Committee Title	Student Voice
Date of Meeting	20th February 2023
Title/Subject	National Students Survey 2022 - Question 26 (Students' Union) report
Paper Presenter	Laiba Tareen, Student President
Brief Summary of Issues/Topic	The National Student Survey (NSS) asks final year undergraduate students 27 questions, relating to 8 aspects of the learning experience. Students are also given the opportunity to make positive and negative comments in an open answer question. The results of the NSS are published at Unistats.com to help prospective students make informed decisions of where and what to study. The students' association question is "The students' union (association or guild) effectively represents students' academic interests" (question 26). The Students' Association receive a 532% satisfaction score in 2022 and higher than the Scottish sector average. This is the last year of this iteration of the NSS.

Recommendation(s)	Information		Discussion	X	Approval	
	Any member can ask a question by raising their voting card and being recognised by the Chair to speak. Student Voice are asked to discuss the NSS 2022 report					

Who have you consulted when developing the paper?	Trustee Board					
Staff/Student Protocol	Yes	X	No		N/A	X
Will any decision approved directly affect the work of staff?						
Should the paper be submitted to any other committee following its consideration/approval at this meeting? If yes, please state the committee and proposed date of submission.						

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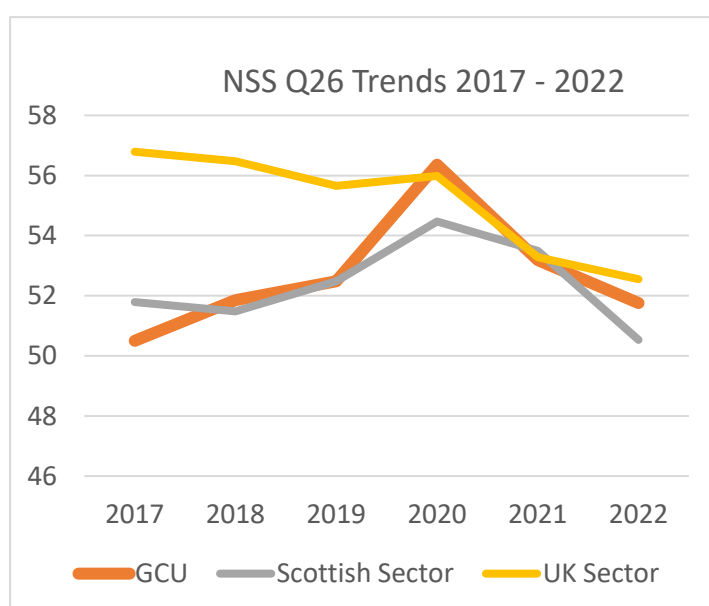
1.0 Introduction

The National Student Survey (NSS) invites students in their final year of their undergraduate degree to rate eight different areas of their academic experience as well as a question on their overall satisfaction with their course and a question about the Students' Association. This report presents the findings from the 2022 National Student Survey (NSS), focusing on the GCU Students' Association's results for Question 26: *The students' union (association or guild) effectively represents students' academic interests.*

The NSS launched at GCU in February 2022 and ran until April 2022. The university response rate was a healthy 72% of all those eligible (undergraduate students in their final year). The ongoing impact of the lockdown and subsequent pivot to digital and then a hybrid approach as we slowly exited the pandemic can clearly be seen in the data, not for GCU or the Students' Association, but for the sector as a whole.

A recap of GCU's overall results is provide in section 5. Most of this report, though, will focus on Question 26 (Q26) that pertains to Students' Associations.

2.0 Overall Results for Q26

	GCU	UK	Scotland
2017	50.5	56.79	51.79
2018	51.85	56.47	51.48
2019	52.48	55.66	52.48
2020	56.36	55.99	54.47
2021	53.18	53.28	53.49
2022	**51.76**	**52.55**	**50.53**

NSS Q26 Trends 2017 - 2022

This year we experienced a decline of 1.5% with an overall approval rating of 52%. Even with this decline from the pandemic, we are 1.5% ahead of where we were when the question was introduced in 2017 as we had strong years in 2019 & 2020 due to strengthening our communication around "academic interest" and the strong win of abolishing graduation fees.

The sector as a whole also experienced a decline in approval ratings for Q26, especially in Scotland. In 2021, Scotland, UK and the GCU score all

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	GCU	Scottish	Difference
2017	50.5	51.79	-1.29
2018	51.85	51.48	+0.37
2019	52.48	52.48	equal
2020	56.36	54.47	+1.89
2021	53.18	53.49	-0.31
2022	**51.76**	**50.53**	+1.23
Change	-1.42	-2.96	

	GCU	UK	Difference
2017	50.5	56.79	**-6.29**
2018	51.85	56.47	**-4.62**
2019	52.48	55.66	**-3.18**
2020	56.36	55.99	**0.37**
2021	53.18	53.49	**-0.31**
2022	**51.76**	**52.55**	**-0.79**
Change	**1.26**	**-4.24**	

converged around 53%. This year, Scotland continued to decline at a steeper rate than the UK sector overall. It is hypothesised that this is due to the different approaches to on campus provisions in England and Scotland during the covid transition year.

2.1 Ranking of Sector on Q26

As the Scottish sector had a steeper decline than GCU on Q26, we have improved three places when compared to other Scottish HE Students' Associations. We are now joint seventh (out of 17). Strong performers in the sector include Queen Margaret University Students' Union who did not lose momentum during the covid downturn and Edinburgh Napier Students' Association who has mostly recovered from their covid lull.

Institution	Q26 2020 Score	Q26 2021 Score	**Q26 2022 Score**	Movement	2022 (2021) Rank
University of Strathclyde	62	65	63	▲	1(3)
Queen Margaret University Edinburgh	57	58	60	▲	2(5)
University of St Andrews	69	69	56	▼	=3(2)
University of Stirling	57	54	56	▲	=3(9)
Heriot-Watt University	56	59	54	▼	=5(4)
Edinburgh Napier University	55	50	54	▲	=5(12)
Glasgow Caledonian University	**56%**	**53%**	**52%**	▲	**=7(10)**
University of Glasgow	55	56	52	▼	=7(=6)
Robert Gordon University	61	55	52	▲	=7(8)

GCU Students' Association NSS Q26 Analysis 2022

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland	53	70	52	▼	=7 (1)
University of the West of Scotland	53	48	51	▲	11(14)
University of Aberdeen	48	56	49	▼	12(=6)
University of the Highlands and Islands	49	49	48	=	13(13)
University of Dundee	62	52	46	▼	14(11)
Abertay University	53	47	43	=	15(15)
Glasgow School of Art	42	42	41	▲	16(17)
University of Edinburgh	40	43	37	▼	17(16)

3.0 Segmentation Analysis

3.1 Demographics - Overall

The NSS provides insight into not only what final year undergraduate students think but also who they are, as the survey asks a number of demographics question and the response rate is high. Below is the percentage of students who described themselves as fitting into each demographic segmentation.

Full Time	93.3		EU	4.7
UK	93.3		A specific learning disability	3.4
No known disability	88.5		Black	2.9
White	86.3		Not known (ethnicity)	2.6
Female	60.1		International (non-EU)	2
Young	58.3		Mixed	1.2
HE/FE Entry Route	49.7		Other (ethnicity)	0.8
A Levels or Equivalent Entry Route	47.6		IMD 1	18.1
Mature	41.7		IMD 2	17.1
Male	39.9		IMD 3	15.2
other disability	8		IMD 4	19
Part Time	6.7		IMD 5	21.8
Asian	6.1		IMD unknown	8.8

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3.2 Demographic Segmentation - Trends

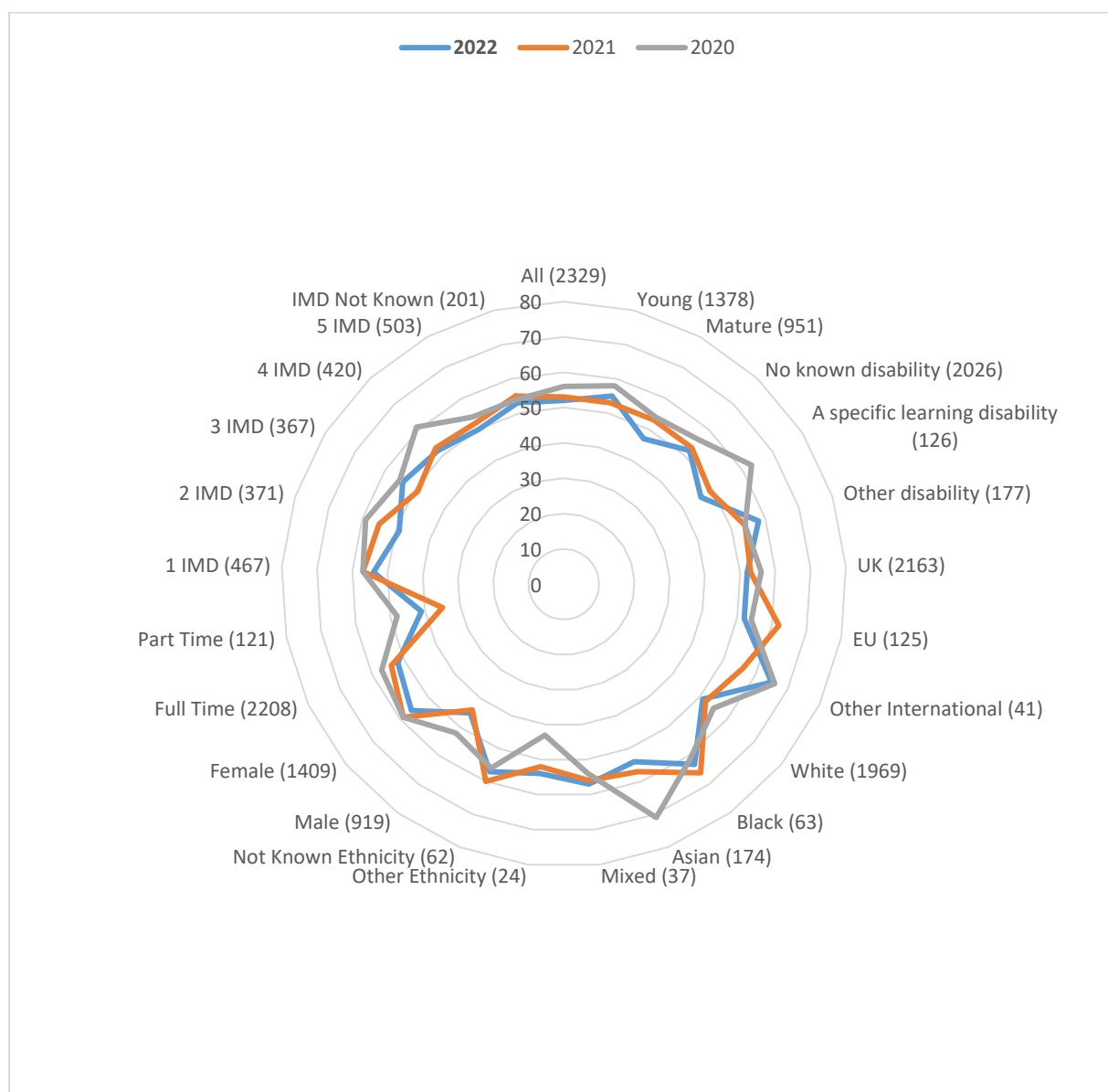|	Percentage Agreeing 2017	Percentage Agreeing 2022	Change between 2017 - 2022
Overall	50.5	51.76	1.26
Mature	50.82	47.05	-3.77
Young	50.34	54.91	4.57
A specific learning disability	55.22	46.02	-9.2
No known disability	50.66	51.57	0.91
other disability	43.48	57.93	14.45
EU excluding UK	46.43	51.69	5.26
Other (Domicile)	47.73	65	17.27
UK	50.73	51.5	0.77
Asian	56.93	54.09	-2.84
Black	64.44	63.33	-1.11
Mixed	*	56.76	*
Not known (ethnicity)	39.34	56.9	17.56
Other (ethnicity)	56.25	54.17	-2.08
White	49.97	50.88	0.91
Female	54.4	56.1	1.7
Male	43.97	45.07	1.1
School Qualifications	50	53.8	3.8
HE	51.25	49.55	-1.7
Other/Not known	46.83	*	*
Full Time	51.2	52.31	1.11
Part Time	36.54	40.59	4.05

When analysed over a 6 year period, we have increased our approval rating with most demographic segments. Some of the segments with fewer individuals within that demographic will also experience

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more variability compared to the larger segments due to the law of averages. Moreover, small gains in segments with large population will have larger impact on overall score than larger gains in segments with fewer students.

Our lowest agreement rates continues to be from Part-Time students and students who identify as male. Part-time students made up 6.7% of the NSS respondents whist males made up 39.9% of respondents. Worryingly, we have also performed more poorly amongst mature students who make up 41.7%. One of our strengths as a Students' Association is our work in representing students from marginalised backgrounds and international students. Since 2017, 17% more international students agree that we represent their academic interest. Whilst we have lost 1 percentage point from students who define as black we still perform strongly, with over 63% rating us positively.

3.3 Demographic Segments – Radar Graph

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3.4. Demographic Segmentation – Sector Comparison

When we compare our NSS Q26 scores to the UK sector as a whole, it further shows our strengths and weaknesses. For example, this year we did very well with students with a (non-learning) disability. This could be due to the hybrid, personalised approach to on-campus learning that we advocated for. We also do well with all the marginalised ethnic student segments except for Asian and international students. As for groups that rate us below average, in addition to Asian students, mature, male and articulation students have large gaps in satisfaction.

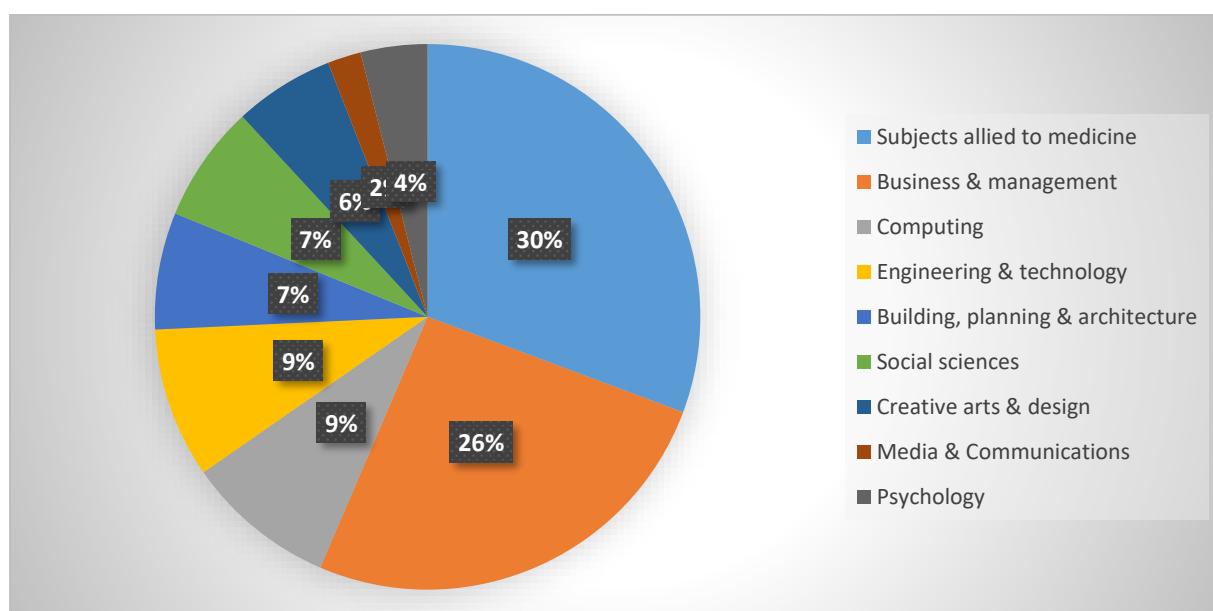| Demographic Group	GCU 2022	UK Sector 2022	Difference	Above or below average
Mature	47.05	53.98	-6.93	▼
Young	54.91	52.05	2.86	▲
A specific learning disability	46.02	49.93	-3.91	▼
No known disability	51.57	53.78	-2.21	▼
Other disability	57.93	48.09	9.84	▲
EU	51.69	54.53	-2.84	▼
International (non-EU)	65	61.21	3.79	▲
UK	51.5	51.35	0.15	▲
Asian	54.09	59.08	-4.99	▼
Black	63.33	57.36	5.97	▲
Mixed	56.76	49.21	7.55	▲
Not known (ethnicity)	56.9	55.67	1.23	▲
Other (ethnicity)	54.17	56.94	-2.77	▼
White	50.88	50.3	0.58	▲
Female	56.1	54.35	1.75	▲
Male	45.07	49.84	-4.77	▼
School Qualifications	53.8	52.04	1.76	▲
HE Qualifications	49.55	53.41	-3.86	▼
Full Time	52.31	53.16	-0.85	▼
Part Time	40.59	44.19	-3.6	▼

4.0 Segmentation by Subject Areas

The data for the NSS can also be segmented based on subject area of the respondent's degree. An analysis based on subject segments is even more important given the reformulation of the student union/association question from a focus on general satisfaction to satisfaction with academic representation.

4.1 Subject area segmentation at GCU

The NSS breaks down all academic degrees into a dozen subject areas that are listed in the following table along with the relative size of each subject area based on respondents to the NSS. The pie chart helps to illustrate the relative size of each subject area at GCU.

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4.2 Subject Segmentation – Trends

	2017 (Baseline)	2022	Change between 2022 and 2017
Subjects allied to medicine	58.33	**54.48**	-3.75
Business & management	47.55	**56.67**	9.12
Computing	41.52	**44.62**	3.1
Engineering & technology	47.94	**45.5**	-2.44
Building, planning & architecture	45.68	**33.79**	-11.89
Creative arts & design	45.45	**59.69**	14.24
Social sciences	47.7	**57.45**	9.75
media, journalism and communications	40.52	**41.67**	1.15
Psychology	*	**50**	*
Law	25	**53.23**	28.23

For the largest subject area at GCU, subjects allied to medicine, we are a significant 3.75 percentage points behind our 2017 baseline score. We also have decreased our approval rating in two big SCEBE subjects, engineering and building & planning. However, we have increased our scores within the subjects that are housed within GSBS as well as in the computing subject area. However, computing along with building & planning are where we perform worst with our strengths in design subjects and business & management segments.

.3 Subject Segmentation – Sector Comparision

Q26 Positive Agreement Percentage 2022	GCU	UK Sector	Difference	Above or below average
Subjects allied to medicine	54.48	53.44	1.04	▲
Business & management	56.67	61.38	-4.71	▼
Computing	44.62	48.93	-4.31	▼
Engineering & technology	45.5	52.17	-6.67	▼

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Building, planning & architecture	33.79	51.16	-17.37	▼
Creative arts & design	59.69	51.83	7.86	▲
Social sciences	57.45	51.16	6.29	▲
Media, journalism & communications	41.67	51.1	-9.43	▼
Psychology	50	52.25	-2.25	▼
Law	53.23	50.47	2.76	▲

When we compare our scores on Q26 with that of the UK sector, we are one percentage point stronger in subjects allied to health. However, we could be doing better with building and planning and engineering as well as, interestingly, a number of subjects with the GSBS umbrella like business & management and media & journalism.

5.0 GCU - Overall Results

The following pertains to the full NSS survey not just Q26 and have been analysed by the university.

Table 2: GCU scores by NSS section, 2017-2022

	Overall satisfaction	Teaching	Learning opportunities	Assessment and feedback	Academic support	Organisation and management	Learning resources	Learning community	Student Voice*
2017	81	82	81	66	75	66	88	75	66
2018	81	83	82	71	78	69	88	77	71
2019	81	83	83	71	78	69	88	77	72
2020	85	85	85	74	80	73	89	78	76
2021	78	80	80	66	74	73	78	68	68
2022	79(+1)	80(=)	79(-1)	67(+1)	74(=)	70(-3)	83(+5)	65(-3)	67(-1)

*Excludes Q26 *The students' union (association or guild) effectively represents students' academic interests*

Table 4: NSS 2022 Scottish university 'overall satisfaction' scores and rankings*

Rank	University	2022 score	2021 score	+/- previous year	2022 benchmark	+/- benchmark
1	University of St Andrews	89	93	-4	78	+11
2	University of Aberdeen	86	85	+1	78	+8
3	Robert Gordon University	83	84	-1	74	+9
4	University of the Highlands and Islands	82	78	+4	77	+5
5	University of Strathclyde	82	85	-3	77	+5
6	Abertay University	81	79	+2	75	+6
7	University of Glasgow	80	84	-4	78	+2
8	Edinburgh Napier University	80	81	-1	74	+6
9	University of Stirling	80	81	-1	76	+4
10	**Glasgow Caledonian University**	**79**	**78**	**+1**	**74**	**+5**
11	University of Dundee	77	79	-2	75	+2
12	Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh	76	79	-3	72	-4
13	University of the West of Scotland	74	74	=	74	=
14	University of Edinburgh	73	71	+2	78	-5
15	Heriot-Watt University	70	79	-9	77	-7

*Excludes SRUC, Glasgow School of Art and Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

Table 5: NSS 2022 School scores

School	Overall satisfaction	Teaching	Learning opportunities	Assessment and feedback	Academic support	Organisation and management	Learning resources	Learning community	Student Voice
GSBS 2022	84	82	82	71	79	78	87	69	70
+/- previous year	+4	+2	+3	+3	+5	+1	+10	+3	+2
SCEBE 2022	74	75	72	63	70	69	78	57	61
+/- previous year	+1	=	-3	-3	-3	-3	+2	-6	-4
SHLS 2022	78	81	82	67	73	65	82	68	68
+/- previous year	-3	-2	-2	+2	-1	-5	+2	-7	-4

6.0 Summary

This has been another tough year for students and the NSS bore out the results of their frustrations. The gains that we had made in the 2020 survey have been wiped out yet we are on the whole in a better place than we started in 2017. The analysis has shown where we need to focus more of our communications, service improvements and campaigns on part time, mature and male students as well as better represent the interests of students studying in Allied Health and SCEBE.