

Statistical bulletin

Coronavirus and higher education students: England, 15 April to 22 April 2021

Experimental statistics from the Student COVID-19 Insights Survey in England. Information on the behaviours, plans, opinions and well-being of students in the context of guidance on the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

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Table of contents

1. [Main points](#)
2. [Coronavirus and higher education students data](#)
3. [Measuring the data](#)
4. [Related links](#)

1 . Main points

- The proportion of students who reported reducing the number of people they met with, always or most of the time, in the last 7 days statistically significantly decreased from 94% in March 2021 to 56% in April 2021; as lockdown restrictions had been eased in England.
- More students left their accommodation to go to the shops for something other than groceries or the pharmacy (61%), to spend time outdoors for recreational purposes or exercise (81%), to travel to different areas (34%) and to study indoors (27%) compared with previous months
- Average life satisfaction scores among students continued to improve, increasing from 5.2 (out of 10) in March 2021 to 5.8 in April 2021; however average scores still remained statistically significantly lower than the adult population in Great Britain (6.9 out of 10).
- The proportion of students reporting a worsening in their mental health and well-being since the start of the autumn term 2020 continued to fall, decreasing from 63% in March 2021 to just over half (53%) in April 2021.
- The proportion of students reporting feeling lonely often or always decreased to 22% in April 2021; however, this is still far greater than the 6% of the adult population in Great Britain reporting the same over a similar period.
- Almost half of students (48%) reported they had met up with family or friends they don't live with indoors; this was more than double who reported the same in March 2021 (21%).
- The proportion of students who were living at the same address as they were at the start of the autumn term 2020 increased from 76% in March 2021 to 82% in April 2021; the number of students who said they were currently living with their parents dropped between March 2021 (41%) and April 2021 (36%).

The statistics presented are experimental statistics, so care needs to be taken when interpreting them. This survey has a relatively small sample size and low response rate. While this has been weighted and is comparable with previous findings, this has an impact on the level of certainty of this research.

2 . Coronavirus and higher education students data

[Coronavirus and higher education students](#)

Dataset | Released 6 May 2021

Experimental statistics from the Student COVID-19 Insights Survey. Includes information on the behaviours, plans, opinions and well-being of higher education students in England in the context of guidance on the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

3 . Measuring the data

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is conducting a survey analysing student behaviour during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This survey is called the Student COVID-19 Insights Survey (SCIS). University students included are those that are studying on Foundation to Postgraduate level programmes at universities in England.

The survey was conducted between 15 and 22 April 2021, using an online survey tool and all answers were self-reported. Some universities were on Easter break while the survey was conducted. A total of 100,000 students in English universities were invited to take part via their email address held by National Union of Students (NUS) with an email sent from the NUS, with a response rate of 1.5%. We would like to thank and acknowledge the important role the NUS had in conducting this survey.

From 12 April 2021, England entered step 2 of the government roadmap out of lockdown which advised the reopening of some businesses and activities such as non-essential retail, indoor leisure facilities and most outdoor attractions as well as limited reopening of hospitality venues (more information can be found [here](#)).

Weighting

Estimates in this report are based on weighted counts that are representative of the population of students studying at universities in England, population totals are taken from the [Higher Education Statistics Agency \(HESA\)](#) 2019/20 estimates. Estimates are weighted to adjust for sex, age and region of university provider.

Uncertainty in the data

The experimental statistics presented in this bulletin contain [uncertainty](#). As with all survey data based on a sample, there is an element of uncertainty as they are susceptible to respondent error and bias.

Adult population in Great Britain

Where possible, comparisons have been drawn with the [Opinions and Lifestyle Survey \(OPN\)](#) to compare the experiences and behaviours of students with the adult population in Great Britain. The comparisons are used to give a broad idea of the different experiences of each group but the statistics measure data from different timeframes, slightly different questions and different sampling methods so are not directly comparable. The period of the OPN used for comparison was 14 to 18 April 2021.

Statistical significance

The statistical significance of differences has been determined by non-overlapping confidence intervals. A [confidence interval](#) gives an indication of the degree of uncertainty of an estimate, showing the precision of a sample estimate. The 95% confidence intervals are calculated so that if we repeated the study many times, 95% of the time the true unknown value would lie between the lower and upper confidence limits. A wider interval indicates more uncertainty in the estimate.

4 . Related links

[Coronavirus and higher education students, additional demographic breakdowns: England, 19 February to 1 March 2021](#)

Dataset | Released 18 March 2021

Experimental statistics from the fifth wave of the Student Covid-19 Insights Survey. Includes breakdowns of several key variables from the survey by age group and by region.

[Coronavirus and university students, 12 October to 18 October 2020, England](#)

Dataset | Released 5 November 2020

Experimental statistics from an initial pilot of the Student COVID-19 Insights Survey. Includes information on the behaviours and well-being of university students attending three English universities in the context of guidance on the coronavirus (COVID-19).

[Coronavirus and university students, 3 to 8 November 2020, Great Britain](#)

Dataset | Released 18 November 2020

Experimental statistics from a pilot of the Student COVID-19 Insights Survey. Includes information on the behaviours and well-being of university students attending four British universities in the context of guidance on the coronavirus (COVID-19).

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) latest data and analysis](#)

Web page | Updated as and when data become available

Latest data and analysis on the coronavirus (COVID-19) in the UK and its effect on the economy and society.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) roundup](#)

Article | Updated as and when data become available

Catch up on the latest data and analysis related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) latest insights](#)

Interactive tool | Updated as and when data become available

Explore the latest data and trends about the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic from the ONS and other official sources.