

Statistical bulletin

Coronavirus and higher education students: 5 to 15 November 2021

Experimental statistics from the Student COVID-19 Insights Survey (SCIS) in England. Includes information on the behaviours, plans, opinions and well-being of higher education 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 majority (89%) of students said they had already been vaccinated against coronavirus (COVID-19) at least once; this is not significantly different to late October (91%).
- A minority (9%) of students said they had not been vaccinated against COVID-19; of those, 51% said that they were fairly or very unlikely to take a vaccine if offered and 28% said they were very or fairly likely to take a vaccine if offered.
- The majority (90%) of students reported they would request a test if they developed COVID-19 symptoms.
- Almost half (49%) of students reported taking a COVID-19 test in the last seven days.
- When asked if they think they have had COVID-19 at some point during the pandemic, 21% of students said yes and that this was confirmed with a positive test.
- The average life satisfaction score for students was 6.7, which was significantly lower than those aged 16 to 29 years (6.9) and the adult population in Great Britain (7.0).
- The proportion of students feeling lonely often or always was 17%, significantly higher than those aged 16 to 29 years (9%) and the adult population in Great Britain (7%).
- Three in ten (30%) students reported that their mental health and well-being had worsened since the start of the autumn 2021 term, similar to late October (32%).
- Over a quarter (27%) of students had zero hours of in-person teaching in the previous seven days; this is consistent with late October (28%) and significantly lower than late May (77%).
- Of students who were enrolled in an educational institution during the 2020/21 academic year, 43% indicated that their academic performance has been better since the start of the autumn 2021 term compared with the previous academic year.

The statistics presented are experimental statistics, so care needs to be taken when interpreting them. It is worth noting 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 29 November 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 SCIS paused after the release on 17 June 2021 because of the end of the 2020/21 academic year. This is the third wave conducted for the 2021/22 academic year. Please note that the population of students sampled is therefore different from previous waves of this survey and comparisons made between this and previous waves should take this into consideration.

The survey was conducted between 5 and 15 November 2021 using an online survey tool and all answers were self-reported. 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). An email was sent from the NUS and achieved a response rate of 1.9%. This survey was conducted early in the 2021/22 academic year and this may have affected the response rate. We would like to thank and acknowledge the important role the NUS had in conducting this survey.

At the time the survey was conducted, there were no restrictions to teaching and learning in higher education providers as a result of COVID-19. More information can be found [Higher education COVID-19 operational guidance](#).

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 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 20 to 31 October 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 \(COVID-19\) 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 Office for National Statistics (ONS) and other official sources.