

The **BIG** Conversation



calling every newly registered student

Term 3 Report 25/26

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greenwich
students'
union

Term 3 Report 25/26 - Welcome calls

Executive Summary

The Big Conversation Welcome calls work alongside the university Big Welcome Programme. We call all new registered students in September, January and April and ask them about their hobbies and interests, tell them about the Big Welcome and ask if they need any support. All students spoken to then receive a personalised follow up email with links and information about how to get involved in societies and student groups, as well as how to contact the services they need to get support as soon as possible.

We also follow up over the year to see how they are finding their studies, if they have engaged with services or activities and whether they feel they have found where they belong in the university community. This is also an opportunity to catch any issues that a student is experiencing and offer early intervention support.

Top line stats:



1,104 students called across Welcome and Follow Up calls



349 calls completed and 116 follow up emails sent



51 students were directed to student groups and societies that were aligned to their interests



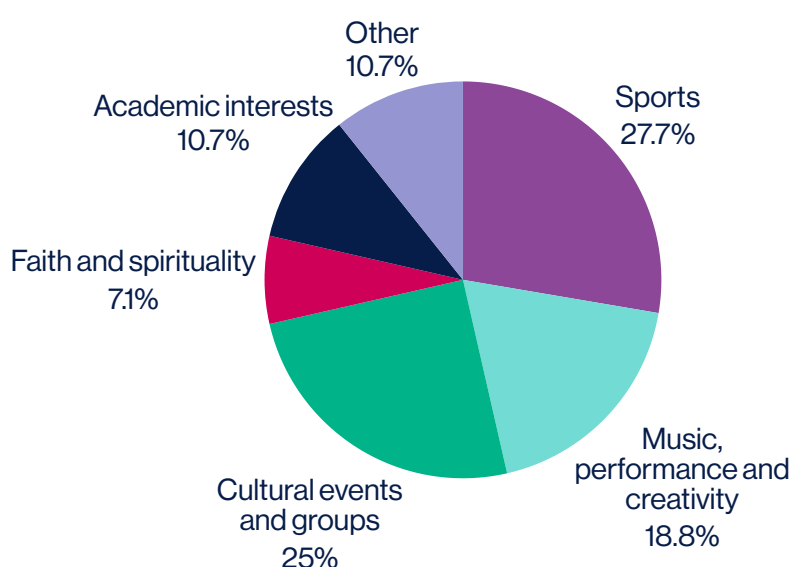
48 students signposted to support during their call

Societies, student groups and support services

Students on the Big Conversation calls told us about the hobbies and interests that they have, and we signposted to societies and student groups both on the calls and in follow up emails.

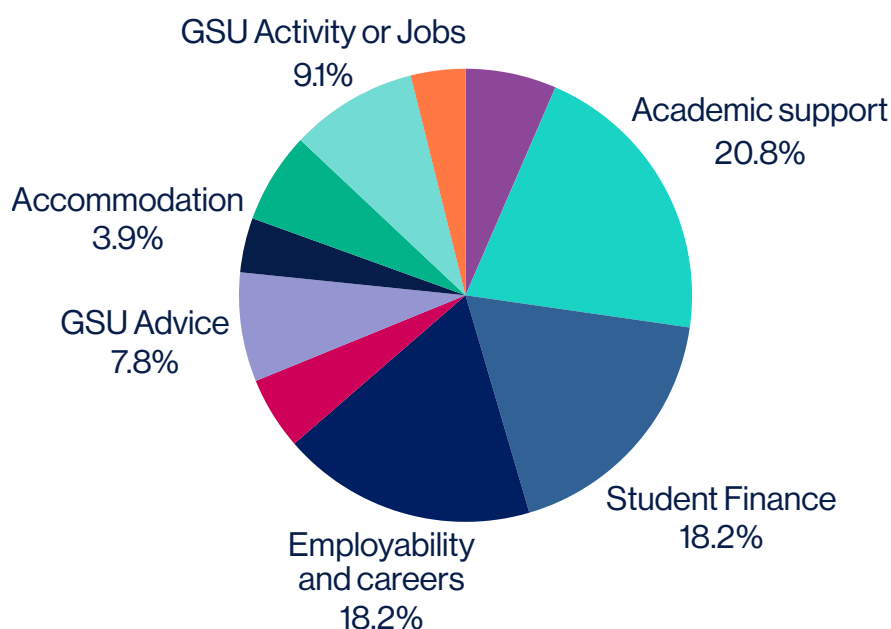
On Follow Up calls 23% of students said they were now a member of a society or student group.

Student hobbies and interests



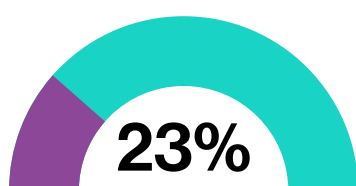
We also asked students if they needed any support or help with settling into university. We signposted to relevant services and more complex cases were escalated for further support.

Distribution of signposting

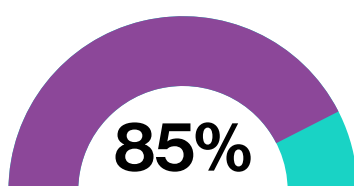


Term 3 Report 25/26 - Welcome Follow Up calls

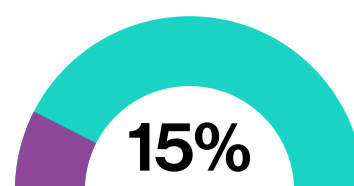
In Term 3 we followed up with the students we spoke to on our Welcome calls in Term 1 and 2, and spoke to 252 students. We asked them if they have got involved in any student groups or societies, about their sense of belonging within the university community and if they have used any support services. We also make sure to give signposting and support if the student does need support now.



Of students said they had joined a student group or society

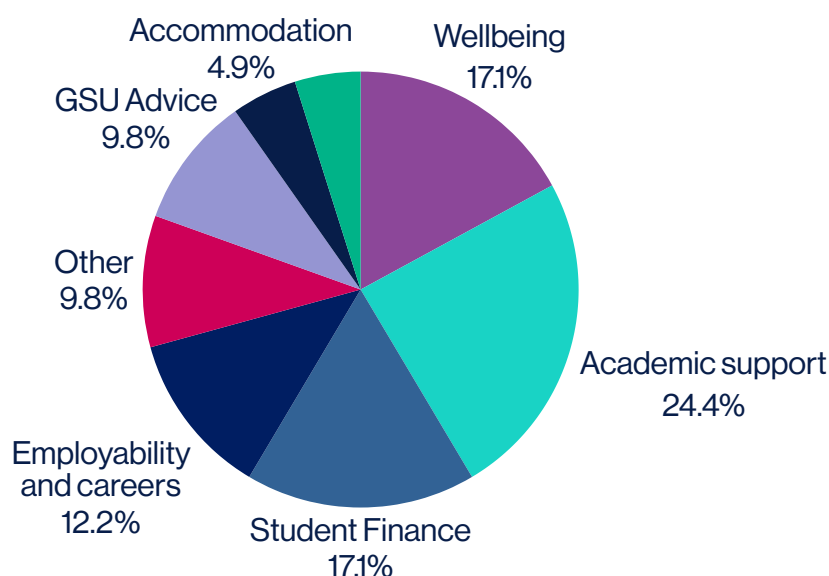


Of students said they had found where they belong at Greenwich



Of students said they had used a support service within the university

Services Used



Only 2% of students told us they did not feel that they had found where they belong in the university, with 12% saying they felt they had partially found where they belong. Reasons given for not feeling able to say yes to the question were predominantly around still finding friends and adjusting to university life, personal circumstances outside of university and being busy with work and studies, so not feeling they have time for social activity.

Term 3 Report 25/26 - Outreach calls

Executive Summary

The Big Conversation Outreach calls aim to reach students who fall into priority groups who have a higher chance of withdrawing or not completing their studies. We call these students and have a structured conversation with them, asking questions about their experience, both academic and wider, offering opportunities for disclosure of challenges and support that may be needed. Our callers signpost to support services and escalate more complex cases to the Service Manager.

Our priority groups for Term 3 were PGT students, student group leaders and students doing summer resits. As well as calling students who were resitting, we also sent WhatsApp outreach to some of these students, which had an overwhelming response.

Top Line Stats



12,530 students contacted



1,150 check-in conversations were completed



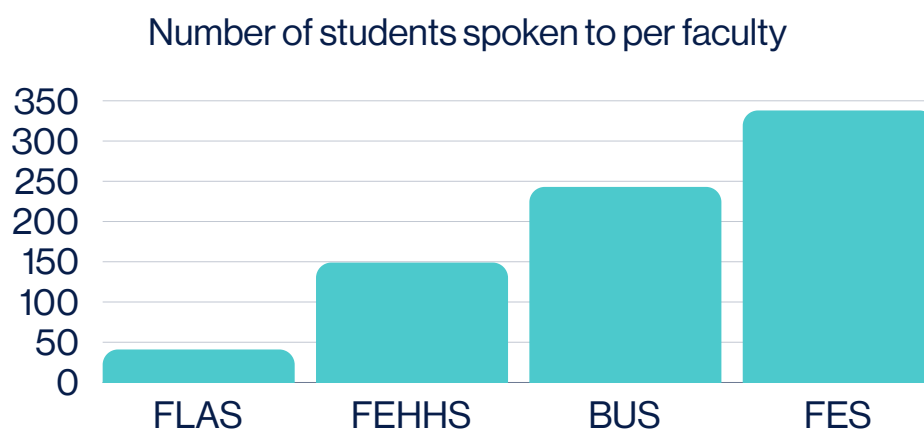
106 students were facing pressures that were impacting their studies, such as financial difficulty or personal/family issues



64 students were escalated for further support

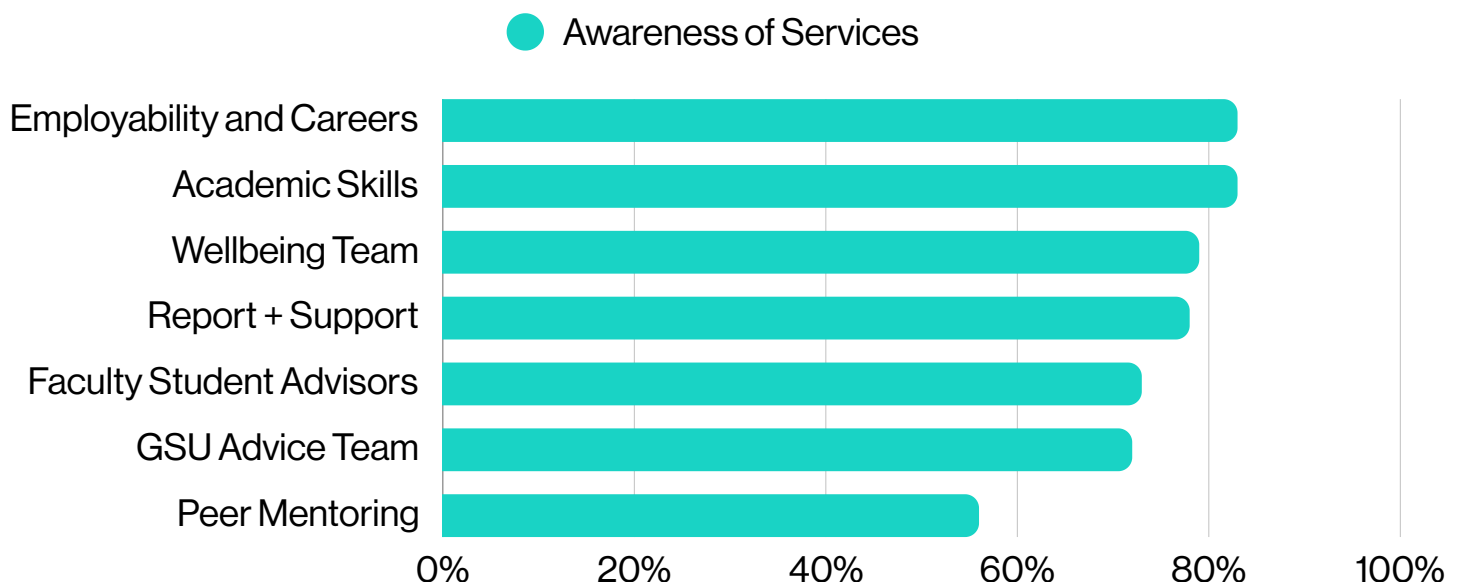
The Big Conversation: Outreach calls - who did we speak to?

23% of the students we spoke to were home students, 77% were overseas students. 19% were undergraduates, 81% were PGT/PGR students. 57% were based at Greenwich campus, 17% at Avery Hill and 26% at Medway.



We spoke to students across the faculties, with the highest proportion being FES students and the lowest FLAS. 672 of the students we spoke to were in their final year and were reminded of their access to alumni support services after graduation.

The Big Conversation: Outreach calls - support service awareness



The Big Conversation: Continuation

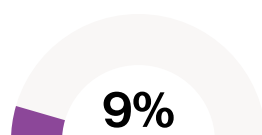
The students we phone in our outreach calls have a higher likelihood of withdrawing or interrupting from their studies due to their priority group (e.g. low or no attendance, repeating students). Our escalated students than have another increase in their likelihood of not continuing their studies due to their complex situations requiring support.

We have looked at continuation through the academic year, from the students we spoke to in term 1 through to those we spoke to in term 3, to see who was still eligible at the end of term 3.

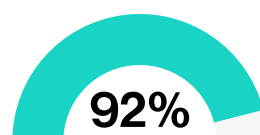
Term 1



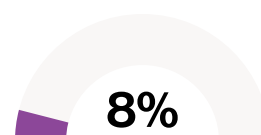
Of students
spoken to on
Outreach calls still
eligible



Of students
spoken to on
Outreach calls
withdrawn or
interrupted



Of students
spoken to on
Welcome calls still
eligible

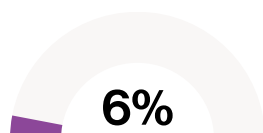


Of students
spoken to on
Welcome calls
withdrawn or
interrupted

Term 2



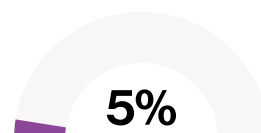
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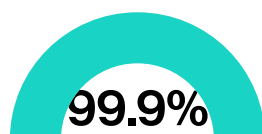


Of students
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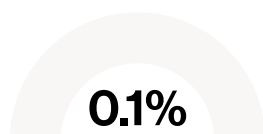


Of students
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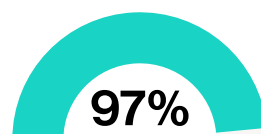
Term 3



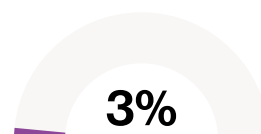
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The Big Conversation: Resit student outreach

In July we contacted students who were submitting resits over the summer. This contact was to ensure that students were aware of their resits and knew about the support that was being offered by the Academic and Digital skills team, as well as other support on offer.

We spoke to 256 students via phone. Of these students 99% were aware they had resits to submit, which was very good to see, as this has been lower in the past. 96% knew how to access their results letter and 91% were aware of how to access their deadlines and exam timetable.

18% said they would need extenuating circumstances for their resits and were directed to the GSU Advice team for support on how to submit ECs. All students were reminded about the Wellbeing team and the support available, with 100 students saying they had not previously been aware of the team and the support they could access.

99% of the students we spoke to said that the phone call had been useful for them.

As well as phone calls, we also reached out to the students we had not been able to call through WhatsApp. This was our most successful WhatsApp outreach of the service so far, with 2421 messages delivered, 423 students clicking through to access the Resit Support information and 130 students clicking the “arrange a call” button. Over 100 calls were made as a result of this, and all students received a follow up by WhatsApp. Responses to the WhatsApp continued through August with students reaching out to get information and signposting regarding PAB results and academic misconduct meetings.

Term 3 Report 25/26 - Themes across all calls

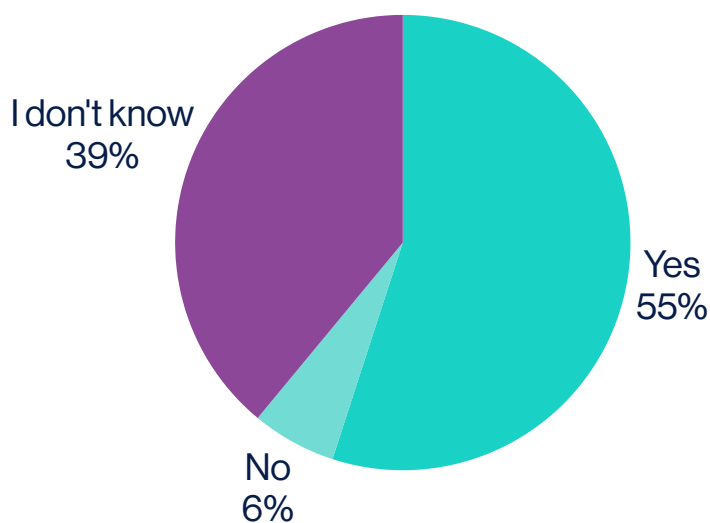
Academic Issues

During Big Conversation Outreach calls we ask students about their experience of their programmes, in Term 3, 750 reported that their experience had been predominantly positive, with only 3 saying their experience was overall negative. The aspect of the academic experience spoken about most positively was the quality of teaching, with 96% of students providing positive feedback. In contrast, timetabling emerged as the area most frequently identified as a challenge.

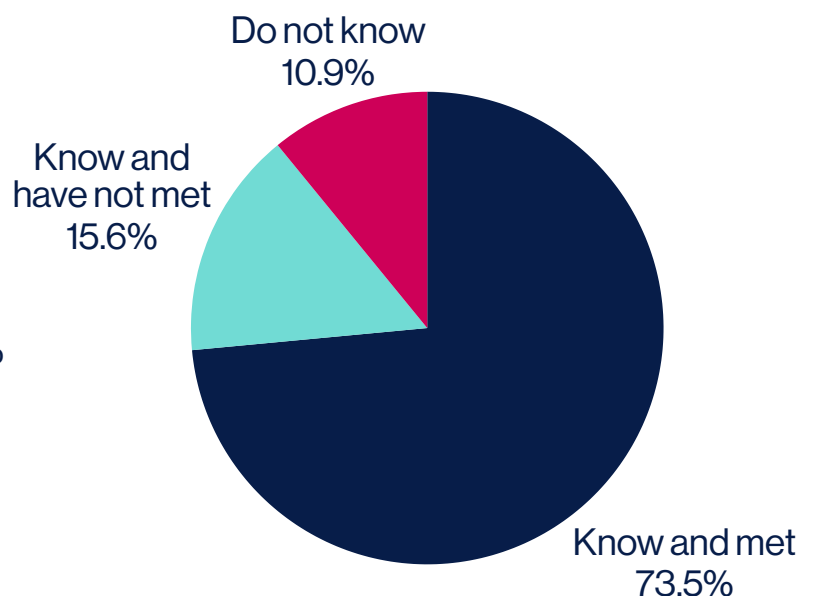
Careers guidance was flagged as an element that students felt more neutral to negative about comparatively, which aligns with a final term focus on next steps.

Of the students we spoke to on Outreach calls 74% knew and had met their academic tutor, 16% knew and had not met their academic tutor and 11% did not know who their personal tutor was. 60% knew who their programme reps for their course were, 424 said that GSU represents their academic interests.

Do you believe that GSU represents your academic interests?



Academic Tutor Engagement



Accommodation, Commuting, Timetables and Finances

Timetabling is still one of the biggest issues that students raise on Big Conversation calls. As previously, students spoke about big gaps in their timetables, receiving timetables late and timetables or locations of lectures changing at the last minute.

We have had a number of accommodation escalations this term. These have centred around students struggling to pay their accommodation fees for a variety of reasons, or due to students misunderstanding the implications of leaving their university accommodation midway through their contract.

On our Outreach calls financial concerns remained a significant issue during Term 3, with 64 students reporting worries about tuition fees or personal finances. Of the 29 students who received a support pack, 17 requested financial support information, while 12 of the 55 students requiring additional support were experiencing financial difficulties. This included students struggling to meet everyday living costs, who were signposted to food banks and other financial support services.

During our Welcome and Welcome Follow Up Calls, 14 students were signposted to the University Student Finance team. 10 students on Follow Up Calls reported that they had accessed support through the Student Finance team since their call in September or January.

Other Pressures and Wellbeing Issues

On our Big Conversation Outreach calls 22% of students said they were facing pressures that were affecting their studies. 8 of those students cited mental or physical health difficulties as a pressure which was impacting their studies, 35 spoke about finances and cost of living and 12 mentioned family/personal issues.

46 students told us that they feel lonely at university, with the majority saying they feel this way sometimes. Students said they felt their loneliness was due to difficulty making friends, and not having the time alongside studies and perceived lack of campus community.

37 students had used the Wellbeing service, with the vast majority saying it was a good, helpful and supportive experience which positively impacted their studies. The only other feedback was regarding response times, and a desire for higher staffing levels to make responses even quicker. The majority of students who knew about the Wellbeing service but had not used it said they hadn't needed the support, with a small number saying they had not known how to get in touch.

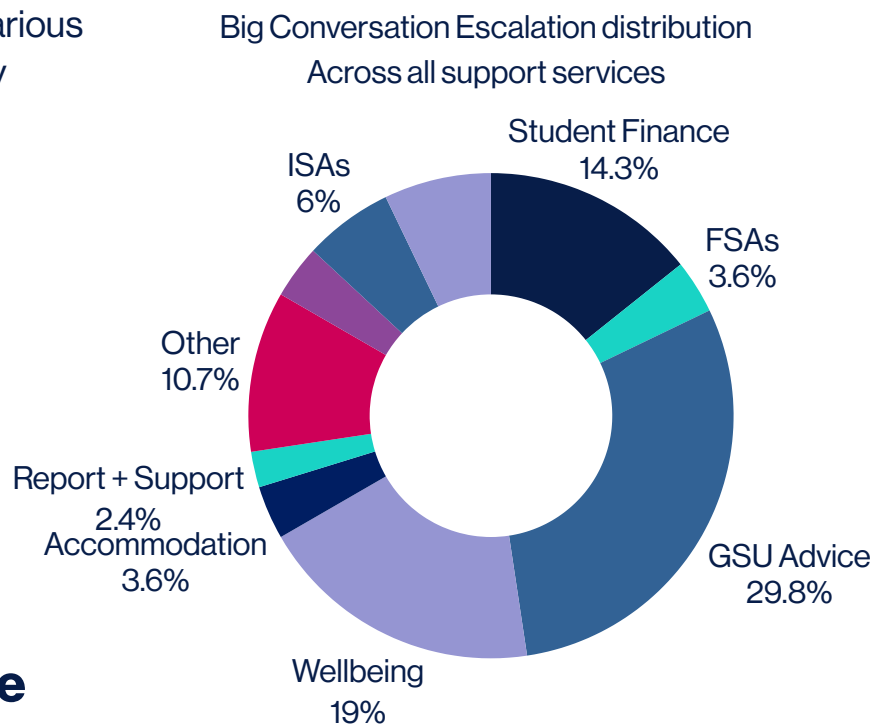
“The Wellbeing team was really helpful! They provided a dyslexia tutor for me which gave me the support I needed, and made my time at Greenwich a much better experience.”

FES PGT International student

Escalations

We had 93 students who were escalated in Term 3 across both the Welcome calls and Outreach calls. Of those 69 were fully escalated due to the complexity of their situations and 24 received support packs relating to finance support, wanting to withdraw or interrupt and loneliness.

The chart shows the distribution of signposting and referring to the various university services across the fully escalated cases.



The WhatsApp Service

We continued our WhatsApp broadcast service this term, and sent one broadcast messages to students who had signed up. This was around exam time in April with information about how to manage exam stress and get support if needed. This message was delivered to 1199 students, 705 viewed the message, 48 clicked through to the exam tips and 3 requested a call. We also contacted 417 Adult Nursing and Paramedic students on placement with 327 students viewing the message. We supported the Student Success team with promoting an end of term survey with 97 students clicking through to book a time, and 12 ended up speaking with the team.

Our most successful WhatsApp outreach was directed to students resitting in the summer as detailed above.

