

Taking part in opportunities through the SU doesn't have an effect on students' mental health

Proving it wrong Impact project 2016

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What

We are trying to demonstrate that the students' association has a positive impact on the lives of students when they are at University and beyond.

One aspect of this is how taking part in clubs and societies affects students' mental health.

Why

This is part of a national push to understand more deeply the impact of students' associations. We're doing this to understand and articulate the value of our work.

The approach

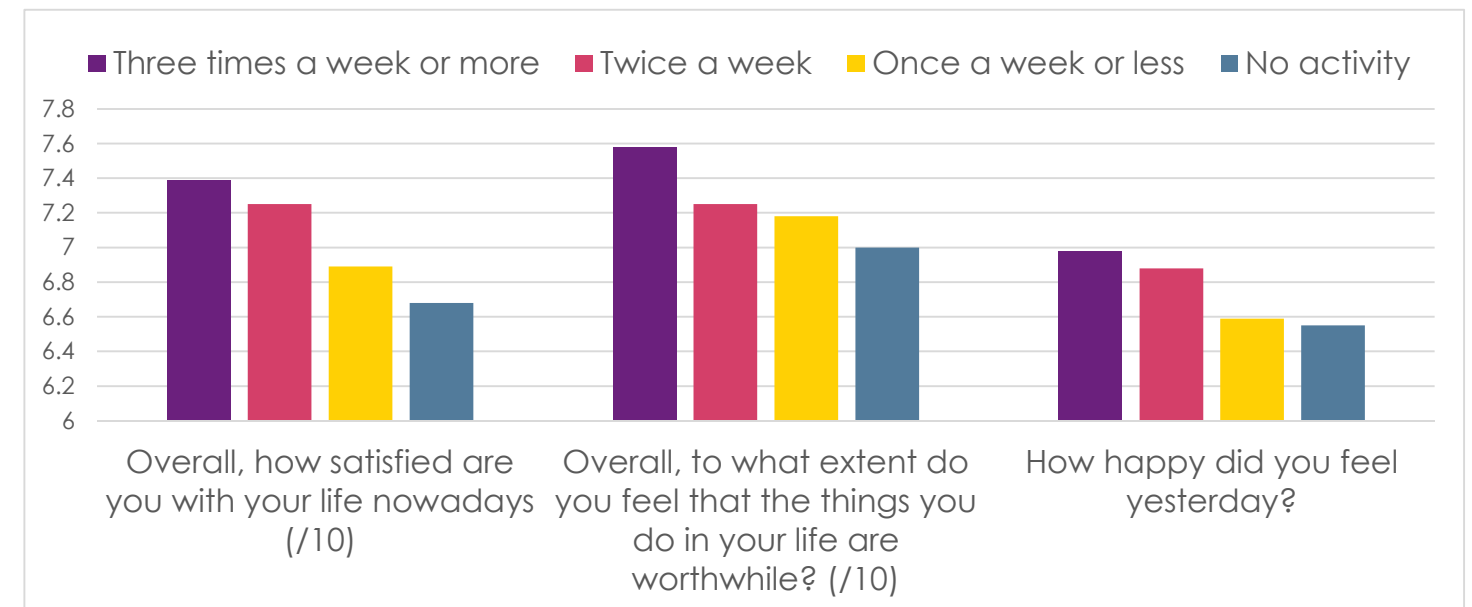
LUU and GCU Students' Association surveyed 693 students across both institutions.

We asked about how often students took part in opportunities as well as some simple measures of wellbeing as used by the Office for National Statistics.

What we found

1. 73% of respondents agreed participating in a sports club/society has helped their mental wellbeing.
2. 73% also agree that coming to university gave them the opportunity to do this activity.

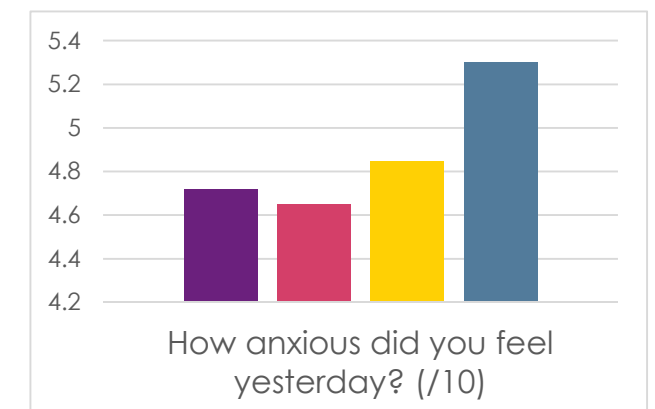
3. We can demonstrate a correlation between those who participate in activities more and those with reduced anxiety and relatively higher levels of wellbeing.



4. There is some evidence there is a link between taking part in activities and lower levels of anxiety.

What we learned

We can have more confidence now that our clubs and societies are associated with positive effects on students' wellbeing.



We recognise these effects could have other explanations but findings 1. and 2. go some way to reassure us we are making a difference.

The impact of LUU and GCU Students' Association

By aiming to provide good value, accessible activities we aim to encourage uptake among students who might not have been involved otherwise.

We also proactively target students who would not traditionally engage in opportunities through initiatives such as Give it a Go, Halls events and health and wellbeing festivals.

In the long term we hope we can create behaviours in students that last for a lifetime, making society overall healthier.