



Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey 2021-22



Scottish Funding Council
Comhairle Maoineachaidh na h-Alba

SFC STATISTICS

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STUDENT SATISFACTION AND ENGAGEMENT SURVEY 2021-22

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SUMMARY:	To inform stakeholders of the publication of the college 2021-22 Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (SSES) outcomes.
FAO:	Principals and Chairs of Scotland's colleges, students, parents, guardians and the general public.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2021-2022 FIGURES

1. The student satisfaction survey for 2021-22 was carried out over an eight-week period between 7 March and 29 April 2022. The academic year was again non-typical as COVID impacted learning and teaching particularly at the start of the academic year with more online learning than face to face, however teaching was not as severely disrupted as it was during 2020-21. SFC continued to work with colleges to support students to complete successfully and to ensure students did not lose out because of the difficult circumstances surrounding their studies.
2. In total nine out of 10 full-time students were satisfied with their college experience (90.2% - 92.7% and 85.7% of full-time FE and HE students respectively).
3. Satisfaction rates were higher for part-time students at 93.9% for FE and 89.4% for HE.
4. Overall satisfaction levels have increased in 2021-22 (FEFT +4.1%, FTHE +5.4%, PTFE +1.7%, PTHE +5.0%) compared with 2020-21 and are back to near pre-pandemic levels.
5. 98,650 full-time and part-time college students were surveyed, with the following response rates:
 - 58,393 full-time students of which 42.8% responded.
 - 40,257 part-time students of which 17.3% responded.

Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey 2021-22


31,970
 students took part

RESPONSE RATE BY STUDENT TYPE



COLLEGE HE STUDENTS

Full-time **36.6%**
 Part-time **18.9%**



COLLEGE FE STUDENTS

Full-time **47.2%**
 Part-time **17.1%**

NINE OUT OF TEN

full-time students were satisfied with their college experience (90.2%)



HIGHER EDUCATION COLLEGE STUDENTS

'OVERALL, I AM SATISFIED WITH MY COLLEGE EXPERIENCE'

FULL-TIME

Strongly Agree **33.1%**
 Agree **52.6%**
 Disagree **10.9%**
 Strongly Disagree **3.4%**

Overall **85.7%**



PART-TIME

Strongly Agree **37.6%**
 Agree **51.9%**
 Disagree **7.7%**
 Strongly Disagree **3.0%**

Overall **89.4%**



'OVERALL, I AM SATISFIED WITH MY COLLEGE EXPERIENCE'

FULL-TIME

Strongly Agree **41.8%**
 Agree **51.0%**
 Disagree **5.7%**
 Strongly Disagree **1.5%**

Overall **92.7%**



PART-TIME

Strongly Agree **47.0%**
 Agree **46.9%**
 Disagree **4.6%**
 Strongly Disagree **1.6%**

Overall **93.9%**



FURTHER EDUCATION COLLEGE STUDENTS

PURPOSE

6. The SSES provides a means to evaluate and enhance college provision in Scotland through a national approach to monitoring student satisfaction and engagement. Over time, this will provide a consistent basis for college regions to evidence impact and improvement within their outcome agreements. With sparqs support it is envisaged that it will help to strengthen the role of Students' Associations in representation and advocacy and will contribute to public accountability.
7. The survey asks students to rate their satisfaction ('strongly agree', 'agree', 'disagree', and 'strongly disagree') on 13 statements.
 - The overall satisfaction figure is the key outcome agreement measure for student satisfaction and is based on the combined figure for 'strongly agree' and 'agree' for the statement '*overall, I am satisfied with my college experience*'.
 - For the engagement statement - '*the college students' association influences change for the better*' - students have the option of providing a 'don't know' response. However, our calculations to derive the levels of satisfaction exclude those 'don't know' responses.
8. Further information on the survey method, coverage and timing is available in separate guidance – [College Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey Guidance 2021-22](#).

SSES ANALYSIS OF FULL-TIME FURTHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

9. Overall, 75% of all full-time FE student enrolments starting in the academic year 2021-22 were surveyed during this period from 26 colleges. The other 25% of FE full-time students will have completed their studies prior to the survey period or withdrawn.
10. Response rates remain variable at a college level ranging from 18.4% to 80.1%. At a sector level, the response rate was 47.2% (16,092 students), an increase of 4.0 percentage points (pp) from 2020-21.
11. Table 1 provides the responses to the following statement: '*Overall, I am satisfied with my college experience.*'

Table 1: Full-time FE student satisfaction with their overall college experience 2021-22

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Number Satisfied	Proportion Satisfied
6,726	8,199	924	243	14,925	92.7%
41.8%	51.0%	5.7%	1.5%		

12. Although we have published the results for all colleges, 13 of the 26 colleges with full-time FE students had response rates below 40%. Care should therefore be taken when comparing the results of colleges.
13. While the results are not directly comparable, Table 2 shows the results of FE satisfaction to a previous pre-COVID academic year 2018-19 and the COVID academic year 2020-21. The overall satisfaction result in 2021-22 has increased by 4.1 pp from the 2020-21 COVID year figure and is similar to the pre-pandemic satisfaction level, with nine out of 10 full-time FE students satisfied with their college experience (92.7%).

Table 2: Full-time FE students satisfaction trend

FE full-time satisfaction trend	
2018-19	93.0%
2020-21*	88.6%
2021-22	92.7%

As a result of the COVID pandemic and a national lockdown starting in the March 2020, the SSES did not take place in the academic year 2019-20. *In the 2020-21 academic year teaching was severely impacted by COVID-19 restrictions.

14. The survey includes 13 statements for each student group. Table 3 on the following page shows the results to each statement for full-time FE students.

Table 3: Summary of student satisfaction results for full-time FE students at colleges 2021-22

FE Full-time	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total Statement Response	Total Strongly agree and agree	Proportion Satisfied
SSES summary statement results	21-22	21-22	21-22	21-22	21-22	21-22	21-22
1. Overall, I am satisfied with my college experience.	6,726	8,199	924	243	16,092	14,925	92.7%
2. Staff regularly discuss my progress with me.	6,079	7,366	1,589	274	15,308	13,445	87.8%
3. Staff encourage students to take responsibility for their learning.	8,327	7,135	426	163	16,051	15,462	96.3%
4. I am able to influence learning on my course.	5,369	9,033	1,252	231	15,885	14,402	90.7%
5. I receive useful feedback which informs my future learning.	6,731	7,868	1,173	244	16,016	14,599	91.2%
6. The way I'm taught helps me learn.	6,050	8,172	1,394	357	15,973	14,222	89.0%
7. My time at college has helped me develop knowledge and skills for the workplace.	7,401	7,294	994	288	15,977	14,695	92.0%
8. I believe student suggestions are taken seriously.	5,263	8,424	1,676	453	15,816	13,687	86.5%
9. I believe all students at the college are treated equally and fairly by staff.	7,392	6,979	1,133	427	15,931	14,371	90.2%
10. Any change in my course or teaching has been communicated well.	6,036	7,633	1,754	542	15,965	13,669	85.6%
11. The online learning materials for my course have helped me learn.	5,652	7,956	1,722	626	15,956	13,608	85.3%
12. I feel that I am part of the college community.	5,333	8,242	1,837	462	15,874	13,575	85.5%
13. The college Students' Association influences change for the better.	3,239	6,412	477	293	10,421	9,651	92.6%

SSES ANALYSIS OF FULL-TIME HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

15. Overall, 78% of all full-time HE student enrolments starting in the 2021-22 academic year were surveyed during the survey period. The other 22% of HE full-time students will have completed their studies prior to the survey period or withdrawn.
16. The Highlands and Islands partner colleges and SRUC report their HE students within the

NSS University statistics. As a result, only 16 colleges are included within the SSES HE results.

17. Sector response rates for full-time HE students are 36.6% in 2021-22, with rates at a college level ranging from 16.9% to 71.3%. This represents a decrease of 5.7 pp from 2020-21.
18. Table 4 shows the overall satisfaction for 8,908 full-time HE students at Scotland's colleges responding to the statement '*overall, I am satisfied with my college experience*'.

Table 4: Full-time HE students' satisfaction with their overall college experience 2021-22

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Number Satisfied	Proportion Satisfied
2,951	4,685	971	301	7,636	85.7%
33.1%	52.6%	10.9%	3.4%		

19. Although we have published the results for all colleges, nine of the 16 colleges with full-time HE students had response rates below 40%. Care should therefore be taken when comparing the results of colleges. Response rates and satisfaction rates for full-time students at individual colleges are shown in Appendix A.
20. While the results are not directly comparable, Table 5 shows the results of HE satisfaction compared to a previous pre-COVID academic year 2018-19 and the COVID academic year 2020-21. Overall satisfaction in 2021-22 has increased by 5.4 pp from the 2020-21 COVID year figure and is near to the pre-pandemic satisfaction level, with more than eight out of 10 full-time FE students satisfied with their college experience (85.7%).

Table 5: Full-time HE student satisfaction trend

HE full-time satisfaction trend	
2018-19	86.8%
2020-21*	80.3%
2021-22	85.7%

As a result of the COVID pandemic and a national lockdown starting in the March 2020, the SSES did not take place in the academic year 2019-20. *In the 2020-21 academic year teaching was severely impacted by COVID-19 restrictions.

21. Table 6 shows the results to each satisfaction statement for full-time HE students

Table 6: Summary of student satisfaction results for full-time HE students at colleges 2021-22

HE Full-time	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total Statement Response	Total Strongly agree and agree	Proportion Satisfied
SSES summary statement results	21-22	21-22	21-22	21-22	21-22	21-22	21-22
1. Overall, I am satisfied with my college experience.	2,951	4,685	971	301	8,908	7,636	85.7%
2. Staff regularly discuss my progress with me.	2,667	4,344	1,559	323	8,893	7,011	78.8%
3. Staff encourage students to take responsibility for their learning.	4,561	3,822	355	148	8,886	8,383	94.3%
4. I am able to influence learning on my course.	2,417	4,775	1,260	294	8,746	7,192	82.2%
5. I receive useful feedback which informs my future learning.	3,270	4,272	1,025	295	8,862	7,542	85.1%
6. The way I'm taught helps me learn.	2,567	4,470	1,383	424	8,844	7,037	79.6%
7. My time at college has helped me develop knowledge and skills for the workplace.	3,495	4,143	881	321	8,840	7,638	86.4%
8. I believe student suggestions are taken seriously.	2,497	4,438	1,288	484	8,707	6,935	79.6%
9. I believe all students at the college are treated equally and fairly by staff.	4,059	3,679	745	360	8,843	7,738	87.5%
10. Any change in my course or teaching has been communicated well.	2,889	3,954	1,448	568	8,859	6,843	77.2%
11. The online learning materials for my course have helped me learn.	3,254	4,318	925	358	8,855	7,572	85.5%
12. I feel that I am part of the college community.	2,219	4,213	1,695	597	8,724	6,432	73.7%
13. The college Students' Association influences change for the better.	1,285	2,938	359	166	4,748	4,223	88.9%

22. The results for the full-time HE students across nearly all statements, including overall satisfaction, were less positive than for the full-time FE students. HE students are encouraged to be more independent in their learning which may explain some of the variances across the two groups. However, there is a need to better understand these differences.

SSES COMPARISON OF FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME SATISFACTION RATES

23. Table 7 below allows for the comparison of satisfaction rates for both full-time and part-time FE and HE students at colleges.

Table 7: Student satisfaction comparisons for full-time and part-time FE and HE students 2021-22

SSES comparison of full-time and part-time satisfaction rates	FE Full-time	FE Part-time	HE Full-time	HE Part-time
SSES statements	Satisfaction rates			
1. Overall, I am satisfied with my college experience.	92.7%	93.9%	85.7%	89.4%
2. Staff regularly discuss my progress with me.	87.8%	89.1%	78.8%	82.6%
3. Staff encourage students to take responsibility for their learning.	96.3%	97.1%	94.3%	95.8%
4. I am able to influence learning on my course.	90.7%	91.3%	82.2%	82.8%
5. I receive useful feedback which informs my future learning.	91.2%	91.6%	85.1%	88.0%
6. The way I'm taught helps me learn.	89.0%	91.5%	79.6%	84.4%
7. My time at college has helped me develop knowledge and skills for the workplace.	92.0%	92.0%	86.4%	89.9%
8. I believe student suggestions are taken seriously.	86.5%	89.9%	79.6%	83.7%
9. I believe all students at the college are treated equally and fairly by staff.	90.2%	93.3%	87.5%	92.6%
10. Any change in my course or teaching has been communicated well.	85.6%	90.1%	77.2%	83.5%
11. The online learning materials for my course have helped me learn.	85.3%	84.6%	85.5%	87.3%
12. I feel that I am part of the college community.	85.5%	83.6%	73.7%	70.4%
13. The college Students' Association influences change for the better.	92.6%	94.4%	88.9%	88.4%

24. The satisfaction rate for FE part-time students is higher than for FE full-time students for all survey statements apart from 'The online learning material for my course have helped me learn' and 'I feel that I am part of the college community'.

25. The satisfaction rate for HE part-time students is higher than for HE full-time students for all survey statements apart from 'I feel that I am part of the college community' and 'The college Students' Association influences changes for the better'.
26. Like previous years the highest level of satisfaction for full-time and part-time FE and HE students is given for the statement 'staff encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning'.
27. When looking at satisfaction rates across level and mode of study, students are generally less satisfied when asked if they feel 'part of the college community'. The proportion of students who did feel part of the college community, however, was still relatively high, particularly for FE students where four in five students agreed that they felt part of the college community.
28. Response rates for part-time students are lower than for full-time students at both FE and HE levels.
 - FE part-time 17.1% compared to 47.2% for FE full-time.
 - HE part-time 18.9% compared to 36.6% for HE full-time.
29. Nine out of 10 full-time and part-time student respondents were satisfied with their college experience, 90.2% and 93.2% respectively.

APPENDIX A: FULL-TIME SURVEY RESPONSE AND SATISFACTION RATES BY COLLEGE

College	FE		HE	
	Response rate	Satisfaction rate	Response rate	Satisfaction rate
Argyll*	71.3%	98.6%	–	–
Ayrshire	37.9%	95.6%	29.6%	89.8%
Borders	58.4%	95.9%	49.1%	84.9%
City of Glasgow	35.0%	85.7%	28.8%	75.8%
Dumfries and Galloway	40.4%	91.2%	62.6%	88.4%
Dundee and Angus	50.5%	96.3%	52.1%	95.5%
Edinburgh	21.2%	91.9%	21.3%	82.4%
Fife	72.9%	90.9%	71.3%	87.4%
Forth Valley	33.0%	89.0%	16.9%	90.9%
Glasgow Clyde	54.0%	95.9%	57.0%	88.2%
Glasgow Kelvin	30.9%	92.1%	17.5%	90.8%
Inverness*	51.8%	91.3%	–	–
Outer Hebrides (Lews Castle)*	30.8%	93.8%	–	–
Moray*	58.6%	92.8%	–	–
New College Lanarkshire	80.1%	88.0%	33.3%	83.9%
Newbattle Abbey	73.5%	97.2%	55.6%	80.0%
North East Scotland	65.0%	95.8%	56.5%	89.2%
North Highland*	36.6%	99.2%	–	–
Orkney*	20.7%	100.0%	–	–
Perth*	56.6%	92.3%	–	–
Scotland's Rural College*	28.3%	93.8%	–	–
Shetland	18.4%	87.0%	–	–
South Lanarkshire	36.8%	89.4%	32.3%	80.6%
West College Scotland	34.7%	93.3%	27.7%	82.3%
West Highland*	55.0%	98.2%	–	–
West Lothian	28.9%	95.1%	28.1%	95.4%
Scotland	47.2%	92.7%	36.6%	85.7%

*UHI partner colleges and Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) HE level student satisfaction is reported in the [National Student Survey](#) (NSS)

APPENDIX B: PUBLICATION METADATA

Metadata Indicator	Description
Publication title	College Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey 2021-22
Description	College student satisfaction data for full-time and part-time courses during the academic year 2021-2022.
Theme	Education
Topic	College Student Satisfaction information
Format	PDF
Data source(s)	Scotland's colleges student satisfaction survey (for Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) and the UHI partner colleges coverage is only for FE level students)
Date that data is acquired	31 May 2022
Release date	01 November 2022
Frequency	Annual
Timeframe of data and timeliness	Academic year (1 August 2021 to 31 July 2022), and limited trend data from academic year 2017-18. Data is not available for 2019-20 as the survey was cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
Continuity of data	From 2015-16 aggregate student satisfaction data has been submitted in Excel tables. Data for 2019-20 is not available as the survey was cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
Revisions statement	There are no revisions to this publication
Enhancements relevant to this publication	The publishing of satisfaction and response rates at a college level for full-time FE and HE students.
Concepts and definitions	Please see the College Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey Guidance 2021-22 .
Relevance and key uses of the statistics	The results from the college student satisfaction publication are used by the Scottish Funding Council, Scottish Government, Audit Scotland, Colleges Scotland, academics, and member of the general public to monitor college student satisfaction and to support policy development.
Official Statistics designation	Official Statistics
UK Statistics Authority Assessment	N/A
Last published	02 November 2021
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APPENDIX C: GLOSSARY

College student satisfaction data - aggregate data from colleges based on the number of current students, at the point of survey, responding.

FE level - courses at SCQF or 'broadly comparable' level 6 and below.

HE level - courses at SCQF or 'broadly comparable' level 7 and above.

Full-time

- Programme of at least 600 planned notional hours or for a one year HNC at least 480 hours.

Part-time

- Self-contained full-time programme, i.e. one not supplemented by other periods of study of 18 weeks duration or less.
- Programme for which students are released by their employer for periods of full-time attendance.
- Programme for which employer sponsored students are released by their employer for part of the week.
- Day programmes in which periods of evening or twilight study form an integral part of the programme.
- Programme held only in evening or twilight sessions or at weekends.

Student target group - students on courses of 160 hours or more in duration.

Survey timing - the period and the number of weeks the survey should be conducted. This is within an eight week window between March and April and during this period, colleges will operate their survey for a period of six weeks (and this could straddle the Spring break).