



Exter Students' Guild: First Impressions

October 2025

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All data has been handled, stored, and shared in line with GDPR guidance. For further information, please see the Guild's [privacy policy](#).

For any further information, please contact insights@exeterguild.com.

Referencing

If you wish to reference this report, please use 'The University of Exeter's Students' Guild' as the author/organisation.

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Introduction

Survey Superheroes gathers monthly feedback from 1000 student volunteers regarding their opinions on a variety of pre-planned and developing issues in exchange for financial compensation.

The Student's Guild Insight Team uses this feedback to influence decisions by the University, inform our projects and empower students to create change for their community.

One of our key topics for October was Exeter Students' Guild. We wanted to find out:

1. How familiar are students with the Guild before and after the start of term?
2. How do students describe the Guild?
3. Do students feel like they're a part of the Guild community?

This report will analyse the feedback given in relation to the above questions and provide recommendations for both the Student's Guild and the University of Exeter to action in order to improve students' experience with the Guild.

All text in quotations marks are comments provided by students showing their individual thoughts and opinions; they have been included as they largely reflect the quotes within the same topic

Summary

Before the academic year started 67% of students were familiar with the Guild (Fig. 1). Those who were most unfamiliar were the first year students and masters students (Fig. 2). At the point of undertaking this survey (4 weeks into term) this had changed, with 91% of students familiar with the Guild and the greatest change within the first year and Masters groups (Fig. 3, Fig. 4).

When asked about first impressions of the Guild, students had positive things to say, with the top responses being friendly/welcoming, good, helpful and informative (Fig. 7). Students thought the purpose of the Guild was to help students, support students and that it was related to the University in some way (Fig. 9). The majority of students said they didn't think the Guild needed to do to become more relevant to them, 17% suggested things surrounding activities and 5% suggested more job opportunities (Fig. 10).

Relating to the Guild, 92% of students felt they were treated respectfully, 90% felt safe to be themselves, 88% felt they could speak freely (Fig. 11). 62% of students felt connected to the Guild, looking at the demographics we can see that part time students and distance learners feel less connected to the Guild (Fig. 12).

Analysis

1. How familiar are students with the Guild before and after the start of term?

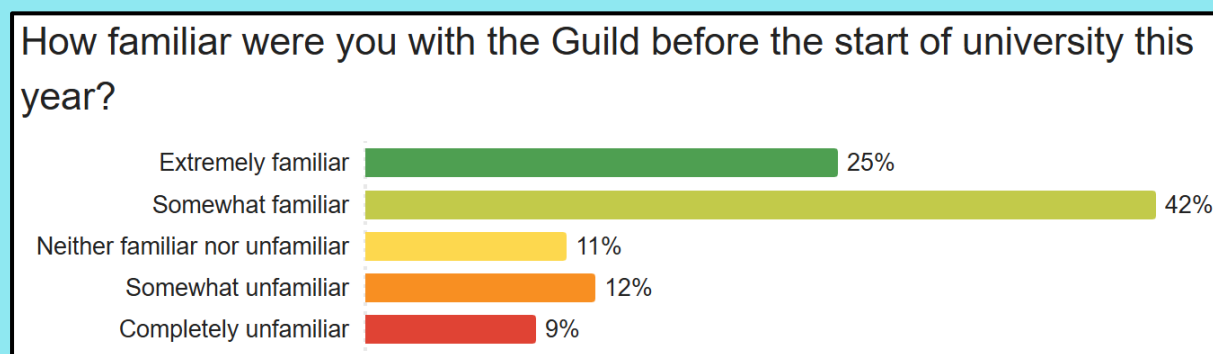


Figure 1 - Question 21: How familiar were you with the Guild before the start of the university year?

When asked how familiar they felt with the Guild before the start of University this year, 67% of students said they were somewhat to extremely familiar whilst 21% said they were somewhat to completely unfamiliar. The remaining 11% said they felt neither familiar nor unfamiliar (Fig. 1).

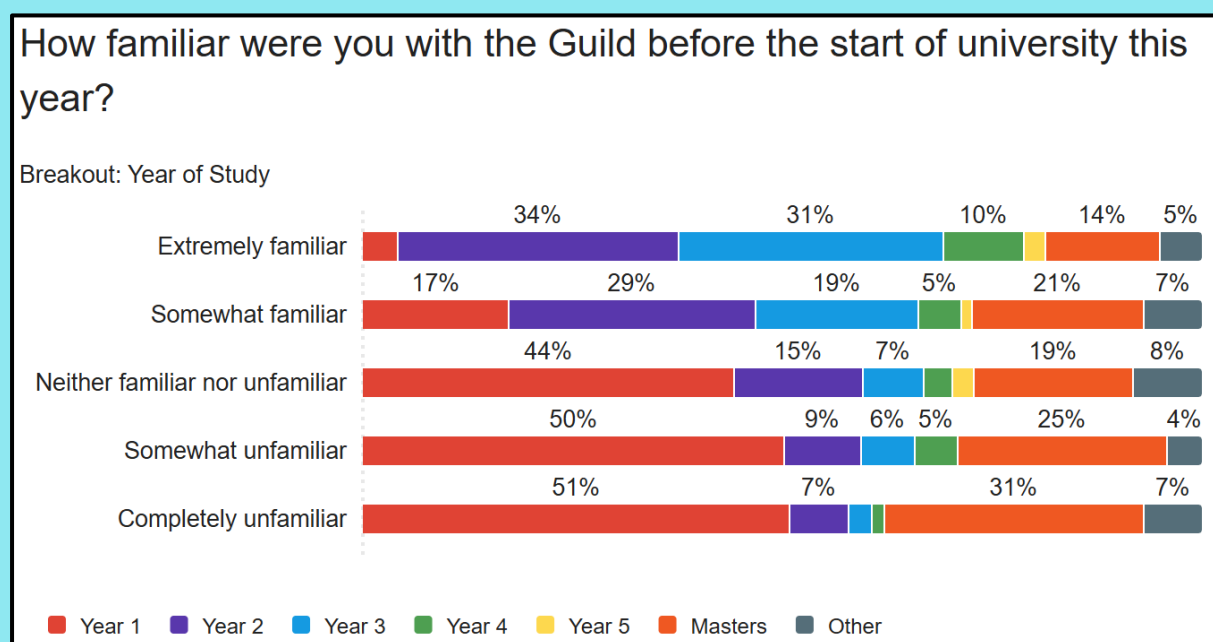


Figure 2 - Question 21: How familiar were you with the Guild before the start of the university year? (Breakout: Year of Study)

When we look at this by year of study, we can see that more students in their 1st year of study or those who are studying for a Master's Degree are unfamiliar with the Guild before the start of the year than they are familiar. Conversely, more students in their 2nd-5th year of study are familiar with the Guild before the start of term than they are unfamiliar (Fig. 2).

Interestingly, students in 'Other' years (e.g. Degree Apprenticeships, PHD students) are almost equally familiar as they are unfamiliar with the Guild before the start of term (Fig. 2).

Groups with lower familiarity likely report this as many of those students are entirely new to the University of Exeter whereas students in the middle of their study are not and have had more opportunity to engage with the Guild.

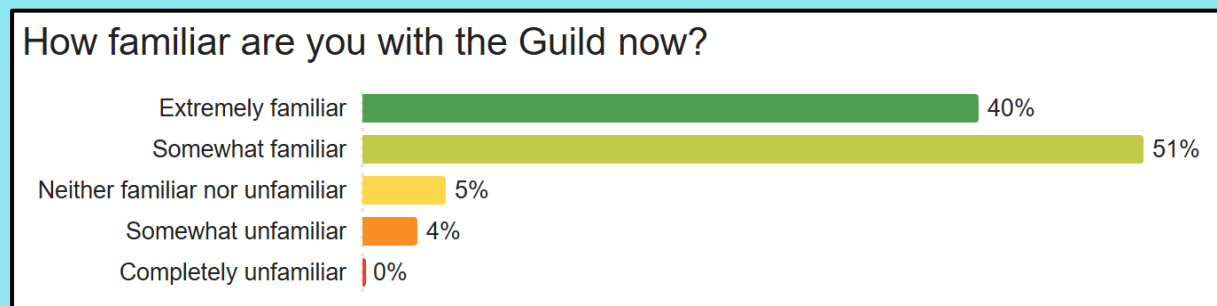


Figure 3 - Question 22: How familiar are you with the Guild now?

When asked how familiar they felt with the Guild with the Guild now – now being 4 weeks into the first term – 91% of students said they were somewhat to extremely familiar whilst only 4% said they were somewhat unfamiliar and 0% said they were completely unfamiliar. The remaining 5% said they felt neither familiar nor unfamiliar (Fig. 3).

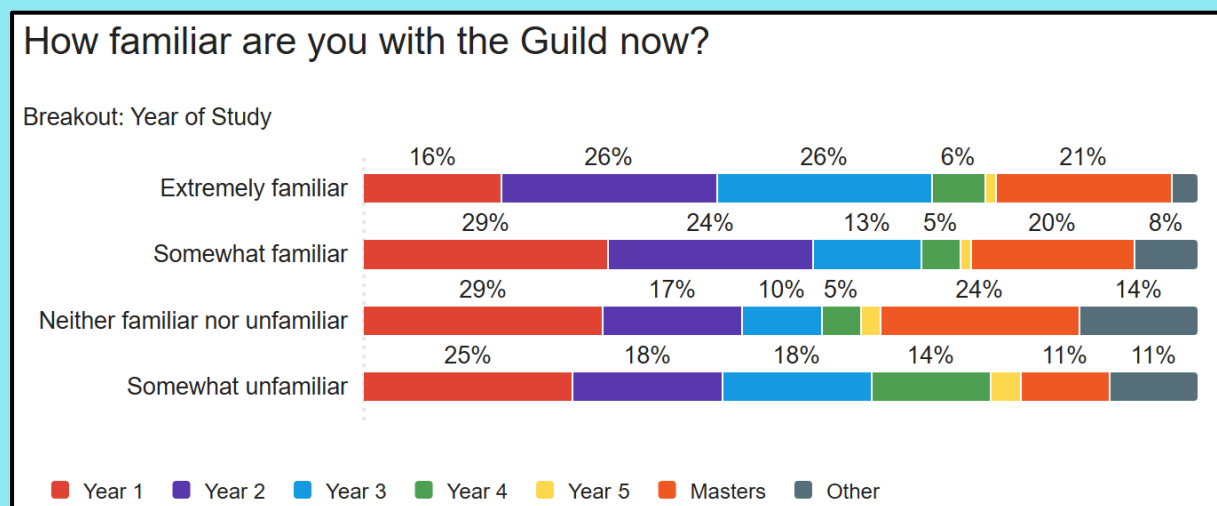


Figure 4 - Question 22: How familiar are you with the Guild now? (Breakout: Year of Study)

When we look at this by year of study, we can see that the split across years between who is familiar or unfamiliar with the Guild is far more even, implying that, once term has started, year of study becomes less of a factor in students' familiarity with the Guild (Fig. 4).

	Familiar Before	Familiar After	PP Change in familiarity	Unfamiliar Before	Unfamiliar After	PP change in unfamiliarity
Average	67%	93%	+26	21%	3%	-18
Year 1	35%	89%	+54	45%	4%	-41
Year 2	86%	94%	+8	8%	3%	-5
Year 3	90%	93%	+3	5%	4%	-1
Year 4	80%	86%	+6	13%	9%	-4
Year 5	81%	81%	+/-0	0%	9%	+9
Masters	60%	92%	+32	29%	2%	-27
Other	67%	81%	+14	18%	6%	-12

Figure 5 - Familiarity with the Guild before and after the start of term by year of study

We can see this idea, and the idea that lower familiarity was reported more by 1st Year students and Masters' students as many of those students are new to the University of Exeter, supported further when we look at the increase in familiarity and decrease in unfamiliarity across individual years.

Year 1 and Masters students showed the greatest increase in familiarity from before to after term started with the former seeing a 26pp increase and the latter 32pp. They also saw the greatest decrease in unfamiliarity at -41pp and -27pp respectively (Fig. 5)

All year groups experienced an increase in familiarity and a decrease in familiarity except for Year 5 students who saw no change in familiarity and actually saw an increase in unfamiliarity (Fig. 5) This is possibly because many students in their 5th year of study are on placement meaning that their interaction and overall familiarity with the Guild may decrease as they are less present on campus and have less time to get involved with the opportunities the Guild offers.

	Familiar Before	Familiar After	PP Change in Familiarity	Unfamiliar Before	Unfamiliar After	PP Change in Unfamiliarity
Average	67%	93%	+26	21%	3%	-18
Attended Welcome Week	64%	93%	+29	23	3	-20
Did not Attend Welcome Week	78%	86%	+8	16	6	-10

Figure 6 - Familiarity with the Guild before and after the start of term by Welcome Week attendance

Students who attended welcome week displayed a greater familiarity with the Guild after the start of term than those who didn't, as well as lower unfamiliarity. However, both groups still reported more familiarity and less unfamiliarity after the start of term, so whilst interacting with the Guild Welcome Week does have an impact on the level of familiarity a student has, it is not essential (Fig. 6).

2. How do students describe the Guild?

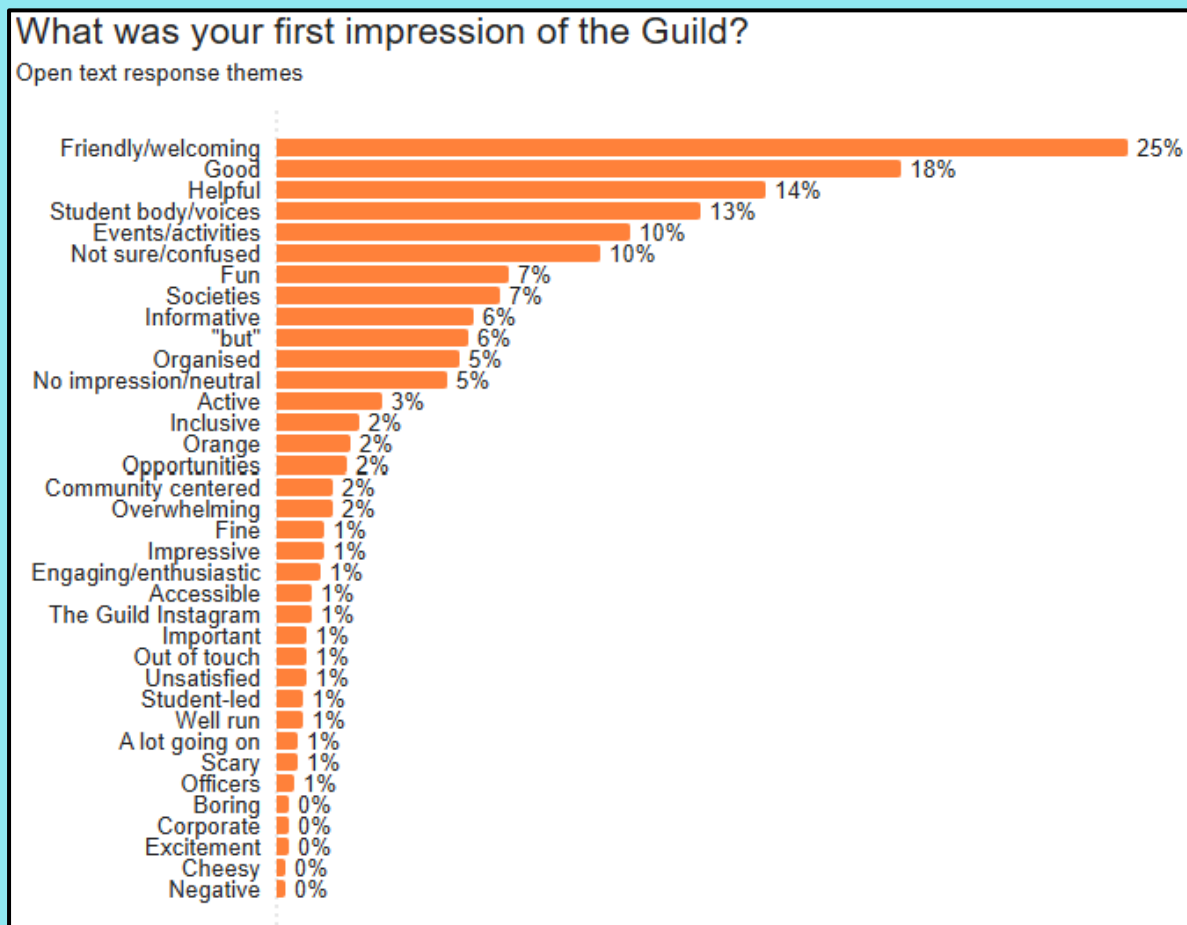


Figure 7 – Question 24: What was your first impression of the Guild?

When asked what their first impression of the Guild was, 25% said that they found it to be friendly/welcoming (Fig. 7)

"My first impression of the Guild was that it was welcoming and student-focused. It felt like a space where students' voices mattered and where there were plenty of opportunities to get involved." ~ Year 3, ESE student

"I was very impressed with my first welcome week and so I felt the Guild was a really positive presence." ~ Masters, HAS student

"I thought they were friendly and could be useful, but wasn't really sure of their purpose." ~ Year 1, ESE student

"The Guild appears to be student-focused and friendly. Lots of opportunities to get involved with societies and support networks. Somewhat overwhelming at first, but everyone was very eager to help and extremely approachable." ~ Year 3, HAS student

"Friendly, welcoming and offering support if you were to ever need it. Its also a place to go for advice, find information and check on events and updates for Exeter university." ~ Year 1, ESE student

18% of students said that they had a good first impression of the Guild.

"My first impression of the Guild was that it was great that the university had a student union that gave a chance to students to speak up about their opinions and mobilise change in the university." ~ Year 2, HAS student

"That its doing some great work at the university and I felt secure that I will have some kinda support, when needed." ~ Masters, INTO student

"It was really good. I believe they host good events which help people get to know others with similar interests." ~ Year 1, HAS student

"My first impression was quite positive. It felt welcoming, organised, and full of opportunities to get involved in societies and activities." ~ Masters, ESE student

14% said they found the Guild helpful, with another 6% saying that it was informative (Fig. 7).

"It seemed like a helpful organisation and resource to support students during their time at university, although I am not yet very familiar with its initiatives and their focus on postgraduate research students." ~ Other, HAS student

"Positive - I think their emails are very informative and appears they run a variety of events." ~ Year 3, HLS student

"They seem very eager to help and also better the way they offer help , I've seen this through them constantly asking for feedback." ~ Year 1, HAS student

"Friendly, welcoming and offering support if you were to ever need it. Its also a place to go for advice, find information and check on events and updates for Exeter university." ~ Year 1, ESE student

13% of students said they felt the Guild was focused on the student body, with some specifically mentioning student voice. 1% of students also said they felt the Guild was run by students for students (Fig. 7).

"That they are group that supports the wants and needs of students and generally seem very friendly." ~ Year 4, ESE student

"The Guild seemed very student driven. The information shared and events that were organised were very relevant which signalled to me that the Guild was built by students for students." ~ Masters, HLS student

"My first impression of the Guild was that it felt like a really approachable and student-focused part of the university. Even though I didn't fully understand everything it offered at the start, it was clear that it played an important role in creating a sense of community and giving students a voice. I noticed how many different events, societies, and opportunities were available through it, and that made me feel like there were plenty of ways to get involved and shape my experience here." ~ Year 2, ESE student

"It is very student-centred and provides many opportunities for students to participate throughout the school year." ~ Year 2, HLS student

10% said that their first impression of the Guild revolved mostly around events/activities, with another 7% mentioning societies (Fig. 7).

"My first impression of the Guild was that it's very friendly and active, with lots of societies and events that make the university feel welcoming." ~ Other, ESE student

"That it ran events/societies etc for absolutely everyone, everyone can find something to their taste through the Guild." ~ Year 4, HAS student

"Everyone seemed very welcoming, there was a massive range of societies and events for everyone." ~ Year 1, HLS student

"Initially, I wasn't completely sure what they do but I saw that they ran lots of events and lead many different societies." ~ Year 2, HAS student

"The Guild seemed very student driven. The information shared and events that were organised were very relevant which signalled to me that the Guild was built by students for students." ~ Masters, HLS student

Another 10% of students said that they were unsure or confused by their first impression of the Guild, with another 6% of students having the conjunctive “but” in their responses (Fig. 7).

“I didn't know much about the guild but I thought it was nice that they seemed helpful and accessible.” ~ Year 4, HAS student

“I didn't really know what it was a first but then I realised it was like a Student Union and I guess the name comes from the Guild in town?” ~ Year 2, HAS student

“I do not remember being aware of it. Its presence seemed unimportant to me as I didn't have any interest in engaging with the events being run.” ~ Year 3, HAS student

“In first year, I was aware of it but not really sure of its purpose, I still am not completely certain but I associate it with the university societies, events, award nights etc. Again, not sure if I felt a bit out of touch with the guild.” ~ Year 4, HLS student

“To be honest was a little confused on what it was and what it did because there seemed to be so much happening at the same time.” ~ Masters, HLS student

Other positive first impressions that students had with the Guild left them feeling like it was a fun (7%), organised (5%), active (3%), and inclusive (2%) place. Less positive impressions, however, left students feeling that the Guild was an overwhelming (2%), out of touch (1%), boring (0%), corporate (0%) place (Fig. 7).

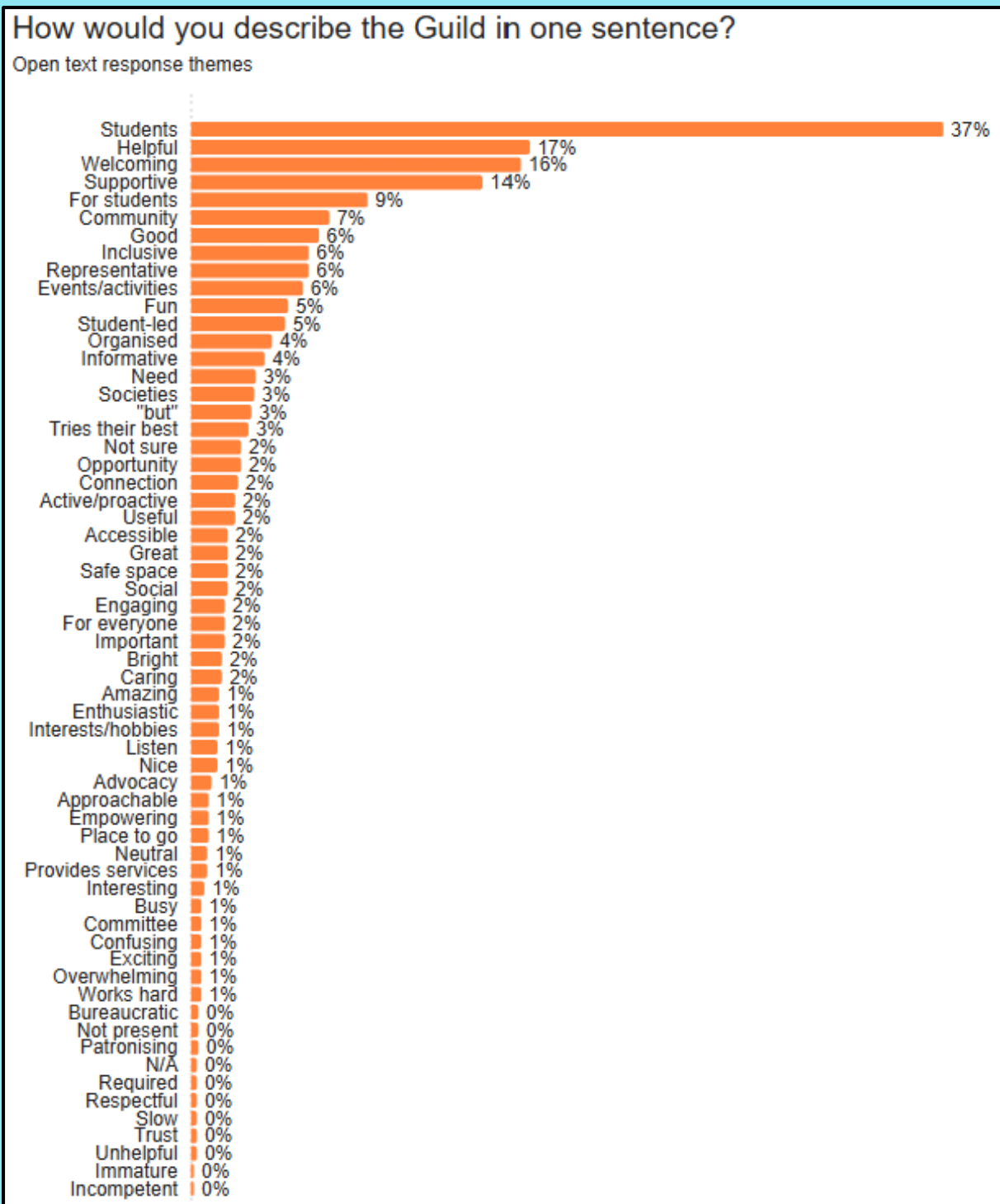


Figure 8 - Question 25: How would you describe the Guild in one sentence?

When asked to describe the Guild in one sentence, 37% of students related the Guild back to students in some way, with 9% specifically saying that the Guild is 'for students' and another 5% saying that it's 'student-led' (Fig. 8)

"A community for students run by students." ~ Year 1, ESE student

"A friendly go to for students with questions and if they don't know the answers they're usually able to point you in the right direction." ~ Year 3, HLS student

"The guild is a place for students to come together and socialise or voice their opinions for change." ~ Masters, ESE student

"A great opportunity for students to network, make friends, explore opportunities available to them, and share knowledge and expertise." ~ Year 1, HAS student

"A largely student-led organisation that supports students in many different ways." ~ Year 2, HAS student

"A student-led organisation that supports, represents, and connects students through events, societies, and welfare services." ~ Year 2, HLS student

17% of students said that the Guild was helpful (Fig. 8).

"The Guild is supportive and helpful, meant to guide students through their university experience." ~ Masters, HLS student

"The Guild is helpful and actively seeks to improve the lives of students." ~ Year 2, HAS student

"The guild seems to be friendly and helpful, reflected in the Guild's bright colours." ~ Year 3, HAS student

"The Guild is helpful and provides some cool environments and events for people to hang out." ~ Year 2, HLS student

"It's a central hub that aims to help everyone with as many problems as possible/make them feel supported and involved." ~ Masters, HLS student

16% said that the Guild was welcoming (Fig. 8).

"A very open and welcoming organisation that supports students and makes sure their voices are heard." ~ Year 4, ESE student

"A friendly go to for students with questions and if they don't know the answers they're usually able to point you in the right direction." ~ Year 3, HLS student

"The Guild is a welcoming and supportive part of university life that helps students feel involved and heard." ~ Year 1, HLS student

"It's a space for all students to feel welcomed." ~ Masters, HLS student

"A warm environment for contributing to uni life, meeting new people and asking for help when you're too scared to everywhere else." ~ Year 1, HLS

14% of students said they felt the Guild was supportive (Fig. 8).

"A friendly and approachable organisation dedicated to supporting students and improving campus life." ~ Year 3, ESE student

"The Exeter Guild is the place where students come together to make uni life better supporting, representing, and connecting everyone at Exeter." ~ Masters, HAS student

"The Guild is a supportive and empowering hub that represents students' voices while creating opportunities to connect, grow, and make the most of university life." ~ Year 2, ESE student

"A supportive organisation that tries to connect students to form a more united community at the University of Exeter." ~ Year 1, HLS student

7% of students related the Guild to the idea of community, with another 2% saying it enabled connection (Fig. 8).

"The Guild creates a sense of community where people can try new experiences and meet new people simultaneously for an affordable price." ~ Year 3, ESE student

"A student-led organisation that supports, represents, and connects students through events, societies, and welfare services.." ~ Year 2, HLS student

"Helping students feel connected and included during university life." ~ Year 1, HAS student

6% of students said that the Guild was representative with another 6% saying it was inclusive (Fig. 8).

"An inclusive space with the support for anyone on anything you could need at university." ~ Year 2, ESE student

"A body of student representatives who are working towards creating an inclusive and inviting university environment." ~ Year 1, HLS student

"The Guild is an Inclusive organisation dedicated to helping students connect, engage, and thrive." ~ Masters, ESE student

A smaller percentage of students had more mixed descriptions of the Guild, with 3% having a "but" in their response.

"Guild buildings and spaces are helpful and safe, but often guild procedures and logistics are more confusing." ~ Year 3, HAS student

"Active area of the university, which students are aware of but don't actually know what they do and how they support them unless you're on the committee of a society." ~ Year 2, ESE student

"Open, inclusive but undergraduate-centric." ~ Masters, ESE student

"I don't really know that much about you, you're a constant presence (in a good way, please continue to be!) but I couldn't really define or explain you." ~ Year 2, HAS student

Other students described the Guild as useful (2%), important (2%), and empowering (1%), although some also said that they felt more neutral (1%), like the Guild was confusing at times (1%), and could be bureaucratic (0%).

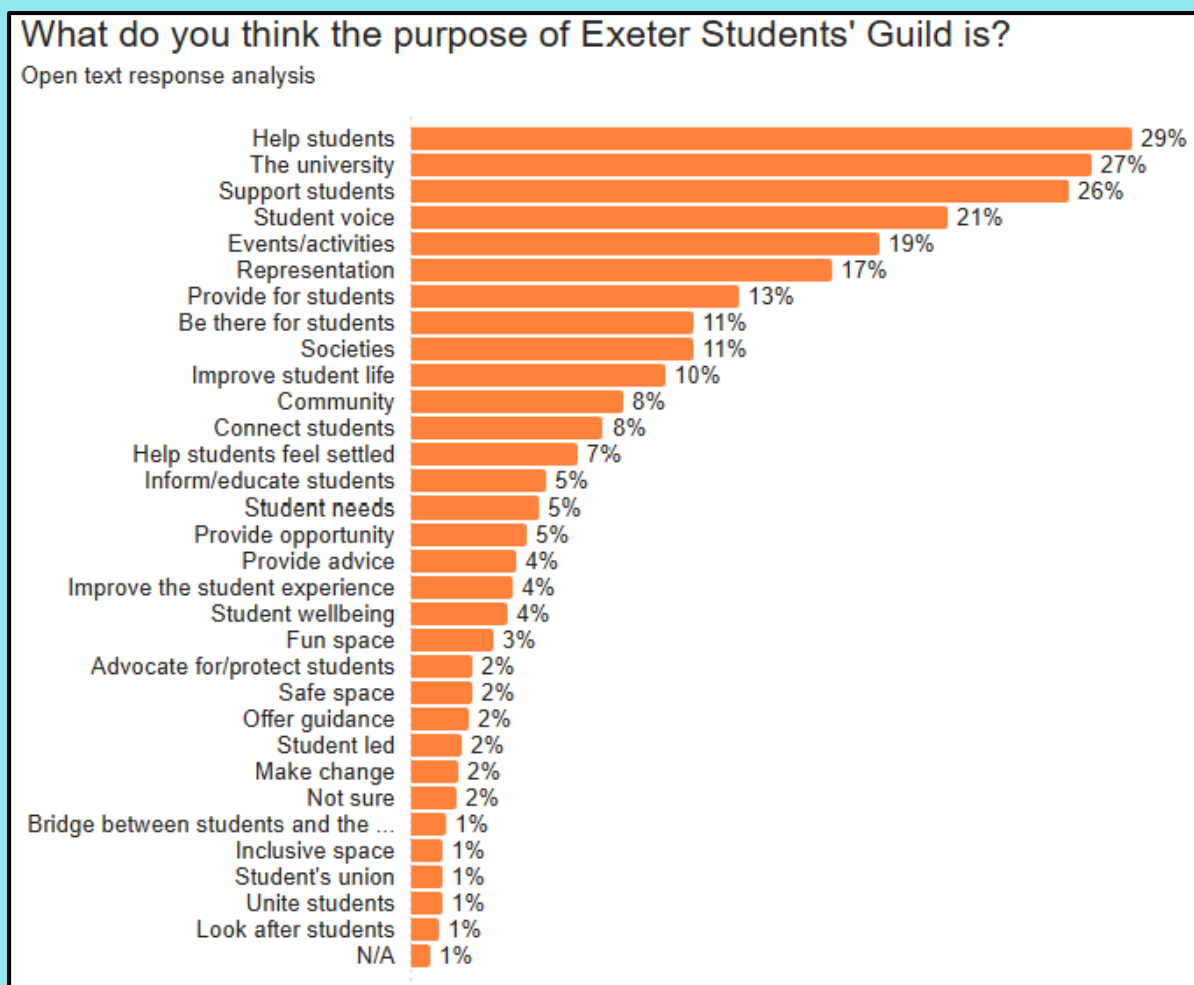


Figure 9 - Question 23: What do you think the purpose of Exeter Students' Guild is?

As of October 2025, the 'About Us' section on the Guild's website describes the Guild's purpose to students as so:

We're the University of Exeter Students' Guild - here to help you Love Exeter! We exist to encourage and inspire you to find your people, your passion and your place.

Day to day, we're the home of societies, events, representation, campaigning, advice - all the best bits when it comes to student life.

We are a completely independent non-profit, which means we can focus our time and energy on doing what's right for you. We're led by our students, and we're always here for you when you need honest advice, support and inspiration.

When we asked what they thought the purpose of the Guild was, 29% of students said that the Guild was there to generally help students, with another 13% saying it's there to provide for students and another 11% to be there for students. 27% of students also spoke about the Guild in relation to the university/university life (Fig. 9).

26% said the Guild's purpose is to support students in a broad range of areas (Fig. 9).

"To be the voice of students, to represent them in the university life and allow the smooth transitions of policies, information and ideas between those who study there and those who run the uni. There are many opportunities that the guild provides and gives students a lot of support and advice." ~ Year 1, HLS student

"To represent the students, ensuring all students are able to find their place (whether that be in terms of making sure everyone can find study spaces suited to them, making sure people feel that their concerns are being heard and making sure students are having fun and meeting both like-minded and diverse people through societies)." ~ Year 4, HAS student

"I think to give the students a voice! It's important for us to feel connected to the guild to know what events are happening, and know where we can go for support. The student officers are extremely important as it's nice to know they have experienced student life too - so they really have a deeper understanding of what it is like to be a student." ~ Year 4, HLS student

"The Exeter Students' Guild exists to represent and support students at the University of Exeter. It advocates for student needs like better teaching or housing policies. It organizes events like Welcome Week to help students settle in. It also provides advice on academics, wellbeing, and employability skills." ~ Year 2, ESE student

21% spoke about the Guild in relation to student voice, with another 17% speaking about representation (Fig. 9).

"I think that the Guild's purpose is to support, represent, and connect students, ensuring they have a positive and inclusive university experience." ~ Year 3, ESE student

"To support students and work alongside them whilst they study at the University of Exeter." ~ Year 3, HAS student

"To support students in all areas through societies but also offering guidance on things such as managing money, mental health etc." ~ Year 1, HLS student

"To help support students, be the middle man between students and the uni, give the uni relevant, student-led experience and advice." ~ Year 2, ESE student

"To represent students, and to support students in their university journey, through social, academic or study support." ~ Year 2, HLS student

11% of students related the Guild's purpose to societies, with another 8% speaking about finding community and another 8% finding connection with other students (Fig. 9).

"To provide information for students on a range of things, be a support network, help them with life after uni." ~ Year 3, HLS student

"Helping students to settle, provide support and guidance both in academic and extracurricular activities." ~ Year 3, ESE student

"Informing students about university news and enhancing the student experience by voicing the concerns/suggestions of students." ~ Year 1, HLS student

"I think the purpose of Exeter, Students' Guild is to guide and help students but most of all to communicate everything that happens around the university, so people feel more informed and settled." ~ Year 2, ESE student

"I think the purpose of the Guild is to be a separate body to the university. For example, to give advice that is not affiliated with the university, and to run events that help with student inclusion." ~ Year 3, HAS student

5% of students said that the Guild's purpose is to inform/educate students with another 4% speaking about providing advice and another 2% about the Guild offering students guidance (Fig. 9).

"To organise university events, including societies and sports but also events outside of those areas and separate from societies. Also to offer advice about university life that isn't from the teaching staff." ~ Year 3, HAS student

"To foster an inclusive and supportive environment, in which students can connect and participate in society events to build a community." ~ Other, HLS student

"To engage students, organise societies and encourage students to join and love out their university time knowing the guild is there to support and help them gain the best out of their uni experience through different inclusive events and societies." ~ Year 4, HLS student

"To bring students together across the university. The guild hosts affordable events and unites all of the societies so is the main place in the uni for finding information about what is going on campus. Also seems to be focused around being quite student led in terms of the advisors and people leading the trips." ~ Masters, ESE student

2% of students think that the Guild's purpose is to advocate for/protect students, with another 2% speaking about the Guild making change and 1% saying that the Guild is the 'bridge' between the students and the university (Fig. 9).

"Represent the interests of the students, pass policies that benefit and protect the student body and provide opportunities for enrichment i.e. societies, language cafe, trips." ~ Year 4, ESE student

"To help bridge the connection between students and the institution! And for student voices to not only be heard but to have power." ~ Year 1, INTO student

"Help to protect students, and speak on our behalf. Help students into uni life, and for wellbeing support." ~ Year 1, HLS student

"To ensure the best student experience by organising events and facilitating societies. Advocating on behalf of students to the university to make changes in the institution that improve things for students." ~ Year 4, HLS student

"I think the Guild's purpose is to support and represent students, create an inclusive community and offer events, societies and resources to make Uni life better. They bridge the gap between students and university to enhance the overall student experience." ~ Masters, HLS student

Other students also spoke about the Guild acting as support for student wellbeing (4%), a fun space for students to take a break from their studies (3%), and as being a safe and inclusive space for students to come to (2% and 1% respectively) (Fig. 9).

Only 2% of students said they were unsure as to what the purpose of the Guild is with another 1% not answering (N/A) (Fig. 9). When we compare student answers to the description provided on the Guild website, we can see that majority of students have a good level of understanding of some, if not multiple, aspects of the Guild and its purpose.

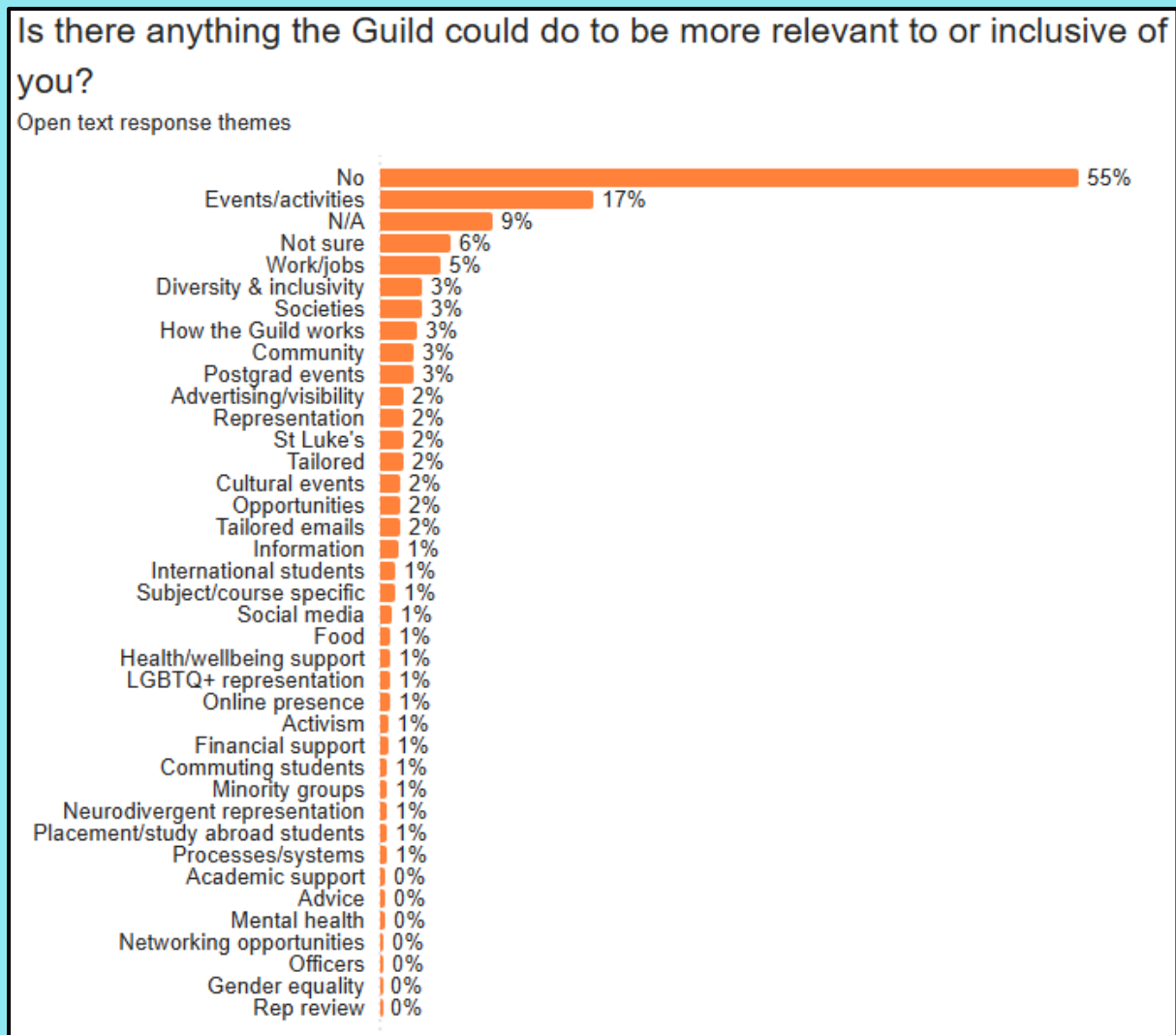


Figure 10 - Question 28: Is there anything the Guild could do to be more relevant to or inclusive of you?

When asked if there is anything the Guild could do to be more relevant to or inclusive of them, 55% of students said no, 6% saying 'not sure' and another 9% replying 'N/A' (Fig. 10).

17% of students mentioned events or activities with 3% specifically talking about postgraduate events, 2% cultural events, and 2% mentioning St Luke's (Fig. 10).

"It could foster collaboration between societies and create more events that bring together students from different backgrounds, courses, and year groups." ~ Year 3, ESE student

"Maybe more space on the St. Luke's campus or activities there? There are many different groups and communities that it can be hard to fit in or be fully integrated into; the guild can be the glue that brings them and holds them together, but also encouraging relationships between them to increase diversity." ~ Year 1, HLS student

"Host more cultural events so I can find other people who are like me." ~ Year 2, HAS student

"More events for masters students (I've seen some stuff for postgrads but not sure if that's just phd students or who is welcome)." ~ Masters, ESE student

"More activities held at St Lukes, after 5pm (when most students are done with placements/ academic lectures)." ~ Year 2, HLS student

"Guild already offers many relevant services and activities. It would be helpful if the Guild created activities or meetings specifically for students who find it difficult to engage in social events, to make it easier for them to connect with others." ~ Masters, ESE student

"Run events for slightly older university students or have a mature student representative." ~ Year 1, HLS student

5% spoke about work/job opportunities (Fig. 10).

"Maybe if there were more paid job opportunities as I have been put off applying as heard they're very competitive." ~ Year 2, HAS student

"Opportunities like this! More student run, paid opportunities." ~ Year 4, HAS student

"Maybe have more part time job opportunities or let us know about some." ~ Masters, HLS student

3% of students spoke about diversity and inclusion, with another 2% speaking about representation more widely. 1% of students also spoke about LGBTQ+ representation, minority groups, and neurodivergent representation (Fig. 10).

"I feel Guild does a great job already, but it could offer more platforms that celebrate diversity and inclusivity, particularly for LGBTQ+ students, to make the community even more relevant and welcoming." ~ Masters, HLS student

"Guidance/training for all students running societies on how to make their societies and events accessible and inclusive. Don't allow societies to book inaccessible venues." ~ Other, ESE student

"More neurodivergent representation, events and spaces (90% of campus is not that inclusive for neurodivergent students who want quiet study spaces without the stress of not being able to book a study space)." ~ Year 3, ESE student

3% of students said it would be helpful to get a better understanding of how the Guild works (Fig. 10).

"Perhaps providing more targeted information about how it supports PhD students?" ~ Other, HAS student

"Maybe giving details about how guild works and what the things guild do, the financial help, mental health support, events in the welcome week for the new comers, also creating more events for showing different culture." ~ Masters, HAS student

"possibly just making it clearer what it does. I think this would encourage me to get involved more as at the moment I'm not really sure how it works." ~ Year 2, HAS student

"Help me understand what the purpose of the guild is and when to approach them." ~ Other, HAS student

"Send out a fact file at the start of each year, so people are aware of the services on offer and how best to access them without having to spend ages scrolling through the website." ~ Year 1, HAS student

Other students spoke about getting more tailored information from the Guild (2%), the Guild increasing its online presence and opportunities especially for commuting students and for study abroad/placement students (1%) (Fig. 10).

3. Do students feel like they're a part of the Guild community?

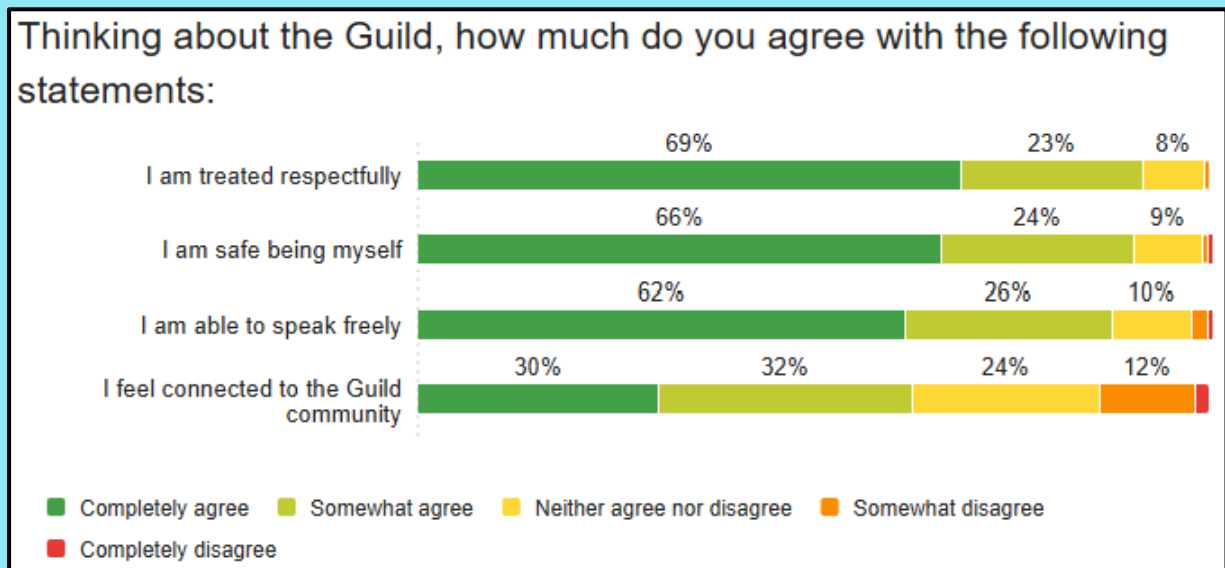


Figure 11 – Question 26: Thinking about the Guild, how much do you agree with the following statements?

92% of students agree that they are treated respectfully by the Guild, with 69% completely agreeing and 23% somewhat agreeing. 8% neither agree nor disagree and less than 1% somewhat disagree with this statement (Fig. 11).

90% of students agree that they are safe being themselves at the Guild, with 66% completely agreeing and 24% somewhat agreeing. 9% neither agree nor disagree, and less than 1% either somewhat or completely disagree with this statement (Fig. 11).

88% of students agree that they are able to speak freely at the Guild, with 62% completely agreeing and 26% somewhat agreeing. 10% neither agree nor disagree whilst 2% somewhat to completely disagree with this statement (Fig. 11).

62% of students agree that they feel connected to the Guild community, with 30% completely agreeing and 32% somewhat agreeing. 24% of students neither agree nor disagree with this statement, meaning that almost a quarter of students fall into this category. 14% of students disagree with this statement, with 12% somewhat disagreeing and 2% completely disagreeing. (Fig. 11).

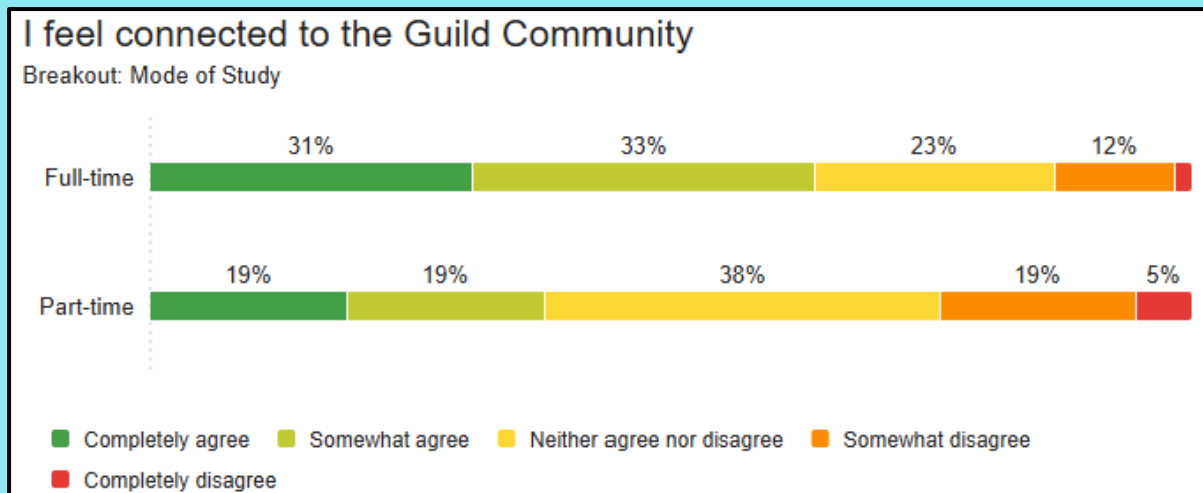


Figure 12 - Question 26: Thinking about the Guild, how much do you agree with the following statement: I feel connected to the Guild Community (Breakout: Mode of Study)

When we take this last statement and look at it by mode of study, we can see that there is a clear disparity between those who students who are full-time or part-time when it comes to how connected they feel to the Guild community. Whilst 64% of full-time students agree that they feel connected, this drops to just 38% for those who are part-time; disagreement for part-time students is also higher than for full-time students at 24% compared to 13% respectively (Fig. 12).

Interestingly, however, there are more part-time students who neither agree nor disagree than agree or disagree outright (Fig. 12). This is possibly because part-time students have less of an opportunity to engage with the Guild community due to the nature of their study pattern.

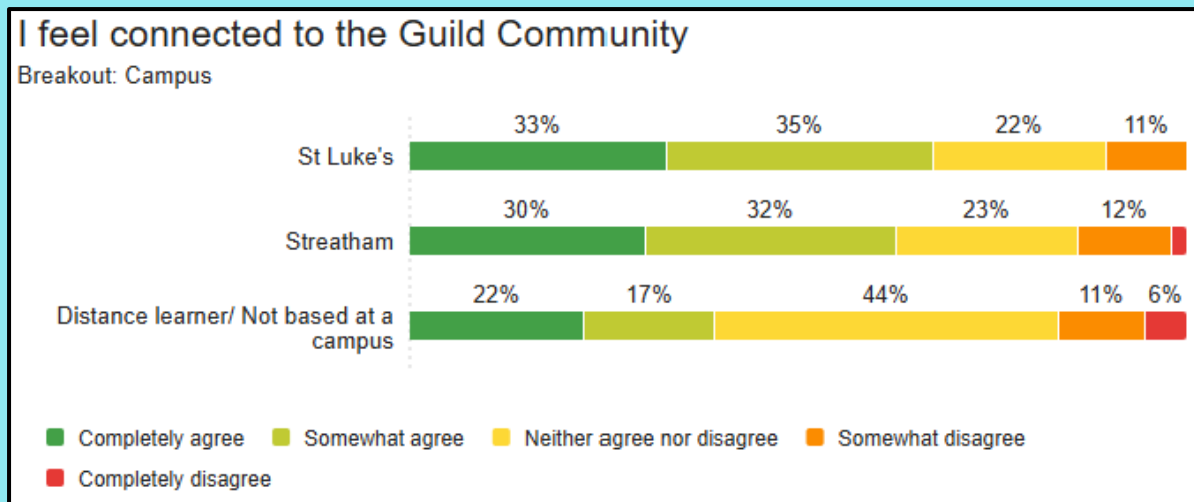


Figure 13 – Question 26: Thinking about the Guild, how much do you agree with the following statement: I feel connected to the Guild Community (Breakout: Campus)

When we look at this statement by campus, we can see that distance learners/students not based at a campus agree the least at just 39% and disagree the most at 17%. Similar to part-time students, however, they neither agree nor disagree the most at 44% (Fig. 13). Again, this is possible because they have less of an opportunity to engage directly, in-person, with the Guild community on campus.

Both St Luke's and Streatham campus report similar levels of connectivity with the Guild community, with 68% and 62% agreeing and 11% and 12% disagreeing respectively (Fig. 13). These similar levels of connectivity is notable as the Guild historically has seen less connectivity with St Luke's campus, but has made active efforts over the past few years to change this- such as during Welcome Week when an event was run every day on St Luke's instead of a stall which was the approach taken last year. This response from St Luke's students suggests that this new approach is working to help those students feel more connected to the Guild.

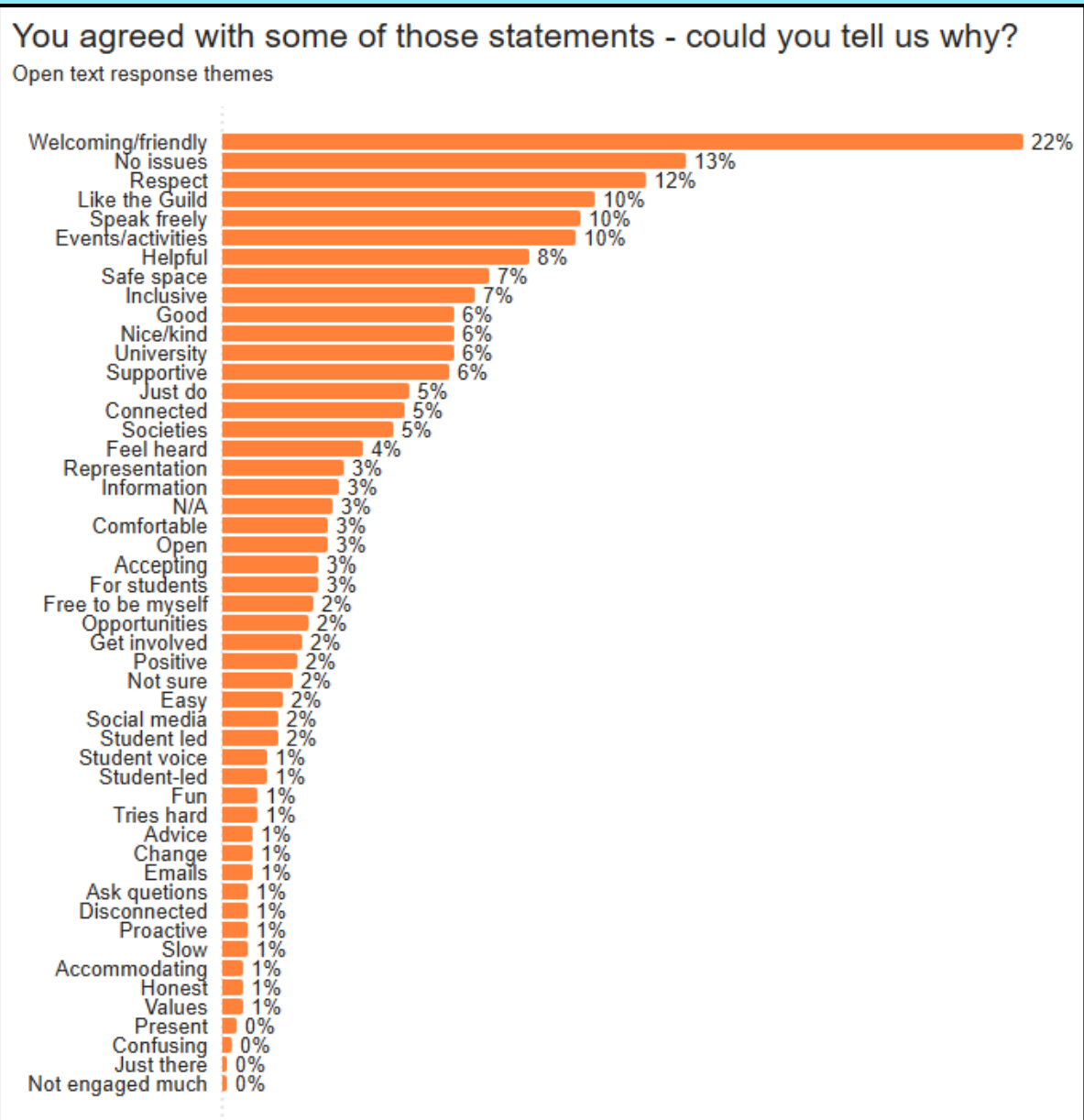


Figure 14 - Question 26a: You agreed with some of those statements - could you tell us why?

When we asked students why they agreed with the above statements, 22% said it was because the Guild was welcoming/friendly to them (Fig. 14).

"I feel as if the Guild is a welcoming and supportive environment for students and is desperately needed in a time like this." ~ Year 1, HAS student

"The guild seems very approachable and like they would listen to anything students have to say and always be happy to help." ~ Year 1, ESE student

"Any time I have been involved in something run by the Guild I have felt completely welcome and never judged." ~ Year 4, HAS student

"The Guild are very welcoming, and the staff are so helpful - particularly the Activities team." ~ Year 3, ESE student

"I attended a few guild events in welcome week and everyone was very kind to me. I also appreciated that they had some postgrad only events as it made it easier to meet people." ~ Masters, HLS student

"The guild has felt welcoming so far, and they are open with feedback from students." ~ Year 1, ESE student

13% of students said they agreed with the statements because they haven't encountered any issues with the Guild (Fig. 14).

"I've never had a negative encounter with the guild so would say I feel respected." ~ Year 4, HLS student

"I have no reason to think otherwise as I have not had any bad experiences with the Guild." ~ Other, ESE student

"The Guild has never given me any reason to feel I wouldn't be treated fairly or respectfully if I went to them for support." ~ Year 3, HAS student

"I have never been disrespected and never felt left out." ~ Masters, HLS student

"I've never had any issue with inclusivity or disrespectfulness in any way with the guild." ~ Year 4, ESE student

"I have attended many Guild events and have never faced and kind of discrimination or ever felt intimidated. Event facilitators were always friendly and easy to talk to and the students I met were respectful, too." ~ Other, HAS student

12% of students said they agreed because they feel the Guild respects them (Fig. 14).

"Because everyone I met in the Guild was wonderful and made me feel like I could talk to anyone when I usually cant, they treated me with respect always and were so polite." ~ Year 1, HLS student

"I have the opportunity to speak my opinion and the Guild respect my identity and there are societies that relate to my opinions and my identity." ~ Year 2, HAS student

"Everyone I've talked to at the Guild seemed really open, friendly and inclusive so I felt respected." ~ Year 1, ESE student

"All communications received from the guild have been helpful and respectful and seem to promote representation in the uni." ~ Year 3, HLS student

"I have spoken to members of the Guild before with no judgement and they have answered my questions respectfully." ~ Year 2, ESE student

10% of students reported agreeing because they can speak freely at the Guild (Fig. 14).

"The guild facilitates free speech and welcomes feedback so I feel safe to voice my thoughts." ~ Year 3, HAS student

"I feel everyone is very respectful and people have the opportunity to speak freely." ~ Year 3, HLS student

"I feel like the guild treats people respectfully and gives them opportunities to have their say and express themselves especially with regards to things they might find difficult or can be improved." ~ Year 3, HAS student

"I've never felt not respected or not safe to be myself. I feel that I can speak freely and raise feedback to the guild." ~ Year 3, HLS student

"You can speak up about any opinion you have and they will try to bring about change." ~ Year 4, HLS student

7% of students said that they feel the Guild is a safe space, with another 7% saying it's inclusive and another 7% talking about representation (Fig. 14).

"I think there is lots of representation in it, and the events that run seem good, respectful and inclusive." ~ Year 1, HLS student

"Feel like guild is a safe place, treats everyone with respect." ~ Year 3, HAS student

"I know there are safe spaces and workshops for students voices to be heard." ~ Year 3, ESE student

"The guild is a nurtured space for the students to be themselves. There is a highlighted element for inclusivity and they do so much to keep this." ~ Year 2, HAS student

"I feel like the guild is the personification of speaking freely and being able to communicate any problems you have to the guild and other representatives." ~ Year 1, HLS student

"Because everyone that I have met from the guild is warm and welcoming and make me feel safe." ~ Year 3, ESE student

You disagreed with some of those statements - could you tell us a bit about why?

Open text response themes

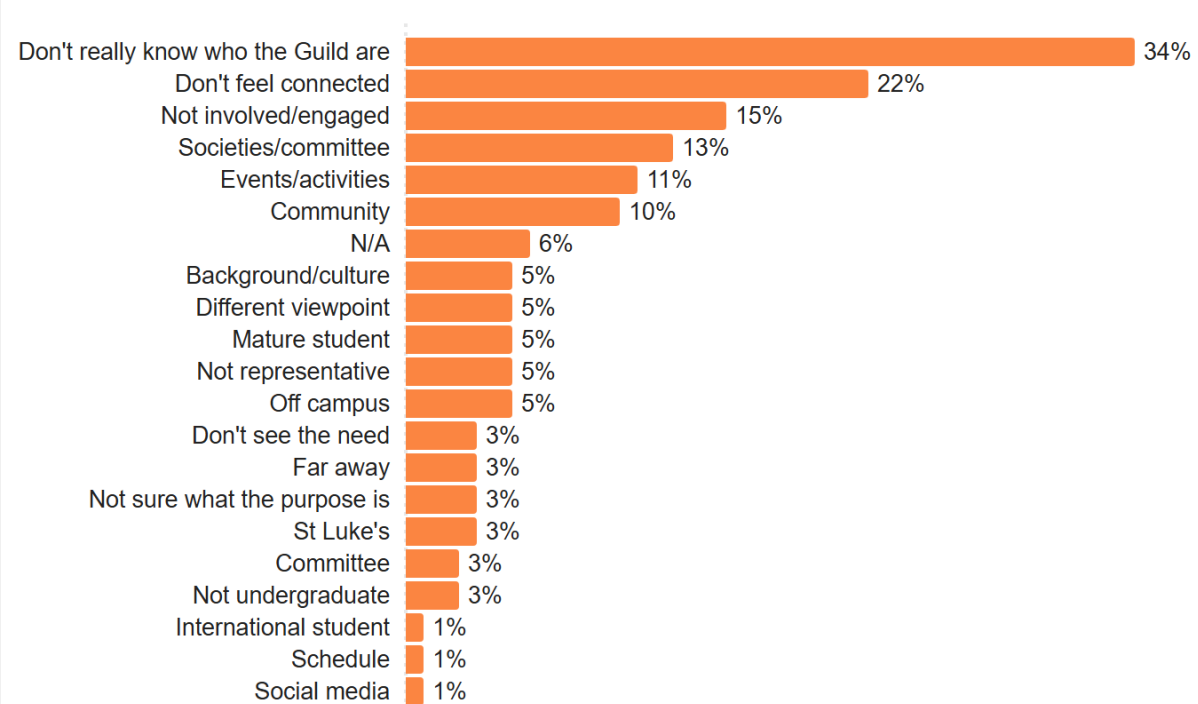


Figure 15 - Question 26b: You disagreed with some of those statements - could you tell us a bit about why?

When we asked students why they disagreed with the statements, 34% said it's because they don't really know who the Guild are (Fig. 15).

"I don't know the guild very well, and I have not attended many of the Guild specific events that aren't a society." ~ Year 2, ESE student

"I feel like I have a basic idea of what the guild does and I have been to a give it a go session before, but I don't really know the detail of how the guild works and what it does so it seems sometimes like it is part of the overall university organisation and staff and not so much a separate entity with a different focus." ~ Year 2, HAS student

"I don't feel like part of the Guild community because I do not frequently engage with their activities/know who the representatives are etc." ~ Year 2, ESE student

"I feel like I don't know much about the Guild or who runs it, though there was one year either last or the year before they advertised the new president really well." ~ Year 4, ESE student

22% said they don't feel connected to the Guild community (Fig. 15).

"I don't feel particularly connected as the guild feels like more of a Streatham campus thing and also are something that engages more with freshers than later years." ~ Year 4, HLS student

"Only emails - distance learner so difficult to feel connected to guild." ~ Masters, HAS student

"I don't feel that connected to the Guild community because I don't go to the events that they run and therefore don't feel connected with it that much but also that's not necessarily a bad thing because I choose to do other things in my social time." ~ Year 2, ESE student

"I am less involved on St Lukes so less connected with the guild." ~ Year 1, HLS student

"I have had almost no interactions with the guild so do not feel connected to them." ~ Year 4, ESE student

15% of students said they were not involved with or engaged in the Guild community, with another 11% saying that they don't attend any of the Guild events or activities (Fig. 15).

"I used to engage with the Guild as an undergraduate and found them really helpful, however as a post-graduate I haven't engaged with the Guild much." ~ Other, HLS student

"I don't really interact with the Guild and feel as though many of their events aren't targeted to me." ~ Year 1, HAS student

"I have not been very involved with the guild. It is quite hard with my course as it's a mix of placement and lectures so my schedule changes every couple of months." ~ Year 4, HLS student

"I don't really engage with guild activities because it seems very undergrad-y and less tailored to older/ postgrad students." ~ Masters, HAS student

13% of students spoke about difficulties in societies or on committees (Fig. 15).

"I feel like the lack of definitive action at times when it comes to issues of discrimination amongst societies can lead to a bit of an unsafe atmosphere." ~ Year 2, HAS student

"There has been multiple incidents where my community was attacked by societies and all we have gotten is an apology. Also most societies are filled with hatred and racism with cases getting overlooked or unreported." ~ Year 3, ESE student

"Not enough restrictions on the societies which are engaging in harmful behaviour and rhetoric." ~ Year 3, HAS student

"The guild are too slow at responding to queries for their advice to have any actual impact and their lack of haste in helping committees causes unnecessary stress." ~ Year 2, ESE student

10% of students said they don't feel part of a community, with 5% talking about coming from a different background/culture, 5% talking about having different viewpoints, 5% being mature students, and another 5% being distance learners (Fig. 15).

"I could never really connect to Guild because as a International Students sometimes I am not sure if my English is perfect enough to talk to Guild and understand everything they say. Sometimes its overwhelming and I feel not fully understood. I would appreciate if Guild would provide with a former international students to help recent international student." ~ Masters, ESE student

"I'm not on site enough to feel overly connected." ~ Other, INTO student

"I think that my views would at times disagree with those promoted by the Guild would, and I am not sure that I would feel free to express them." ~ Year 4, HAS student

"I don't feel community with the guild because I am nearly 30 with established friends and hobbies. It would be weird for me to want to seek community among 18 year olds." ~ Other, ESE student

Other students mentioned not feeling the need to connect with the Guild (3%), not being sure what the purpose of the Guild is for them (3%), and feeling disconnected on St Luke's campus (3%) (Fig. 15).

Conclusion

1. How familiar are students with the Guild before and after the start of term?

Before the academic year only 67% of students were familiar with the Guild (Fig. 1). Looking at the 21% of students who were unfamiliar, we can see the vast majority of these are either Year 1 or Masters students (Fig. 2).

However, when asked how familiar they are with they are with the Guild now (at point of survey 4 weeks into term) this number rose from 67% familiar up to 91% familiar (Fig. 3). With the greatest increases coming from Year 1 and Masters students (Fig. 4).

2. How do students describe the Guild?

When asked about first impressions of the Guild students generally had very positive things to say. 25% of students found the Guild to be friendly/welcoming upon first impression, 14% said the Guild was helpful and 13% of students felt the Guild focused on the student body (Fig. 7).

Students were asked to what they thought the purpose of the Guild was, 29% said to help students, 13% said its there to provide for students and another 11% said it was to be there for students. We also saw 27% of students discuss the purpose of the Guild in relation to the university and university life. Only 2% were unsure on what the purpose of the Guild was, showing most students have some level of understanding of the Guild (Fig. 9.).

When asked if there was anything the Guild could do to become more relevant or inclusive, 55% of students said no. Among those who had suggestions, 17% mentioned events or activities and 5% spoke about job opportunities (Fig. 10).

3. Do students feel like they're a part of the Guild community?

Relating to the Guild, 92% of students felt they were treated respectfully, 90% felt safe to be themselves and 88% felt they could speak freely (Fig. 11). 62% of students felt connected to the Guild. Upon investigating this further through demographics we can see that part time students and distance learners feel less connected to the Guild. Interestingly these students had almost equal levels of neutrality towards feeling connected to the Guild, this could be because these students have less of an opportunity to engage in-person, on-campus with the Guild. Positively, there is little difference in feelings of connectivity between St Luke's campus and Streatham campus, showing the efforts made to increase engagement on St Luke's has resulted in strong feelings of connection to the Guild (Fig. 12, Fig 13).

Students who agreed with the statements (respectful treatment, safe to be themselves, speak freely and feeling connected) did so for various reasons. 22% said it was because the Guild was welcoming/friendly to them, 13% of students said it was because they hadn't encountered any issues with the Guild and 12% said it was due to feeling respected by the Guild (Fig. 14).

Of the Students who disagreed with the same statements we also saw a variety of reasons, however the largest with 34% of students, was that they don't really know who the Guild are. This is interesting as earlier in the survey we saw 91% familiarity with the Guild and little issue naming a relevant purpose of the Guild. Other reasons students cited for disagreeing were, 22% not feeling connected, 15% not feeling engaged in the community and 11% not attending any guild events or activities.

Recommendations

1. **How familiar are students with the Guild before and after the start of term?**
 - The Guild could consider new ways to increase familiarity with new students prior to the start of term
 - More timely emails or signposting to Guild social media
 - Emails and social media posts in the lead up to a new academic year should intro who the Guild are, what their purpose is and how students can engage with them
2. **How do students describe the Guild?**
 - Generally, the Guild comes across positively to students so efforts should be made to continue existing engagements with students to maintain this
 - The Guild could run events tailored to students from different years of study, cultural background and campuses
 - Events for postgraduate students should advertise what is meant by postgraduate e.g. is it intended for both masters and PhD students or just one group
 - The Guild could investigate opportunity spaces to increase student staff numbers
 - Students often look for roles prior to academic terms starting, could the window for advertisement be increased or could roles be posted earlier in the year
 - The Guild could provide more guidance to committees on how to ensure their events are accessible and inclusive

3. Do students feel like they're a part of the Guild community?

- The Guild could investigate strategies to increase connection/engagement with part-time and distance learning students
 - Explore online activities
 - Explore targeted events for these groups
 - Explore working in partnership with SU's local to distance students so that they can gain access to support and social opportunities closer to home
- The Guild could explore increasing it's presence on St Luke's campus
 - Following the recent refurbishment, the Guild could make more use of G48 to host events to connect with the St Luke's community
 - Work more closely with the courses based on St Luke's to understand student's schedules/timetables more to ensure events/activities are run at more accessible times
- The Guild could explore its relationship to societies to ensure its providing them with enough support
 - Review and clarify society guidelines around discrimination and hate-speech to help societies understand them and how to report instances that need to be investigated
 - Work on improving the administration system for societies so that their queries can be answered in better time
- The Guild could continue to expand it's efforts to be inclusive and diverse
 - Explore offering a buddy system to international students to help them feel settled and connected
 - Work with mature students to better understand what services they'd like the Guild to provide for them

Demographics

Our panel of 1000 students is demographically representative of the University of Exeter's student population but, due to varying response rate on a month-to-month basis, the demographics of this data change survey-to-survey.

The demographics of this report's respondents are illustrated below.

*PNS = Prefer not to Say

Category	Panel Total	Response Total	Category	Panel Total	Response Total
Faculty			Gender		
ESE	363	289 (80%)	Female	721	590 (81%)
HAS	379	316 (83%)	Male	236	177 (75%)
HLS	248	195 (78%)	Non-Binary/ Genderfluid	31	27 (87%)
INTO	10	5 (50%)	PNS*	12	11 (91%)
Campus			Identification with Gender Assigned at Birth		
Streatham	831	677 (81%)	Yes	946	760 (80%)
St Luke's	142	108 (76%)	Sometimes	22	17 (72%)
Distance	27	20 (74%)	No	23	19 (82%)
Domicile			PNS*	9	9 (100%)
UK	739	616 (83%)	Ethnicity		
International (EU)	47	33 (70%)	White	625	536 (85%)
International (Rest of World)	214	156 (72%)	Latin	13	12 (92%)
Mode of Study			Black	36	22 (61%)
Full-Time	951	766 (80%)	Asian	240	166 (69%)
Part-Time	49	39 (79%)	Arab	12	10 (83%)
Study Level			Mixed	51	39 (76%)
			Other	11	11 (100%)

1 st Year	250	198 (79%)	PNS*	12	9 (75%)
2 nd Year	228	194 (85%)	Sexual Orientation		
3 rd Year	172	143 (83%)	Gay	18	13 (72%)
4 th Year	54	45 (83%)	Lesbian	24	23 (95%)
5 th Year	13	11 (84%)	Bisexual	142	118 (83%)
Masters	220	163 (74%)	Pansexual	18	15 (83%)
Other	63	51 (80%)	Asexual	19	15 (78%)
			Queer	30	25 (83%)
Age Bracket			Heterosexual	636	501 (78%)
Under 20	553	460 (83%)	Other	2	2 (100%)
21-30	396	303 (76%)	Unsure	23	19 (82%)
31-40	35	30 (85%)	PNS*	88	74 (84%)
41-50	15	12 (80%)	Disability Status		
51+	1	0 (0%)	No known disability	647	513 (79%)
Widening Participation			Learning disability	110	93 (84%)
Parent	17	13 (76%)	Physical disability	45	36 (80%)
Carer	21	21 (100%)	Mental health condition	190	163 (85%)
Care experienced or care leaver	4	3 (75%)	Other	23	19 (82%)
Estranged from family	12	10 (83%)	PNS*	56	46 (82%)
Refugee or asylum seeker	1	1 (100%)			
None of the above	945	757 (80%)			