



**COUNCIL, 19 OCTOBER 2020**

**National Student Survey 2020 Summary**

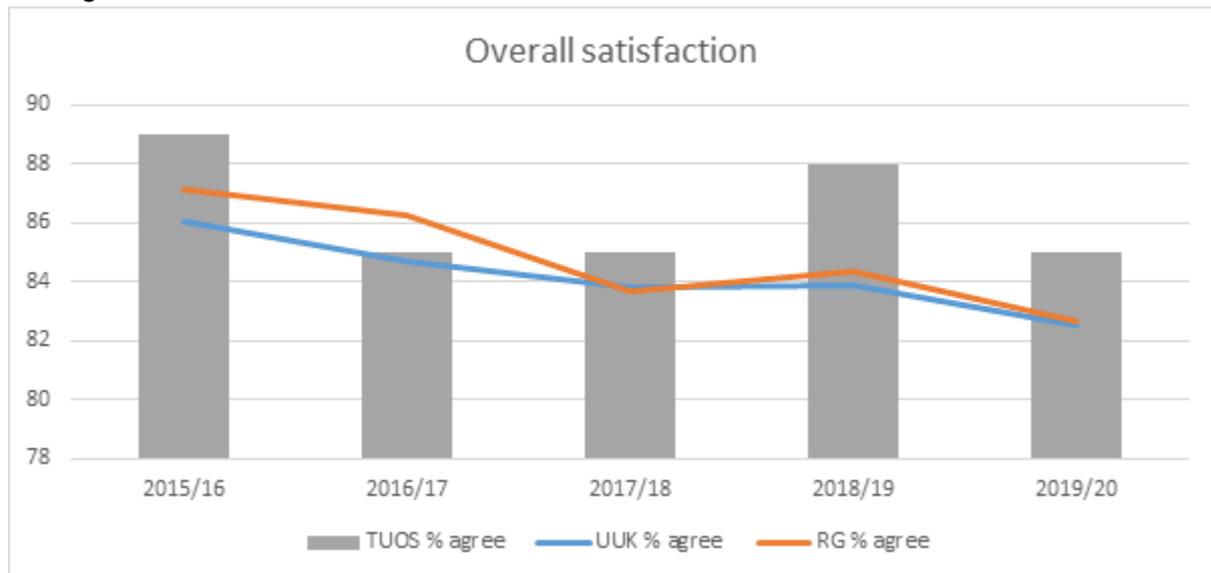
**1. Introduction**

The National Student Survey launched at the University of Sheffield on 10 February and closed on 30 April. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the Office for Students decided to continue running the survey as normal; however, the University decided to cease active promotion of it in March. Despite this, the University still achieved a response rate of 59% meaning that institutional level results were publicly reportable. This was down from 68% in 2019; in comparison, the response rate for England dropped to 68% from 72%. All but three departments (Architecture, Politics and Sheffield Methods Institute) reached the 50% threshold for publicly reportable results.

The Office for Students decided to publish the results as normal, concluding from their statistical analysis that the pandemic had not caused significant differences to previous years and so the data was comparable to previous years.

**2. Institutional results**

Overall Satisfaction for the University was 85%, down from 88% last year (all figures are % agree), 2% higher than both the Russell Group and Universities UK average. The University ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the Russell Group for Overall Satisfaction, down from 2<sup>nd</sup> last year, and 32<sup>nd</sup> among Universities UK institutions, down from 15<sup>th</sup>.



There was no drop in scores for four categories: The teaching on my course; Learning opportunities; Learning resources; Learning community. However, scores did go down for Assessment and Feedback (-2%), Academic Support (-1%), Organisation and Management (-4%) and Student Voice (-1%). The University scored higher than the Russell Group average in all categories and level with or higher than the Universities UK average in

everything except Assessment and Feedback, where we scored 2 points lower (70% as opposed to 72%).

Detailed interactive reports at University, department, programme and subject level are available online via the University's [Reporting Service](#) (available to all staff but the VPN might be needed for access). Headline charts are available in the Reading Room.

### **3. Subject highlights**

The University was ranked 1st in the Russell Group for Overall Satisfaction in 12 subjects:

- ophthalmics
- social sciences (non-specific)
- zoology
- materials technology
- artificial intelligence
- journalism
- aeronautical and aerospace engineering
- planning (urban, rural and regional)
- computer science
- adult nursing
- bioengineering, medical and biomedical engineering
- Asian studies

In addition to this, a further 10 subjects were in the top 5, and 14 in the top 10.

The Faculty of Engineering did particularly well with 5 of its 10 subjects ranking 1st in the Russell group and the other 5 ranking no lower than 6th

### **4. Department summary**

Seventeen departments improved their Overall Satisfaction score from last year but it fell for 22 (one stayed the same).

The largest increases were:

- Bioengineering: +21.03
- Aerospace Engineering: +14.62
- Journalism: +12.94
- Electronic and Electrical Engineering: +11.14
- Archaeology: +9.36

The largest decreases were:

- Maths: -10.35
- History: -11.38
- Politics: -11.88
- Architecture: -18.4 (only 29% response rate so not reportable publicly and not statistically reliable)
- English: -19.19

### **5. Free text comments**

1836 students made free text comments with a word count of over 114,000. Roughly the same amount of positive and negative comments were made but on average negative

comments were almost twice the length of the positive ones (40 words as opposed to 22). The comments are available to departments for insight into student responses.

## **6. Action**

The NSS reports and comments were made available to departments and faculties in July and will be considered as part of the Annual Reflection process, with a particular focus on those aspects of the survey which feed into the TEF: The teaching on my course; Assessment and feedback; Academic support; Learning resources; and Student Voice.

30 September 2020

Dr Trevor Brent, Surveys and Data Evaluation Coordinator, Academic Programmes Office