' Union is separate to the University. Only just over half of the respondents know who the Sabbatical Officers are and who their Programme Rep is. The majority don't know who the Union Councillors are. Students do know that the Union represents them to the University.

We will need to publicise these areas more effectively to the student population.

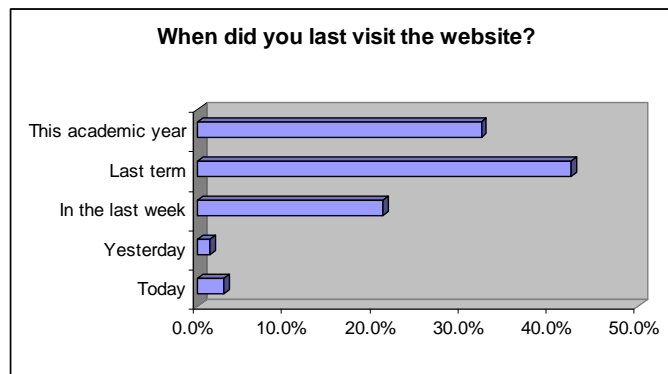
Most students who responded are not members of a club or a society; they've not volunteered through the SU; they didn't vote; they haven't been to a START session or taken part in a We'll Fix It activity.

Why aren't students getting involved? How do we increase the numbers of students involved in these areas?

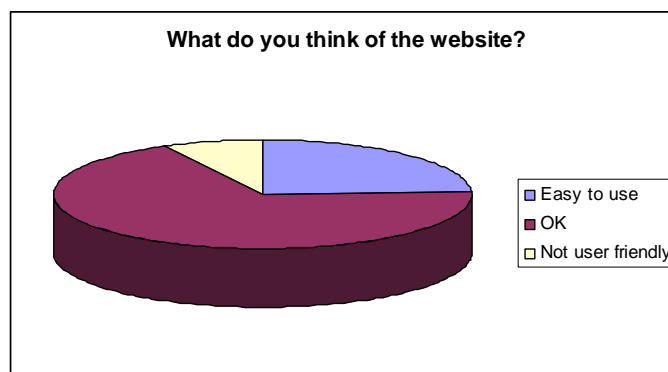
### Section Six: Students' Union Website

Students were then asked about the Students' Union website at [www.ysjsu.co.uk](http://www.ysjsu.co.uk)

80.9% said that they had visited the website. The majority of students (42.4%) had last visited the website last term; 32.2% last visited last academic year (before the website was re-vamped); 21% visited in the last week; 3.1% visited that day; 1.4% visited the day before.



Most students thought that the website was OK (67.9%); 24.4% thought that it was easy to use and 7.7% thought that it was not user friendly.



Students were asked if there was anything not on the website that they would like to see. The major issue identified was that students wanted information on clubs and societies. Most students wanted:

- Up to date information
- More information particularly on clubs and societies and how well sports clubs are doing
- Contacts for all areas of the SU including clubs and societies and sabbatical officers
- More photographs
- An easier to find and more up to date "what's on" section
- Information about when We'll Fix It and START courses are running
- Opening times
- Promotions
- Online tickets

We must plan to plan to meet these requests and ensure that the website is kept continually updated.

### Section Seven: What's the best thing about York St John University?

There were a whole range of answers and comments which we have listed in order of the number of times they were mentioned:

	No of Comments	Keywords
Size (Small and Friendly)	68	Relaxed, individual not a number, welcoming, cosy, compact, intimate, big enough not to be claustrophobic, feel part of a family, not intimidating
People	37	Friendly, helpful, laid back, any worry or problem can be solved
Location	34	York, central
Community	27	Close knit, family feel, welcoming
Atmosphere	24	Great, amazing, intimate, sense of togetherness, relaxed
Staff (tutors, lecturers, general)	23	Supportive, approachable, friendly, willing to listen, wonderful, awesome, understanding
Campus	20	Beautiful, superb, lovely, pretty, well kept, character, pleasant, amazing
Study/Course	19	Amazing, highly regarded
Opportunities available	15	Study abroad, clubs and societies, new people
Diversity	11	Mature, different cultures, accepting, disabled access, non judgemental
Facilities	10	Quality, modern, spacious
Students' Union	7	Bar, Coffee Bar
Library	7	Well organised
Students	6	
Everything	5	
IT	5	
Social life	5	
Sports	4	Although sports facilities are poor
Quad	3	Beautiful, pretty
Support Services	2	
Career prospects	2	

## Section Eight: What's the worst thing about York St John University?

Again there were a whole range of answers and comments which we have listed in order of the number of times they were mentioned:

	No of Comments	Keywords
Disorganised	22	Lack of co-ordination, unprofessional, sloppy
Lack of Resources	17	Lack of equipment, poor lecture rooms, space, classrooms uncomfortable and cold, cameras for counselling, inferior spaces, dated technology
Course/Modules	15	Completely irrelevant, poor, poorly organised, poorly run, repetitive, awful
Lecturers	12	Too stretched, change goal posts, no reply to emails, too busy to help, bad, minimal support, questionable quality, disorganised, unprepared, lack of knowledge, not interesting
Timetable	11	Messed up, double booking
Too small	10	Boring
Staff	9	Rude, bad attitudes, miserable
Assessment Feedback	9	
Students' Union	6	Too small, facelift, revamp
Parking	6	
Cost	6	Module fees not clear, waste of money, profit driven, prices on campus
Profile of University	5	Too small to make an impression, not seen as highly academic, not valued by employers, inferior to York University
Lack of contact time with tutors	5	Especially if live off site and have children
Lack of communication	5	Signage, no response to emails, WebCT is rubbish
Accommodation	5	Distance, transport to residences, LMW, internet access
Lack of respect	4	Treated like children, not adults
Sports	3	Session times, gym is rubbish, not accessible, poor, university put profit before students, astro turf
Lack of academic study	3	Too much fun, not enough lectures, too many holidays
Part time issues	3	Finance and school offices closed in evening, no evening access, travelling 140 miles for a 2 hour lecture; late night lectures for part time students
Security Team	2	
Lack of diversity	2	Mature students
Music Block	2	Too noisy, too hot

## Section Nine: What's the best thing about the Union?

There were a whole range of answers and comments which we have listed in order of the number of times they were mentioned:

	No of Comments	Keywords
Atmosphere	49	Cosy, community, welcoming, calm, feel comfortable, feels like home, great, lively, laid back, relaxed, pleasant, open, airy, chilled out.
Cheap	46	Good prices, food, drinks, excellent, reasonable, well priced
Bar	43	Good deals, alcohol, ace, friendly staff, good service, relaxed, good sense of security, clean, good place to start the night
Social	38	Friends, good, know everyone, nice, always someone I can talk to
Shop	32	Pick and mix, handy, sells everything, prices
Coffee Bar	27	Nice, decent meal, yummy, sausage baps, bacon sarnies, well looked after, variety, good prices
Space for students	23	Everything set up to help students, genuinely care, want to make your University experience as positive and successful as possible, there for you, meeting place, encouraging, small but big enough to care, somewhere to escape to, it's a place the University don't have control over and you can tell, with the students for the students, committed to student welfare not the University's, totally accessible, very student friendly, just for students, it's our union not the University's
Events	22	Happy Mondays, Late licenses, fancy dress, Archies Day, Acoustic, £ a pint, summer ball
Staff	18	Always there, friendly, helpful, nice, fun, easy to talk to, lovely, so nice, dedicated to students
Help and Advice	17	Support, representation, programme reps
Friendly	16	
Activities	14	Volunteering, clubs, societies, opportunities to get involved
Sabbs	5	Available, enthusiastic, listening ear, friendly
Location	5	Great, central, easy to get to
Convenient	4	Useful, everything under one small roof
Settees	3	

### Section Ten: What's the worst thing about the Union?

Again, there were a whole range of answers and comments which we have listed in order of the number of times they were mentioned:

	No of Comments	Keywords
Size	76	Too small, very small, tiny, too crowded, cramped, lack of space, just not big enough now we're a University
Events	17	No enough, need to revamp ents, never anything of interest on, same every week, no daytime ents, no live music, no bands, summer ball too expensive
Bar	16	Dark and dull, queues, expensive, uncomfortable atmosphere, tiny, too light, no food in evening, pool tables never free and expensive
Too smoky	15	
Clubs and societies	13	Too cliquey, run by self important jocks, too competitive, lack of funding, lack of variety of societies
Not for mature students	13	
Coffee Bar	12	Prices, service, run out of food, can't use vouchers, food not good, not clean, lack of variety, too dark, too much mayo, untidy.
Shop	11	Not well stocked, expensive, too small, should be open before 9am
Opening Hours	10	Not open in vacation, shop should open before 9am, bar should open before 11am, late license should be a late license
Building	10	Dark, doesn't look good, needs a refurbishment, scruff, dull, tired, dated, toilets
Prices	9	Expensive,
Too much emphasis on drinking	5	
Lack of cash machine	5	Free cash machine rather than paying for cash back
Music too loud	4	Can't have a conversation in the Bar
Staff	4	Bad service, unfriendly, unapproachable, miserable, arrogant, cliquey
No outside seating area	4	Need a pub garden area
Politics and rules	3	When advertising external events
Not enough advertising	3	For events and welfare
NUS Extra	3	£10 too expensive
Unwelcoming	3	Intimidating going upstairs
Temperature	2	Too cold in Coffee Bar, too hot in Conservatory in the Summer and too cold in winter

### Section Eleven: Any Other Suggestions

Finally, we asked students if there was anything else they would like to suggest or comment on – what we should be doing that we don't already do and what we should be doing better. There were a whole range of answers and comments which we have listed in order of the number of times they were mentioned:

	<b>No of Comments</b>	<b>Keywords</b>
Improve Ents	18	Make ents creative, fun, varied, more up to date, not just drinking and fancy dress, live music, late licenses until late, better use of Coffee Bar
Better advertising	14	Of issues, ents, UGMs, We'll Fix It, Saint, Rag, Welfare, bar promotions and prices, sports, representation, not just bar
Make it bigger	7	
Ban smoking	5	
Better bar staff	5	Smile! Obnoxious
More activities	5	Volunteers, intersport competitions, not just alcohol based activities
Lower prices	4	Summer Ball
More diversity	3	LGBT, international, mature
Refurbish	3	I love it but knock it down and start again
More societies	3	
Get a free cash machine	3	
More drinks promotions	2	
Change opening hours	2	
Improve Coffee Bar	2	Better food, not like a youth club

**Nicky Goldthorpe**  
**20<sup>th</sup> June 2007**