

Committee Title	Student Voice					
Date of Meeting	22 nd October 2018					
Item Number and Title/Subject	National Student Survey 2018					
Paper Presenter	Rachel Simpson, Student President (or nominee)					
Brief Summary of Issues/Topic	<p>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. This is the seventh year that students have been asked about the Students' Association in this survey. The results of the NSS are published at Unistats.com to help prospective students make informed decisions of where and what to study.</p> <p>The 2017 survey had substantial changes. This included nine new questions on student engagement, updated questions on assessment and feedback and learning resources, removal and transfer of personal development questions to the optional question banks, and removal of two duplicative questions. The students' association question was also changed from "I am satisfied with the Students' Union (Association or Guild) at my institution" (question 23) to "The students' union (association or guild) effectively represents students' academic interests" (question 26). There is a question on clubs and societies and this remains unchanged as "I am satisfied with the range of clubs and societies on offer".</p> <p>The Students' Association receive a 52% satisfaction score in 2018, down on the UK sector (56%) and 1% up on the Scottish sector (51%). The clubs and societies satisfaction score was 61%, down on the Scottish sector (67%) and UK sector (72%).</p>					
Recommendation(s)	Information	X	Discussion		Approval	
	Student Voice is asked to note the National Student Survey 2018 paper.					
Who have you consulted when developing the paper?	Executive Committee Trustee Board					
Staff/Student Protocol	Yes		No	X	N/A	
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?	No					
If yes, please state the committee and proposed date of submission.						

1.0 Introduction

This report presents the findings from the 2018 National Student Survey (NSS), focusing on the GCU Students' Association's results for the student union question (Q26). Additionally, analysis of the satisfaction with clubs and societies and open comments is included as well as an update on the NSS Action Group.

2.0 NSS Score for Q26 on the Students' Association

Question 26 of the National Students Survey (NSS) asks respondents how much they agree, on a five point Likert scale, with the following statement. 'The Students' Union (Association or Guild) effectively represents students' academic interests'. This is the second year the question has been asked replacing a former question (Q23).

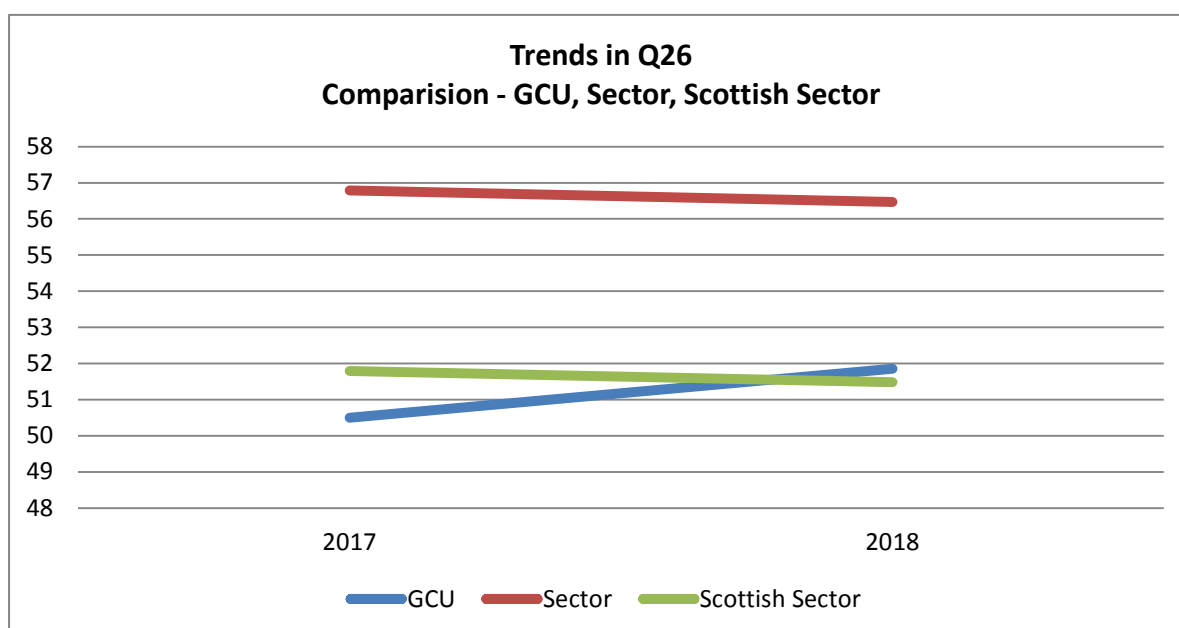
2.1 Overall Results for Q26

2018	51.85
2017	50.5
Change	+1.35

Overall, the Students' Association increased the approval rating slightly from 50.5% to 51.85%. The UK sector average for the Q26 was 56.5% with Scotland average being 51.5%. Thus we are close to 5% below the UK average but just slightly above average for Scotland. However, the sector and Scottish trends from 2017 to 2018 has been a decrease in the percent agreeing with Q26 while we have seen a slight increase. Tables 2-4 and graph 1 illustrates these points. Table 3 presents the Q26 scores from all Scottish University and highlights were GCU is in relation.

	GCU	Scottish Sector	Difference
2017	50.5	51.79	-1.29
2018	51.85	51.48	+0.37
Change	+1.35	-0.31	+1.66

	GCU	Sector	Difference
2017	50.5	56.79	-6.29
2018	51.85	56.47	-4.62
Change	+1.35	-0.32	+1.67



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GCU Students' Association Analysis

Institution	Q26 2017 Score	Q26 2018 Score	Rank	Movement
Glasgow School of Art	60%	70%	1	▲
University of Dundee	65%	67%	2	▲
University of St Andrews	67%	62%	3	▼
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland	-	58%	4	
University of Stirling	51%	54%	5	▲
University of Glasgow	54%	53%	6	▼
Robert Gordon University	56%	53%	7	▼
Queen Margaret University Edinburgh	41%	52%	8	▲
Glasgow Caledonian University	51%	52%	9	▲
University of Strathclyde	56%	52%	10	▼
Heriot-Watt University	54%	51%	11	▼
University of the West of Scotland	49%	51%	12	▲
University of Abertay Dundee	52%	50%	13	▼
Edinburgh Napier University	51%	48%	14	▼
University of the Highlands and Islands	41%	47%	15	▲
University of Aberdeen	38%	42%	16	▲
University of Edinburgh	42%	42%	17	=

2.2 Segmentation Analysis

To better understand how the Students' Association is meeting the needs of students in terms of academic representation, segmentation analysis was undertaken for both demographic segments and subject area segments.

2.2.1 NSS Demographic Segments at GCU

Figure 1 presents a number of demographic segments and the likelihood of a GCU student who responded to the NSS of being in one of these segments. Not only does this present a picture of what the typical GCU student looks like but is also helpful in message segmentation. However, as an organization committed to diversity and values inclusion, the equitableness of such an approach also needs to be considered.

GCU NSS RESPONDANT

Likelihood of being....

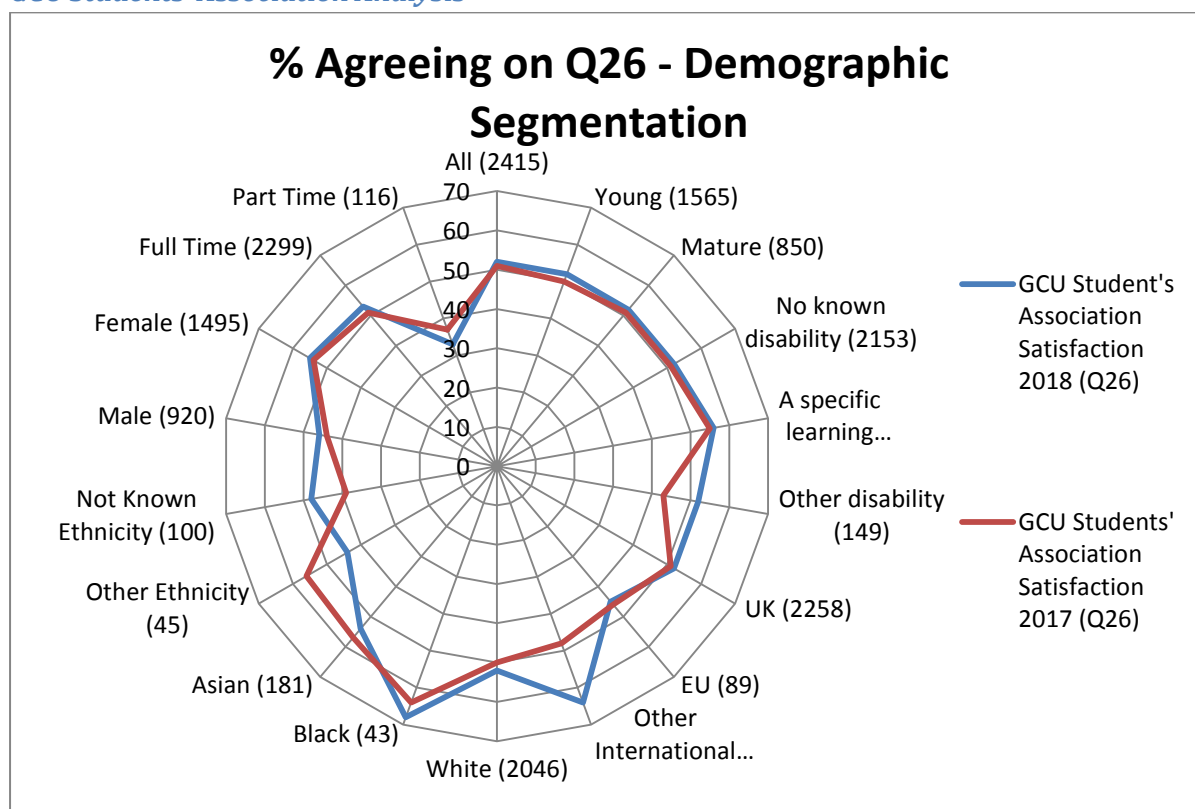


FULL TIME	95.2%
UK	93.5%
NO KNOWN DISABILITY	89.2%
WHITE	84.7%
YOUNG	64.8%
FEMALE	61.9%
HE (HIGHEST QUALIFICATION ON ENTRY)	48.9%
A LEVELS OR EQUIVALENT (HIGHEST QUALIFICATION ON ENTRY)	48.8%
MALE	38.1%
MATURE	35.2%
ASIAN	7.5%
OTHER DISABILITY	6.2%
PART TIME	4.8%
A SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY	4.7%
NOT KNOWN (ETHNICITY)	4.1%
EU EXCLUDING UK	3.7%
OTHER (DOMICILE)	2.8%
OTHER/NOT KNOWN	2.2%
OTHER (ETHNICITY)	1.9%
BLACK	1.8%

Most GCU students are full time, white and UK based with no known disabilities. They also tend to be young (under 26 when enrolling) but there is a significant proportion of mature students at GCU as well (35.2%). 3 out of 5 students identify as female. There is an even split in their route into GCU between HE provisions and GCSEs/A-Levels.

2.2.2 Demographic Segmentation - Trends

While there is limited historical data due to the revision of the Students' Union/Association question on the NSS, analysis of the change between 2017 and 2018 can provide insight on what groups we successfully engaged with last year.



Demographic Segment	% agree 2018	% agree 2017	Change between 2017 to 2018
Overall	51.85	50.5	+1.35
Mature	52.37	50.82	+1.55
Young	51.58	50.34	+1.24
A specific learning disability	55.86	55.22	+0.64
No known disability	51.63	50.66	+0.97
other disability	51.85	43.48	+8.37
EU excluding UK	45.24	46.43	-1.19
International (non- EU)	64.06	47.73	+16.33
UK	51.75	50.73	+1.02
Asian	53.57	56.93	-3.36
Black	68.29	64.44	+3.85
Not known (ethnicity)	47.87	39.34	+8.53
Other (ethnicity)	44.19	56.25	-12.06
White	51.72	49.97	+1.75
Female	55.34	54.4	+0.94
Male	46.19	43.97	+2.22
A Levels or equivalent (highest qualification on entry)	49.55	50	-0.45
HE (highest qualification on entry)	54.58	51.25	+3.33
Other/Not known	44	46.83	-2.83
Full Time	52.68	51.2	+1.48
Part Time	32.61	36.54	-3.93

2018 NSS

GCU Students' Association Analysis

The Students' Association increased the percentage agreeing with Q26 for both young and mature students. In regards to academic representation, we increased our satisfaction with students who identify as disabled, more so those with non-learning disability. We increased slightly with UK domicile students however for EU students we declined. Our largest gain was made with students who are international, non EU students with a 16.33 increase in percentage. We also see variability in our engagement rates based on ethnicity, with increases in White, Black and Not known ethnicity segments but decreases in Asian and 'Other' ethnicity which experienced the biggest drop in satisfaction (-12%). We held relatively stable with females while increasing our agreement rate with males. We lost some traction with school leavers but increased our satisfaction rates with those students entering with a previous HE qualification.

It is important to note that due to the law of averages, segments with larger number of students will be more stable than those with fewer students; therefore the data for these groups will experience greater variability. Moreover, small gains in segments with large population will have larger impact on overall score than larger gains in segments with fewer students.

2.2.3 Demographic Segmentation – Sector Comparison

In comparing GCU's NSS results for Q26 with those of the sector, we are behind the curve for most demographic groups, especially students who identify as 'other' in ethnicity and part-time students. There are a few areas where we performed well and one in particular (students who identify as Black) where we were sector leaders.

Demographic Group	GCU	Sector	Difference
Overall	51.85	56.47	-4.62
Mature	52.37	56.68	-4.31
Young	51.58	56.4	-4.82
A specific learning disability	55.86	56.23	-0.37
No known disability	51.63	56.74	-5.11
Other disability	51.85	53.59	-1.74
EU excluding UK	45.24	54.99	-9.75
International (non-EU)	64.06	60.34	3.72
UK	51.75	56.16	-4.41
Asian	53.57	62.12	-8.55
Black	68.29	61.82	6.47
Not known (ethnicity)	47.87	57.4	-9.53
Other (ethnicity)	44.19	55.9	-11.71
White	51.72	54.83	-3.11
Female	55.34	58.67	-3.33
Male	46.19	53.22	-7.03
A Levels or equivalent (highest qualification on entry)	49.55	56.34	-6.79
HE (highest qualification on entry)	54.58	56.14	1.56
Other/Not known	44	58.75	-14.75
Full Time	52.68	57.05	-4.4
Part Time	32.61	47.55	-14.94

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GCU Students' Association Analysis

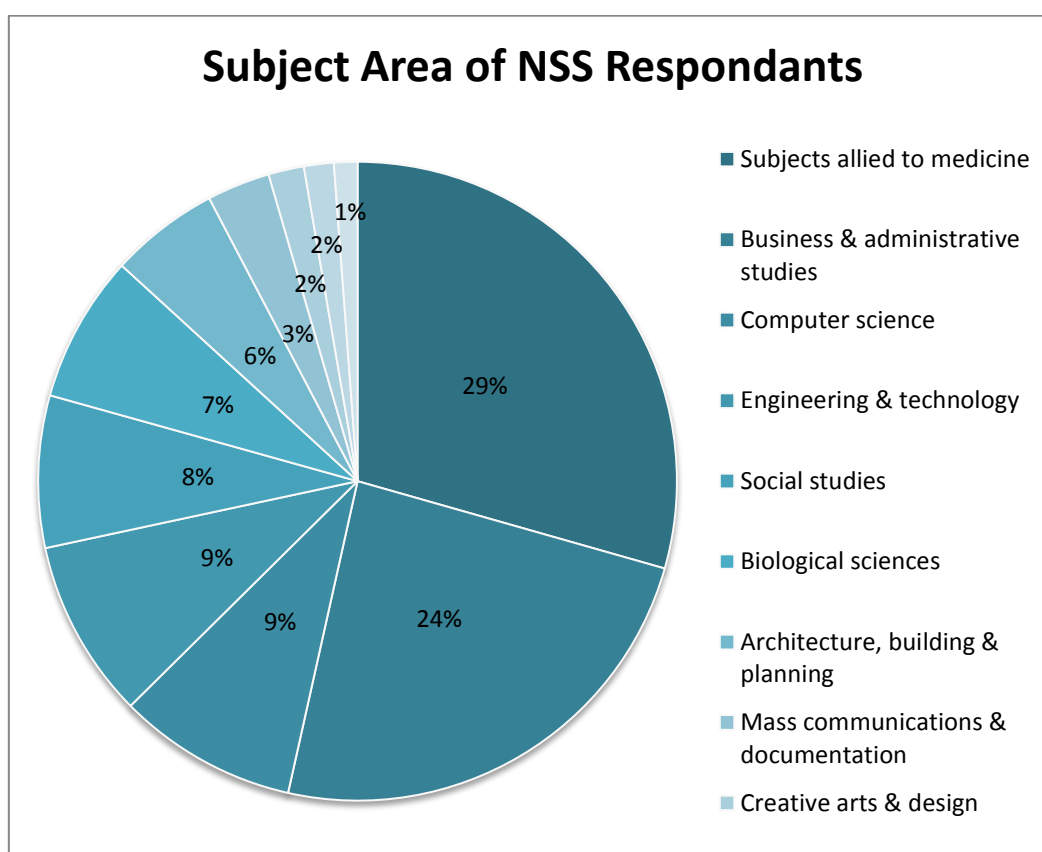
2.3 Segmentation by Subject Areas

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.

2.3.1 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. Further, a breakdown by degree, subject area and academic school is provided in the appendix.

Subject area	% of NSS
Subjects allied to medicine	29.27
Business & administrative studies	23.97
Computer science	9.05
Engineering & technology	9.01
Social studies	7.66
Biological sciences	7.42
Architecture, building & planning	5.5
Mass communications & documentation	3.18
Creative arts & design	1.79
Law	1.5
Physical sciences	1.18
Medicine & dentistry	0



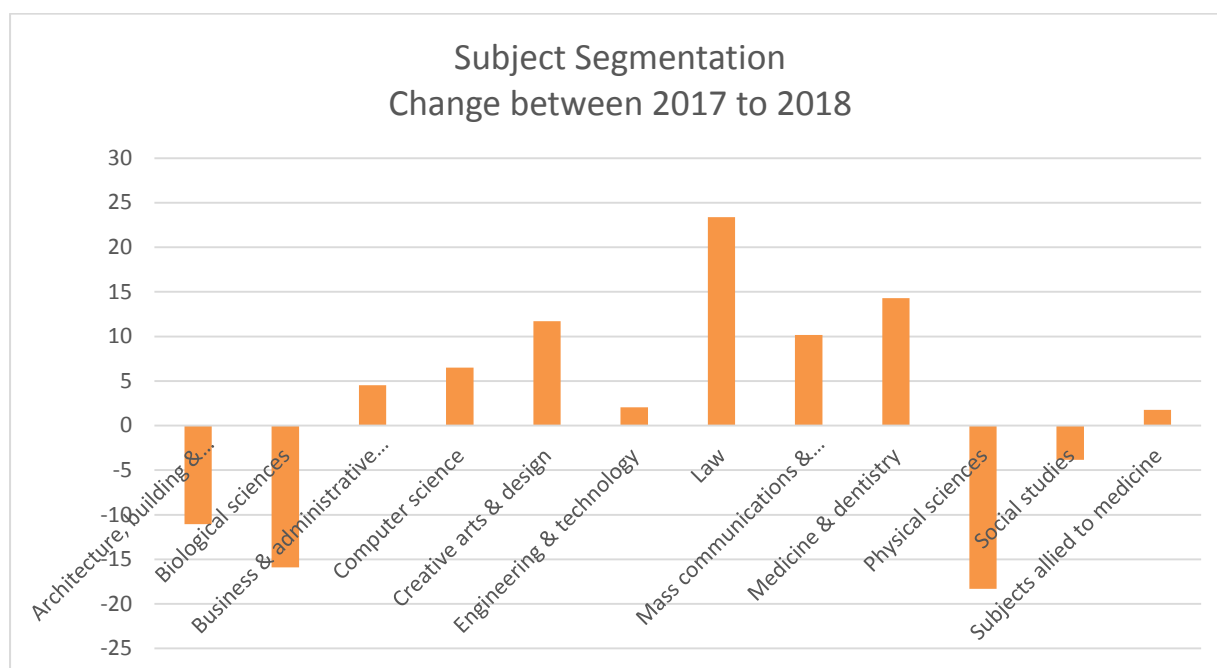
2018 NSS

GCU Students' Association Analysis

2.3.2 Subject Segmentation – Trends

Subject area	% Agree 2018	% Agree 2017	Change
Architecture, building & planning	34.26	45.68	-11.06
Biological sciences	49.42	65.31	-15.89
Business & administrative studies	52.08	47.55	+4.53
Computer science	48.02	41.52	+6.5
Creative arts & design	57.14	45.45	+11.69
Engineering & technology	50	47.94	+2.06
Law	48.39	25	+23.39
Mass communications & documentation	50.68	40.52	+10.16
Medicine & dentistry	42.86	28.57	+14.29
Physical sciences	23.08	41.38	-18.3
Social studies	43.86	47.7	-3.84
Subjects allied to medicine	60.09	58.33	+1.76

Given that there is limited data due to the change in the Students' Union/Association NSS question and the law of averages, some of the biggest swings (changes) are in subjects that are relatively small in size. For the two largest subject areas at GCU, allied health and business & administration studies, there is an increase in satisfaction. Allied health increased by 1.8% while there was a significant increase of 4.5% for business & admin studies. Moreover, engineering and computer science, who together account for 18% of the NSS respondents and make up the bulk of the School of Computing, Engineering and Built Environment (SCEBE) programmes, also experienced significant increases with computing science increasing by 6.5% and engineering by 2%. However, the subject areas of social studies, biological sciences, and building & planning had significant decreases in satisfaction as well as still being over 5% of NSS respondents. Most notably, biological sciences satisfaction with academic representation decreased 16% and building & planning by 11%. The following graph illustrates this variability.



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GCU Students' Association Analysis

2.3.3 Subject Segmentation – Sector Comparison

Subject area	GCU	Sector	Difference
Architecture, building & planning	34.26	55.55	-20.93
Biological sciences	49.42	58.93	-9.51
Business & administrative studies	52.08	61.28	-9.2
Computer science	48.02	53.73	-5.71
Creative arts & design	57.14	57.53	-0.39
Engineering & technology	50	54.55	-4.55
Law	48.39	52.95	-4.56
Mass communications & documentation	50.68	51.5	-0.82
Medicine & dentistry	42.86	56.88	-14.02
Physical sciences	23.08	51.05	-27.97
Social studies	43.86	54.4	-10.54
Subjects allied to medicine	60.09	59.45	0.64

In comparing the Students' Association to the sector, we are behind in every area but one, allied health subjects. For that subject area, the Students' Association scores about average. For our other large programmes, business & admin studies we are 9.2% below the sector average and for the two large SCEBE programmes, computing and engineering, we are 5.7% and 4.6% below average. While physical sciences are 28% below average, this subject area accounts for only 1% of respondents. However, building and planning is 5.5% of respondents and scored 21% below average.

2.4 Awareness and Fit

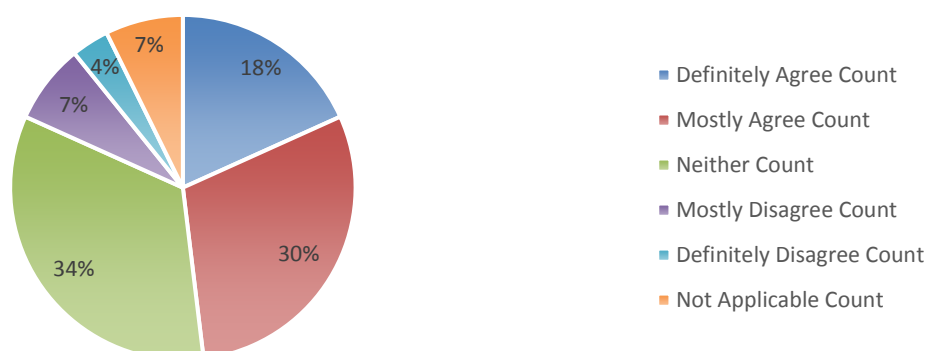
The data for Q26 shows a large number of neither/nor responses which could indicate a number of things. It could signal that respondents don't understand the question or that there is a general unawareness of the Students' Association – especially in the area of representing academic interest. Thus, an awareness and fit analysis was carried out to help understand the groups/subject areas that are aware of the Students' Association and, of those that are aware, their satisfaction with the Students' Association.

Definitions

Awareness: the proportion of respondents who show a distinct preference (by selecting the 'definitely agree', 'mostly agree', 'mostly disagree' and 'definitely disagree' answer options).

Fit: the proportion of respondents who are satisfied (those selecting 'definitely agree' and 'mostly agree') from among those showing awareness.

Overall Response for Q26 2018



2.4.1 Awareness and Fit – Demographic segments

NSS respondents who are aware of the Students' Association find the Students' Association to be fit for purpose in respect to representing their academic interest. Where the problem seems to lie is a general awareness of the Students' Association.

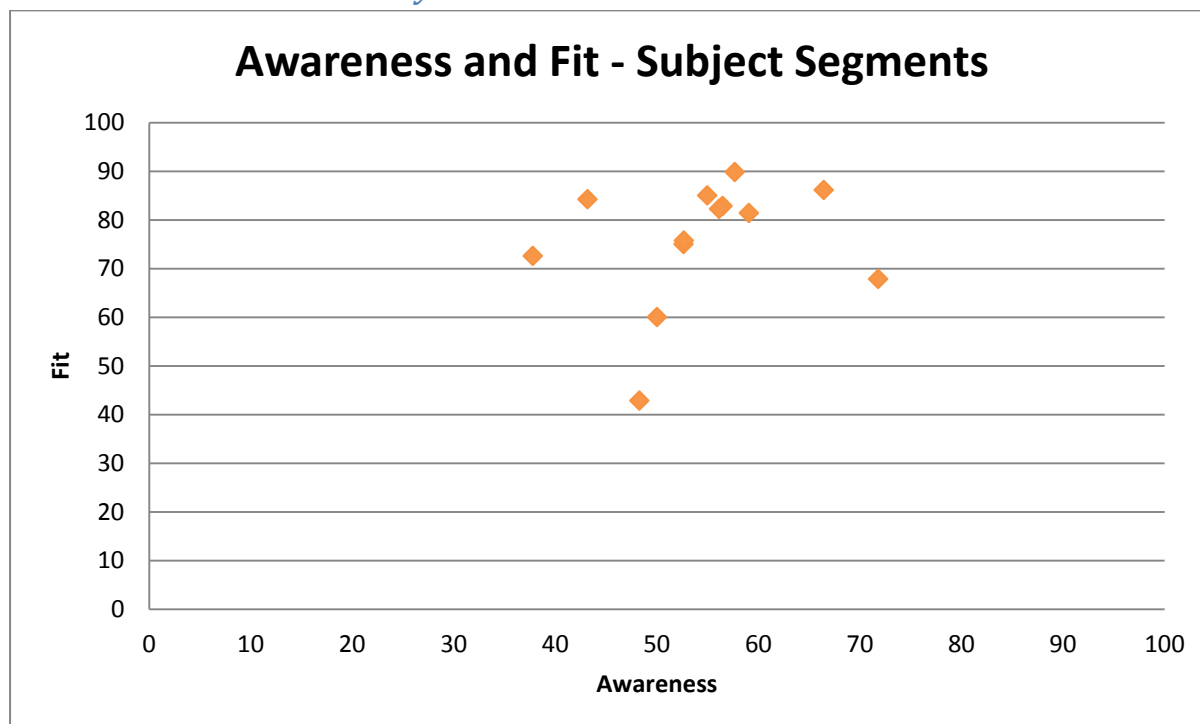
Demographic segment	Awareness Rate	Fit Rate
Overall	59.05	81.42
Mature	57.06	84.33
Young	60.13	79.91
A specific learning disability	68.14	80.52
No known disability	58.76	81.34
other disability	56.38	83.33
EU excluding UK	55.06	77.55
International (non -EU)	70.59	85.42
UK	58.56	81.41
Asian	59.67	83.33
Black	74.42	87.50
Not known (ethnicity)	58.00	77.59
Other (ethnicity)	60.00	70.37
White	58.70	81.52
Female	61.47	83.46
Male	55.11	77.71
A Levels or equivalent (highest qualification on entry)	58.69	79.34
HE (highest qualification on entry)	59.56	83.81
Other/Not known	55.56	73.33
Full Time	60.20	81.72
Part Time	36.21	71.43

Overall, the Students' Association had an awareness rate of just under 60%. For those that were aware though, 81% agreed that it represents their academic interests. Part-time students had the lowest awareness rates of 36.2% and those identifying as Black ethnicity had the highest awareness rate of 74.4%. The larger segment groups experienced less variability from the average with males being the least aware (55.1%) of these large segments.

Once awareness is considered, satisfaction with the Students' Association (i.e. fit) is consistent around the overall average of 81.4%. Other ethnicity (70.4%) and part-time students (71.3%) scored us the lowest while non-EU international students and mature students scored the Students' Association well. Of the large demographic segments, males, young students and students with GCSEs/A-levels scored us the lowest. Mature (84.3%), those with HE qualifications (83.8%) and female (83.5%) are the highest ranking large demographic groups.

2.4.2 Awareness and Fit – Subject Area Segmentation

There is more variance in awareness and fit when looking at subject area segments compared to the previously examined demographic segments as illustrated by the scatterplot graph that has less grouping of the segment points.



Subject Area	Awareness Rate	Fit Rate
Architecture, building & planning	37.78	72.55
Biological sciences	54.95	85.00
Business & administrative studies	56.46	82.83
Computer science	57.66	89.81
Creative arts & design	43.18	84.21
Engineering & technology	56.11	82.26
Law	52.63	75.00
Mass communications & documentation	71.79	67.86
Medicine & dentistry	50.00	60.00
Physical sciences	48.28	42.86
Social studies	52.66	75.76
Subjects allied to medicine	66.43	86.16
Overall	59.05	81.42

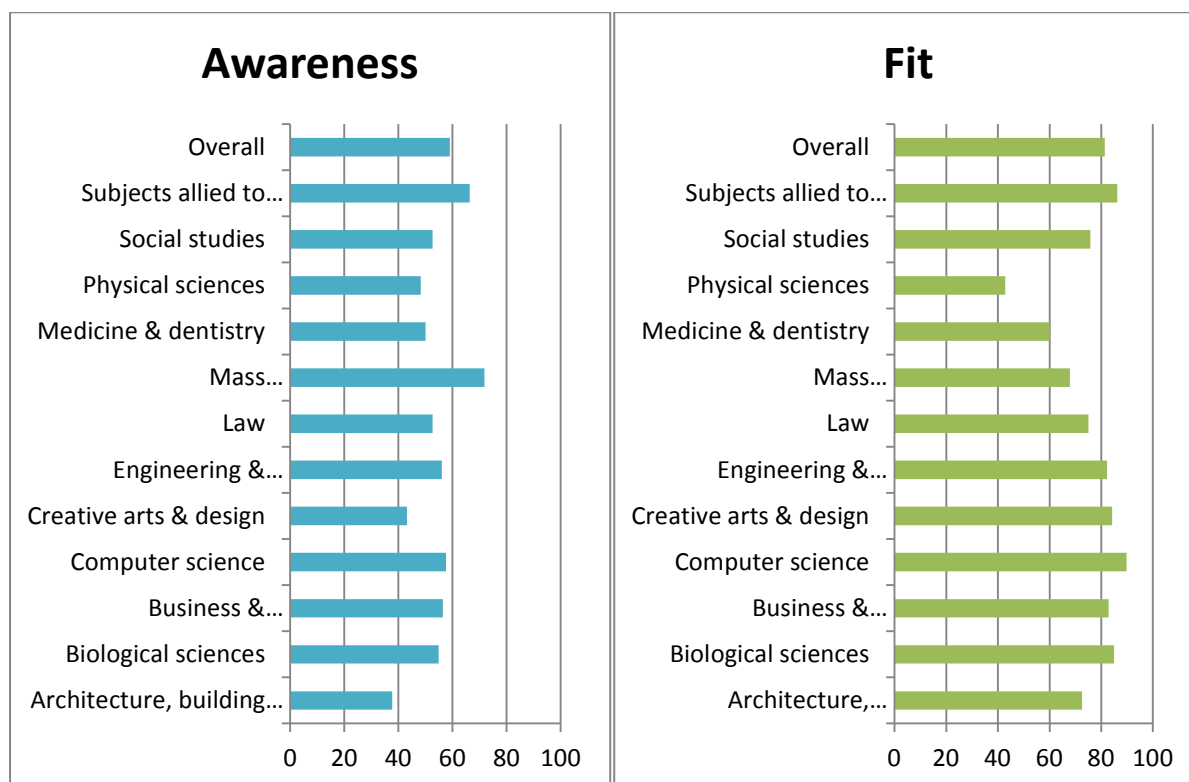
The Students' Association has low awareness rates amongst building and planning (37.8%), creative arts and design (43.2%) and physical sciences (48.9%) with all of three having an awareness rate under 50%. However, overall these subject areas only make up around 9% of all NSS respondents. Similarly, we see high awareness rate in the smaller subject area on mass communication (71.8%). While they may be a small programme though, the Students' Association has several academically aligned activities, the student media groups, which impacts on the awareness level for these groups. Allied health subjects also had a high awareness rate of 66.4% and as the single largest subject area at GCU, this helped boost the overall awareness rate.

Of those students who are aware of the Students' Association, one subject area (physical science) rated the Students' Association under 50% for fit/satisfaction. Also interesting to note is that while

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GCU Students' Association Analysis

there is a high overall awareness of the Students' Association by mass communication students, their fit/satisfaction rate was around 15% below average at 67.9%. So while they may be aware of the Students' Association, they don't particularly feel that we represent their academic interests. The highest rating subject areas are relatively large, with computer science having the highest fit rate of 89.8% followed by allied health subjects at 86.2%. All four of the largest subject areas which comprise 71% of the student's responding to the NSS, had a fit rate above the overall rate.



3.0 Satisfaction with Clubs and Societies

Prior to 2017, the NSS survey asked respondents about their satisfaction with clubs and societies. In 2017, this question was switched to the optional bank of questions but GCU has continued to ask this question. We have gone against the general trend in the UK and Scottish sector of seeing a decrease in satisfaction with clubs and societies and have gained 2.2%

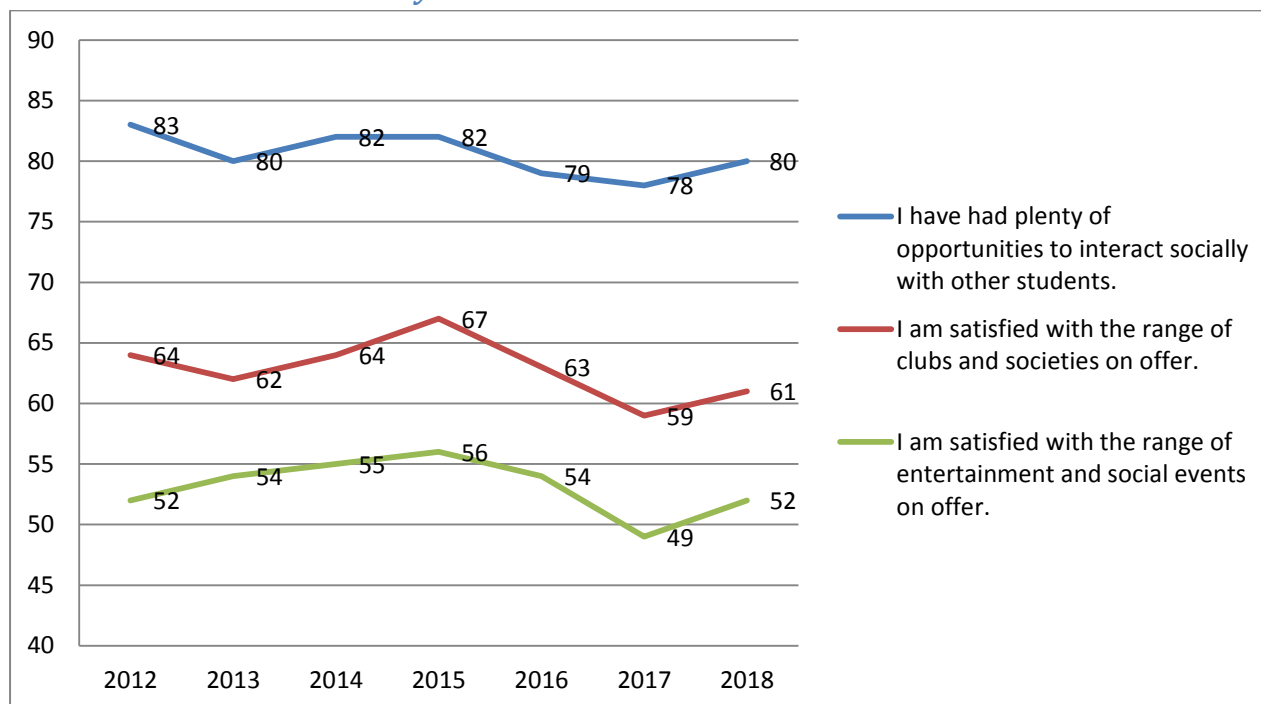
Satisfaction with Club/Societies NSS
Question

I am satisfied with the range of clubs and societies on offer.

	GCU	UK	Scotland
2018	60.81	72.03	66.82
2017	58.66	74.85	68.11
Change	+2.15	-2.82	-1.29

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GCU Students' Association Analysis



4.0 Open comments

Of this year's 2688 open comments, 78 made mention of the Students' Association or one of our core working areas. Several comments made reference to various aspects of our work.

Comment Area	Positive	Negative
General	3	7
24 Hour Computer Lab	1	0
Student Reps	2	2
Involvement – sports, societies, media, events, SLP	62	1
Union Bar	2	3
Total	70	13

Word cloud of positive comments



Word cloud of negative comments



*2018 NSS**GCU Students' Association Analysis***5.0 NSS Action Group**

On the release of the NSS data in August, the Students' Association created an action group comprising both members of staff and Full Time Officers. The action group has drafted the following actions with the intention of raising the score on Q26.

	Action	Action Owner
1	Carry out/commission research on how GCU students interpret Q26	Chief Executive and Student Voice Team Leader
2	Improve communicating the 'value added' by the Students' Association	Full Time Officers
3	Increase both the quantity and quality of our academic societies	VP SCEBE (policy lead: societies)
4	Find 'impactful' academic programmes to target	Student Voice Team Leader