

SURVEY SUPERHEROES

The Guild Experience Report

March 2026

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

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Referencing

If you wish to reference this report, please use 'Exeter 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 March was The Guild Experience. We wanted to find out:

1. How do students engage with and view the Guild?
2. How do students feel the Guild has impacted them?

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

Students mainly engage with the Guild through societies (48%), using Guild study spaces (32%), participating in surveys other than superheroes (28%) or attending Guild run events (26%), with some also having student/Guild roles (e.g. committee member, academic rep, department officer). 22% of students do not really engage with the Guild (Fig. 1). 79% of students find the Guild makes it easy to use their services and get involved with their activities, with only 4% disagreeing and 17% neither agreeing nor disagreeing (Fig 2).

22% of students say this is due to advertisement of events and services and general communication (7%), through social media (12%) and emails (11%). 20% feel this is because of events, how accessible they are (9%) and the variety of ways to get involved (6%). 10% say it is due to not engaging with the Guild (Fig. 3). Students not based in Exeter agree with the statement a lot less, this is the same for older students where we see a negative correlation for agree against students age bracket (Fig. 4, 5).

62% of students feel that the activities and services run by the Guild add value to their student life, with 7% disagreeing and 30% neither agreeing nor disagreeing (Fig. 6). It is even more apparent here that students not based in Exeter, and students in the older age brackets agree less, with more neither agreeing nor disagreeing or disagreeing (Fig. 7, 8). 28% of students say this is because they don't engage with the Guild. 19% explain this is because of events, activities (13%) and opportunities (3%), finding that they are fun (17%) and good ways to

make friends (14%) and meet new people (10%); helping them to feel part of a community (6%). 2% of students in total feel that events are either not interesting or not focused on postgraduates/mature students or students that are not based at Streatham campus or in Exeter. (Fig. 9)

Students feel that the most significant change that has happened to them since engaging with the Guild has been making friends (17%) and meeting people (10%); helping them to increase confidence (9%) and gain new skills (3%), particularly for committee members (10%). 11% of students feel that nothing has changed for them because of the Guild (Fig. 10).

Students feel the Guild has contributed to this change by supporting societies (23%), hosting events (14%) and providing opportunities (13%) where students can meet people (5%). 20% of students had non-applicable results (Fig. 11). Students feel that the impact this change has had has been through making new connections (19%), contributing to an enjoyable university experience (18%), and building their confidence (10%) and skills (6%). 29% of students had non-applicable responses or felt that there had been no impact for them (Fig. 12).

16% of students want better communication from the Guild, as well as more varied events (13%) and opportunities (4%), as well as more support for societies (7%) and better advertisement of events and services (6%). 45% of students were either unsure, felt that nothing needed to change or had non-applicable responses (Fig. 13).

Analysis

1. How do students engage with and view the Guild?

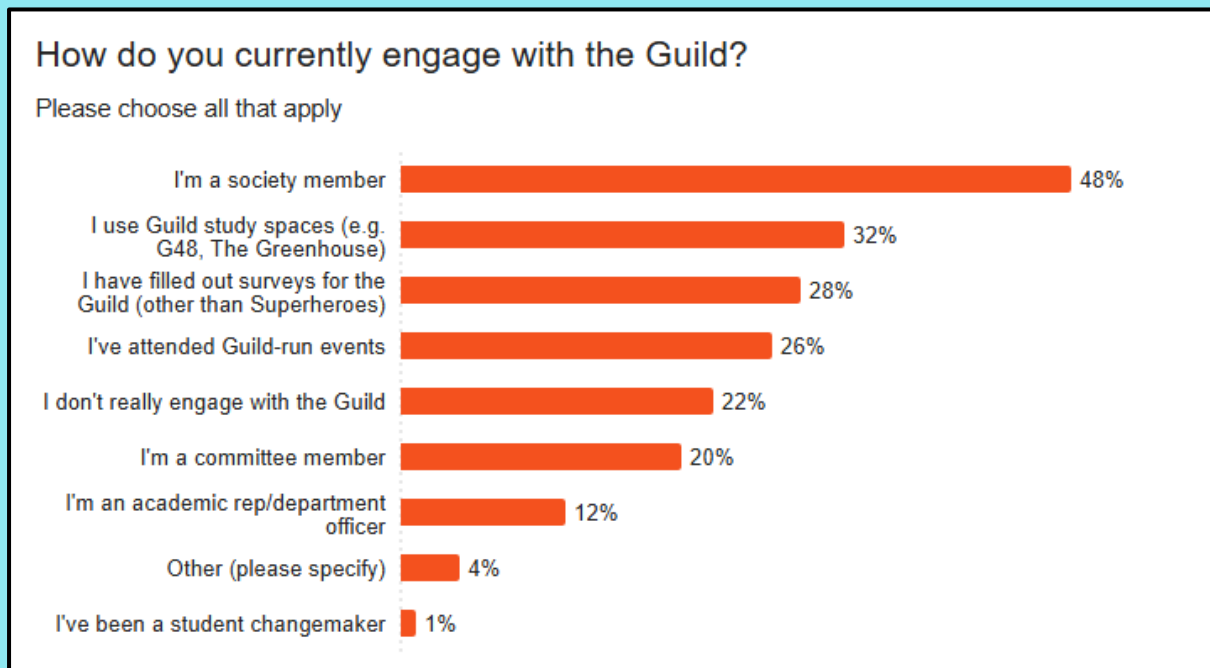


Figure 1 – Question 12: How do students currently engage with the Guild? (Please choose all that apply)

Students were asked in what ways do they currently engage with the Guild, 48% of students of students stated that they are a society member, with an additional 20% who are also committee members. 32% of students use the Guild study spaces, such as the Greenhouse and Devonshire house. 28% of students have filled out Guild surveys outside of Survey Superheroes. 26% of students have attended Guild-run events, however 22% of students said that they don't really engage with the Guild. 12% of students are academic reps or department officers, with a further 1% having been a student changemaker. (Fig. 1)

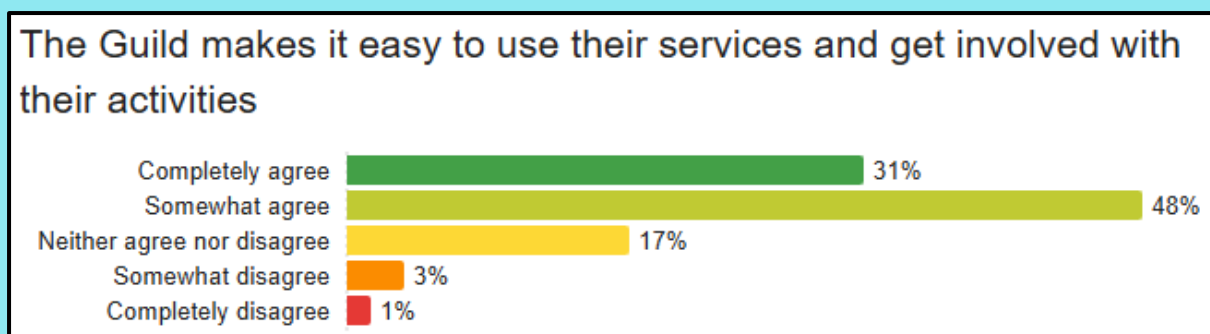


Figure 2 – Question 13: How much do students agree with the statement: The Guild makes it easy to use their services and get involved in their activities?

We asked students to what extent do they agree that the Guild makes it easy to use their services and get involved in their activities, to which the majority of students (79%) at least somewhat agreed. This includes 48% who somewhat agree, and 31% who completely agree. 17% neither agree nor disagree. Only 4% of students disagree, with 1% completely disagreeing.

students do not agree with this statement, including 3% who somewhat disagree and 1% who completely disagree. (Fig. 2)

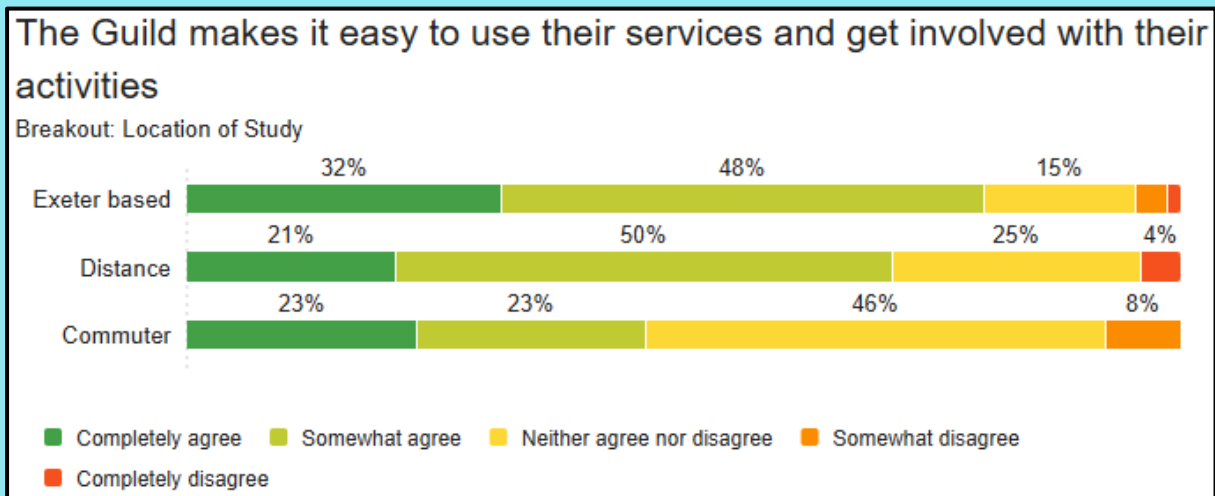


Figure 3 – Question 13: How much do students agree with the statement: The Guild makes it easy to use their services and get involved in their activities? (Breakout: Location of Study)

When we look at this by location of study it becomes evident that commuters and distance learners have a much higher percentage of students that neither agree nor disagree with the statement. 80% of Exeter based students agree with the statement, compared to 46% of commuters and 71% of distance learners. Only 15% of Exeter based students neither agree nor disagree which is much lower than 25% of distance learners and 46% of commuters. This is likely because students that are not based in Exeter feel that the Guild is less relevant to them since they cannot engage with it in person as easily. (Fig. 3)

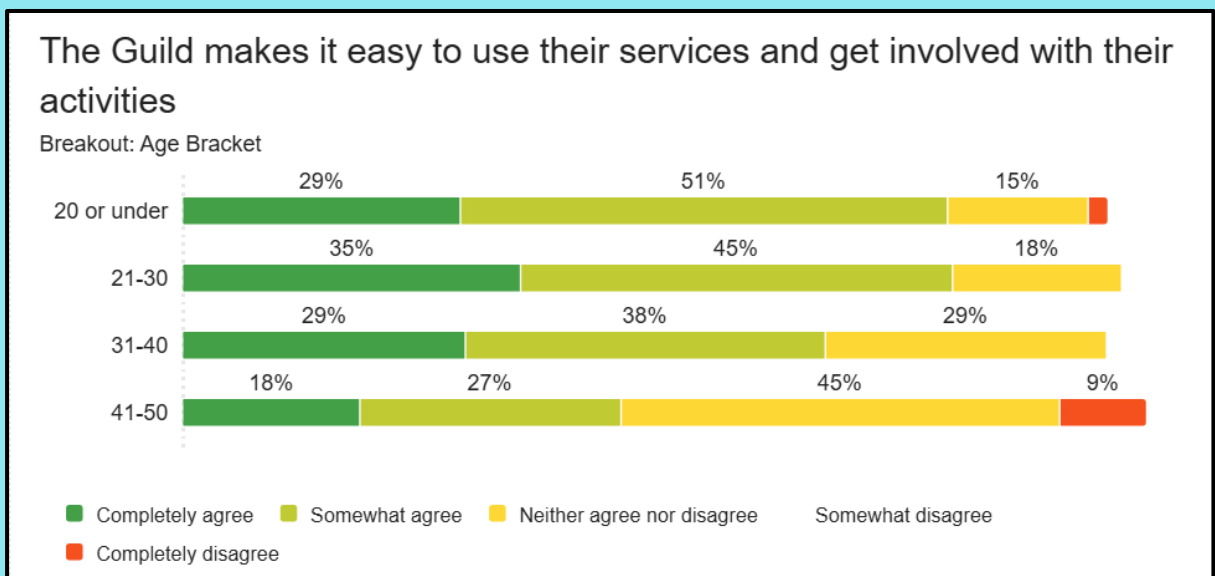


Figure 4 – Question 13: How much do students agree with the statement: The Guild makes it easy to use their services and get involved in their activities? (Breakout: Age Bracket)

When we look at this by age bracket, we can also see a trend whereas the age bracket increases, the agreement with the statement decreases whilst the percentage of students who neither agree nor disagree decreases. Students under 20, and those in the 21-30 bracket, have the highest percentage of students who agree, with 80% and only 20% who either do not agree nor disagree or disagree. This shifts to 67% who agree for the 31-40 bracket and only 45% for 41-50. Instead, 29% of 31-40 neither agree nor disagree, this is 45% for 41-50 as well as 9% who strongly disagree. This clearly shows that older students find it harder to engage with the Guild events and services. (Fig. 4)

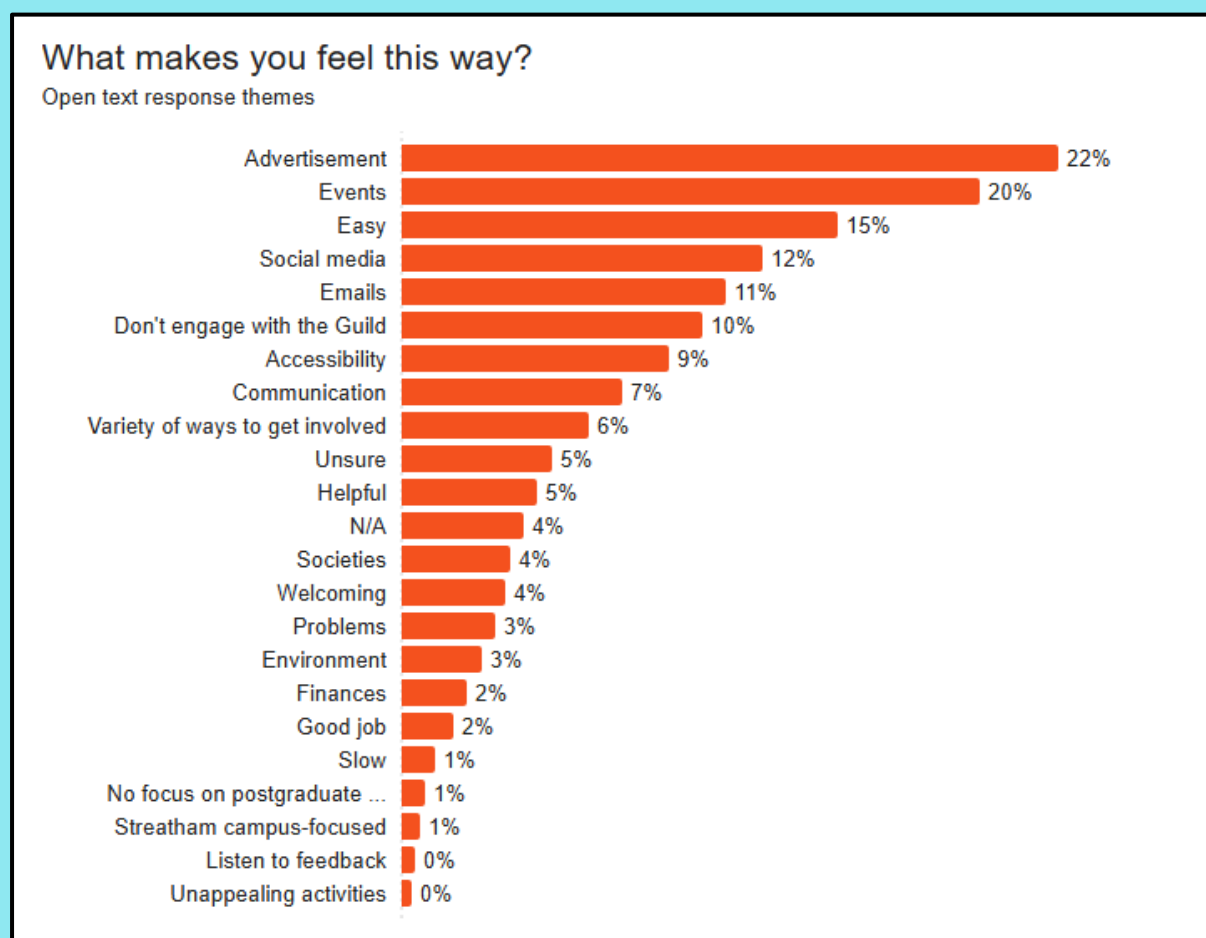


Figure 5 – Question 13a: What makes students feel this way? (Open text response themes)

When students were asked what makes them feel this way, the most common response was the Guild's advertisement, with students generally feeling that events are well advertised so it is easy to get involved in; a further 20% also mentioned events specifically and getting involved in the activities ran by the Guild. In relation to advertisement of the Guild and their events, 12% of students discussed the Guild's social media presence as well as 1% who talked about the emails received from the Guild. 7% also discussed the Guild's communication

influencing how they feel, elaborating further on the Guild's social media, website and emails. (Fig. 5)

"I think they promote themselves well both in-person on campus and online, and their posts feel really welcoming making getting involved and feeling comfortable using their services far more accessible." ~ Masters, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"They advertise activities on socials a lot so I am kept up-to-date. Services are easy to find on the web as you just search what you're looking for." ~ Year 1, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

Students mention the variety of ways to get involved with the Guild (6%), such as societies (4%). 15% of students talked about finding it easy to get involved with the Guild, also mentioning that it is helpful (5%), with a welcoming atmosphere (4%) and environment (3%) with the study spaces and events they host. Students generally find the Guild accessible (9%), and that they are doing a good job (2%) and feel that they listen to student feedback (<1%). Some students also mentioned liking that the Guild is free or affordable to engage with (2%). (Fig. 5)

"I feel like different activities are communicated about frequently. Additionally, i feel like there are many different types of activities to suit as many peoples needs as possible" ~ Year 2, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

"They are advertised well and societies / activities are easy to join" ~ Other, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

"easily bookable spaces, helpful front desk, lovely staff members, great website!" ~ Year 2, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

"Any time I interact with the guild, either for support or during an activity, staff are very welcoming, friendly and supportive. This allows myself, and many others, to feel relaxed and therefore, more likely to get involved with them and their services." ~ Year 1, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

"All the ones ive known about have been free, having them displayed on the my exeter app is also really useful for finding out about them." ~ Year 3 Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

However, 10% of students responded saying they don't engage with the Guild. Students also mentioned facing problems interacting with the Guild (3%), with some going into further detail about how they feel there is no or little focus in postgraduate students (1%), or that events feel Streatham campus focused (1%) so it is hard to get involved if students are not based on this campus. Students also discussed that the Guild is slow to respond (1%), or that they don't engage with the Guild because the activities don't appeal to them (<1%). (Fig. 5)

"I haven't used many Guild services or activities yet, so I don't have a strong opinion." ~ Other, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"I think the Guild area on St Luke's is somewhat hidden away, so I've never really been inside the guild space because it's a bit uninviting. However, the activities hosted by the guild every week are amazing and I've been to a few on St Luke's, I really enjoyed the flower/bouquet making one." ~ Year 1, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

"Seem to be targeted more towards undergraduate/full time students, difficult to engage around work" ~ Masters, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"There seems to be activities available, they just never really appeal to me" ~ Year 2, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

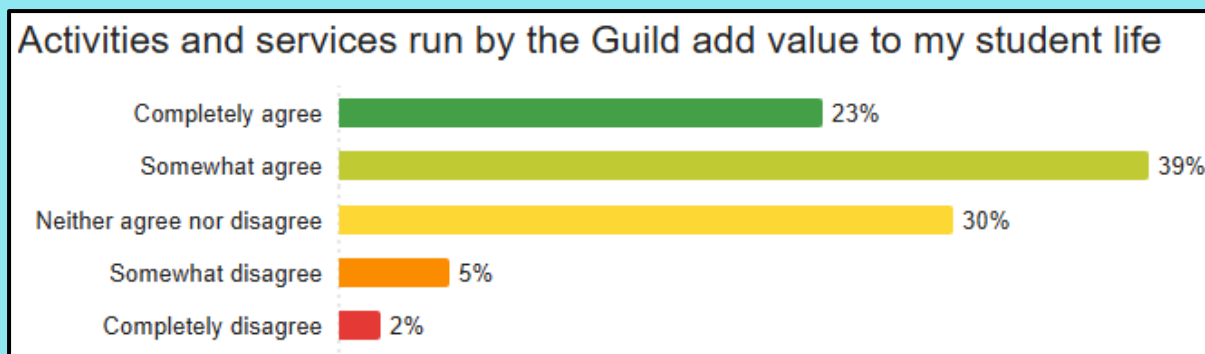


Figure 6 – Question 14: How much do students agree with the statement: Activities and services run by the Guild add value to my student life?

The majority of students (62%) at least somewhat agree that the activities and services run by the Guild add value to their student life. Only 7% of students disagree with this statement, with 5% somewhat disagreeing and 2% completely disagreeing. However, 30% of students feel that they neither agree nor disagree with that the activities and services ran by the Guild improve their student life. (Fig. 6)

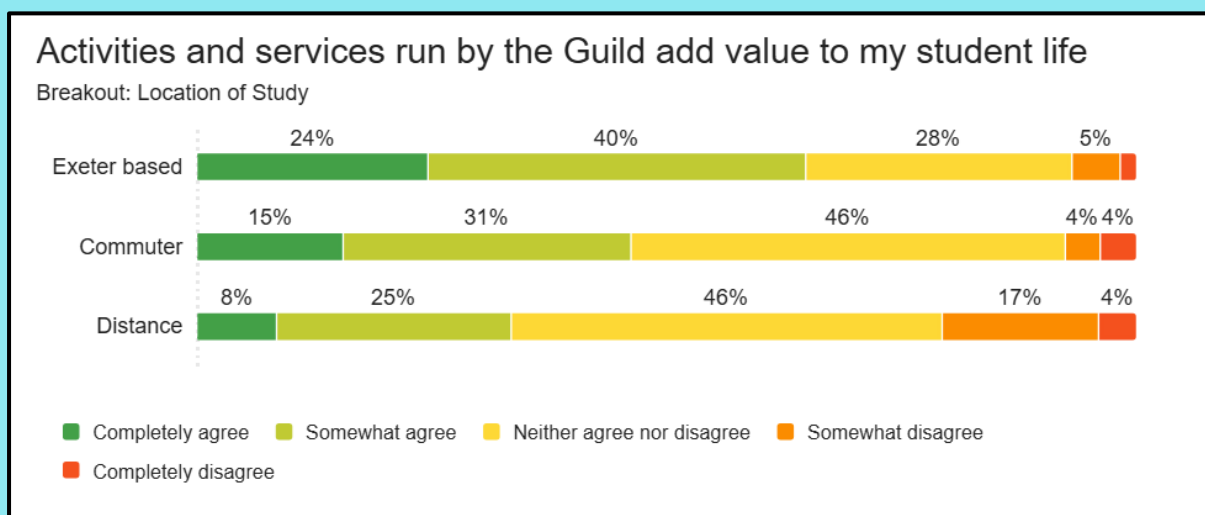


Figure 7 – Question 14: How much do students agree with the statement: Activities and services run by the Guild add value to my student life? (Breakout: Location of Study)

When we look at this by location of study, we again see that students that are not based in Exeter agree with the statement less, with distance learners agreeing the least. 64% of Exeter based students agree with the statement, this drops to 46% for commuters and only 33% for distance learners. 28% of Exeter based students neither agree nor disagree, whereas this is 46% for both commuters and distance learners. Only 8% of Exeter based students disagree with the statement, this is the same for commuters however 4% of these students strongly disagree. 21% of distance learners disagree with the statement, including 4% who strongly disagree, which shows that the students not based in Exeter do not feel that the Guild has as much of an impact on them as Exeter based students do. (Fig. 7)

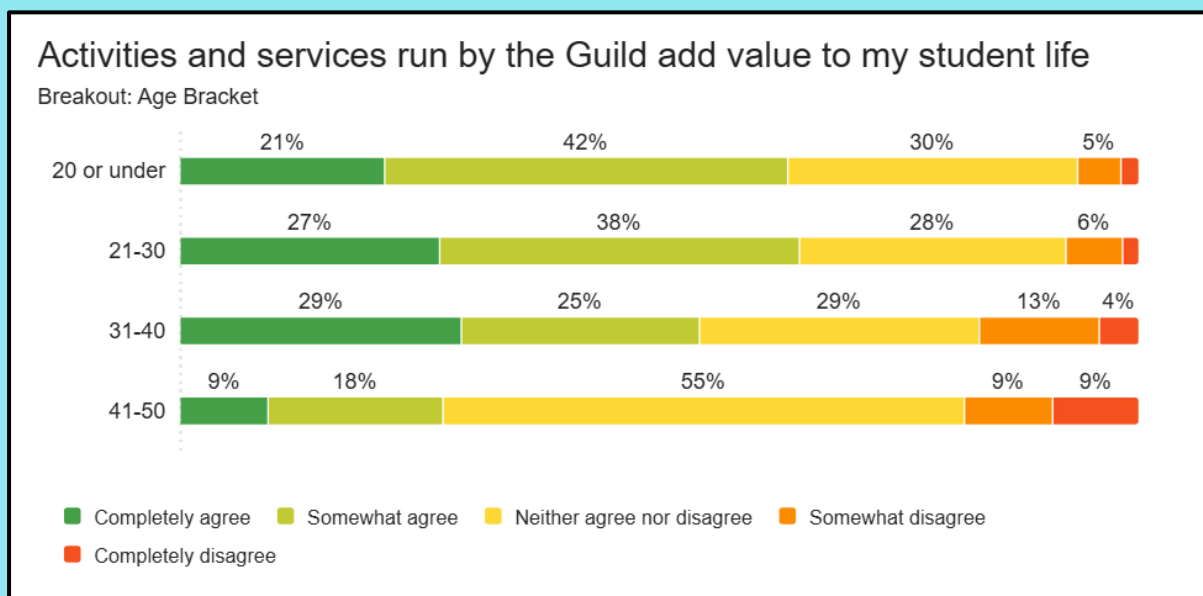


Figure 8 – Question 14: How much do students agree with the statement: Activities and services run by the Guild add value to my student life? (Breakout: Age Bracket)

When we look at this by age bracket, we continue to see the negative correlation of decreasing agreement with increasing age. Whilst 20 or under and 21-30 students are generally consistent (with slightly more 21-30 disagreeing), there is a significant increase of 30+ students that do not feel the activities and services run by the Guild add value to their student life. 17% of 31-40 and 18% of 41-50 disagree, with only 54% of 31-40 that agree and 27% of 41-50. This is much lower than 63% for 20 and under, and 65% for 21-30. This once again displays that older students feel less engaged with the Guild, perhaps because they need it less due to having established a community outside of university, being too busy or feeling that Guild activities are not accessible to them. (Fig. 8)

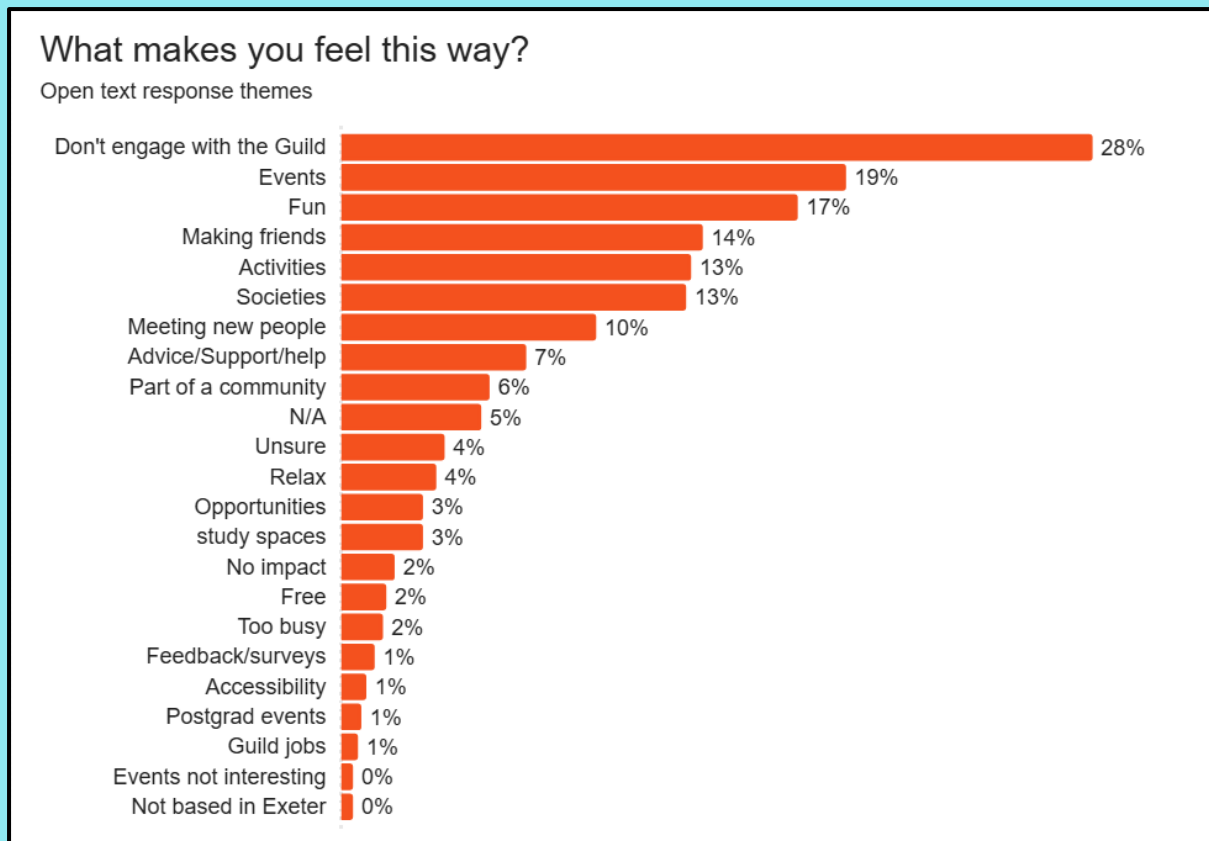


Figure 9 – Question 14a: What makes students feel this way? (Open text response themes)

We asked students why they feel this way, and 28% of students said that it's because they don't engage with the Guild, perhaps contributing to the 30% who neither agree nor disagree that Guild activities and services add value to their life (Fig. 4). This was the most common response for this question, showing that just under a third of students do not engage with Guild, with some being too busy (2%) and others simply uninterested in the events offered (<1%). Other students mention not being involved since they are not based at Exeter (<1%). 1% also discussed feeling that there are not many opportunities to get involved as a postgraduate or mature student, feeling that most events are not aimed towards them. 2% of students explained that the Guild simply does not have any impact on or feel that the Guild has enhanced their student life, saying that they feel unaffected by the Guild or that it hasn't had an impact. (Fig. 9)

"I haven't participated in any activities that have really impacted my student life" ~ Year 3, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"I don't use any of the services or activities run by the guild so they don't add value to my student life" ~ Other, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

"I don't always feel that they are particularly interesting/ relevant to me but I can see the value in them to other students" ~ Year 3, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

"Feels irrelevant to distance learners" ~ Masters, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"I am an older PhD student, I'm not sure the Guild is really there for me" ~ Other, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"I don't massively engage with them as do not have the time to" ~ Masters, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

Many students mention Guild events (19%) and activities (13%), with most saying they enjoy the events offered and get involved. 17% further explain that the Guild activities are fun and provide refreshing opportunities outside of lectures to help students relax (4%). 3% of students say that the Guild offers new and different opportunities for students to get involved in, with students especially feeling that making friends (14%) and meeting new people (10%) is made easier by the Guild. Many feel a greater sense of community and belonging (6%) thanks to the Guild. 13% of students also discuss societies helping them have fun, meet new people and find a community. (Fig. 9)

"I think I met all of my friends in Exeter for the first time through one guild event or another." ~ Masters, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"I've attended various types of activities by the Guild and it is a much needed break from the regular routine and hectic uni work. Whether it be craft events, workshops or movie nights, it has been quite fun so far to attend these with friends and also meet new people" ~ Masters, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

"I have made some really lovely memories through events run by the Guild but events around exam season to help de-stress have also been so helpful" ~ Year 3, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

7% of students mentioned finding the Guild, and the services/resources and support offered by the Guild, to be helpful. A further 1% comment on finding the opportunities to give feedback such as the Superheroes Surveys to be very helpful

in improving student life. 1% of students also discussed accessibility, with some finding it accessible and easy to get involved in Guild events, and others mentioning the difficulties in being commuters. 2% find the Guild more accessible in that it is cheap or free to get involved, which makes them more inclined to join in and have fun. 3% also find that the Guild study spaces that are available are nice and help them in their student life by providing easy places to study on campus. (Fig. 9)

"I know that the Guild have helped make changes to education - e.g., one week extensions which has been incredibly helpful. I also liked the £2 meals in 2023/24. It helped with budgeting." ~ Year 4, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"The Guild has closed great student run services such as Nightline without introducing alternatives, services which contribute to making campus a safer and more supportive place for the students." ~ Year 3, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"I only really passively use the services, eg the study areas, and do not attend guild events as they do not generally align with what I enjoy. I have enjoyed filling out the survey superhero surveys monthly." ~ Year 4, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"The Guild spaces are accessible and allows me to study on campus, The other resources like Academic reps allow me to use my voice about important issues" ~ Year 2, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"There are a mix but I find the times are not always accessible for commuters" ~ Year 3, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"The free activities especially are very enjoyable to attend" ~ Year 5, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

2. How do students feel the Guild has impacted them?

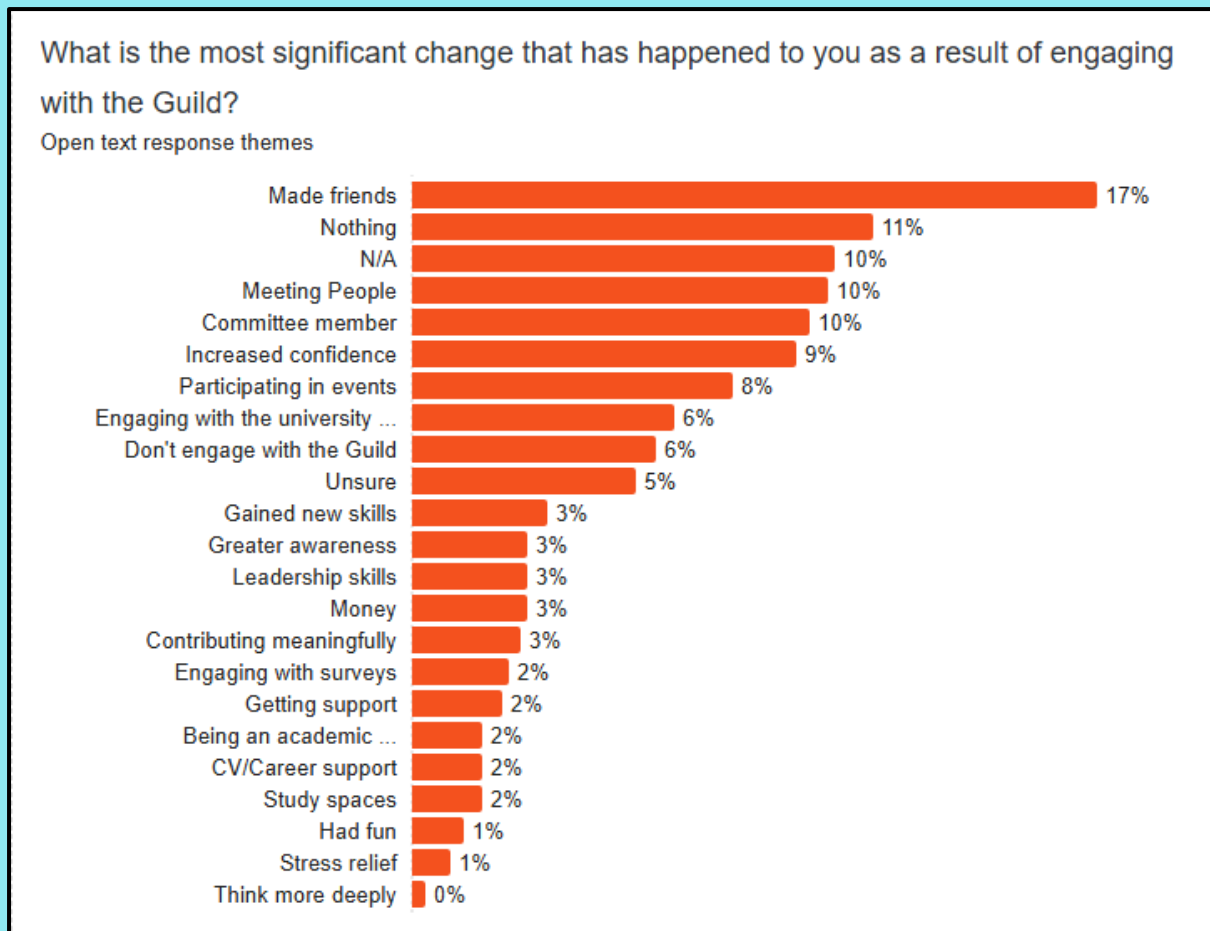


Figure 10 – Question 15: What is the most significant change that has happened to students as a result of engaging with the Guild? (Open text response themes)

Students were then asked what the most significant change that happened as a result of engaging with the Guild has been. The most common response was making friends through Guild events (17%), with 10% that also said meeting people was the biggest impact. (Fig. 10)

By engaging with the Guild and new people, 9% of students feel that it has increased their confidence, with some students further discussing that they have gained new skills (3%) and leadership skills (3%). Students also felt that they

gained a greater awareness of both things around campus as well as life after university (3%) and feel that they think more deeply about things since engaging with the Guild (<1%). (Fig. 10)

2% also specified that the CV and career support from the Guild has been the most significant change for them. For some students this also meant being a committee member (10%), department officer or an academic rep (2%). (Fig. 10)

"As a department officer, I have learnt so much about how to handle feedback from students and what we can do to make the uni a better place for everyone. My leadership and problem solving skills have developed way more ever since I have engaged in this role. Moreover, I love to participate in socialising activities carried out by the guild like movie nights or international student meet-ups, which has helped me make new friends and improve my social life even outside of classes and lectures." ~ Year 2, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"The most significant change that happened to me as a result of engaging with the Guild is an increase in my confidence and sense of belonging at university. When I first started university, especially as an international student, it felt challenging to adjust to a new environment, meet new people, and fully participate in campus life. Through Guild events and activities, I had opportunities to connect with students from diverse backgrounds and become more involved in the university community." ~ Masters, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"Filling these surveys out makes me think a lot more deeply about my experience at exeter and others and the effort behind the scenes" ~ Year 3, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"Work experience - worked as part of the give it a go team - organising, improvising, quick thinking, public speaking" ~ Other, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

Students mentioned that participating in events (8%) and engaging with the university community (6%) contributed to the biggest changes to them, with some students specifying that engaging with the Guild helped them to have fun (1%) and relieve stress (1%). 2% said that engaging with surveys made a big change for

them, helping them to contribute meaningfully (3%). 2% of student also discussed that getting support from the Guild was the most significant impact, with 3% also benefitting financially from engaging with the Guild and 2% finding the study spaces useful. (Fig. 10)

"I have attended 2 Student-led business Forum events and I have been able to have a pop-up stall for free through the Guild which were extremely successful. I wanted to try having a pop-up stall as I am interested in pursuing my second hand clothing business (that I have had alongside my studies for 4 years) after I graduate from university. By not having the risk of a financial loss from the set-up fee it has given me the opportunity to trial this and collect enough data from footfall and student engagement that the market for my clothing is there. I learnt organisation skills, communication skills, sale and budgeting skills by myself through this experience and I am very grateful for this opportunity - thanks Guild Team!" ~ Year 4, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"De-stressing when engaging in student activities" ~ Other, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"Engaging with Surveys via Survey Superheroes does make me feel as though my opinion counts and that it can make some sort of change." ~ Year 1, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"Knowing the facilities and support are available and welcoming me to Exeter at the start of the year really made it feel like home." ~ Year 1, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"I do like the Guild spaces, those have become a good place to study with people from my course." ~ Year 2, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

However, 11% could not think of any significant change from engaging with the Guild, with a further 5% being unsure and 10% having non-applicable responses. 6% stated that they didn't engage with the Guild therefore it had no significant impact on them. (Fig. 10)

"Nothing. I don't engage with the guild." ~ Year 3, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"Not experienced any change as a result of engaging with the Guild" ~ Year 3, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

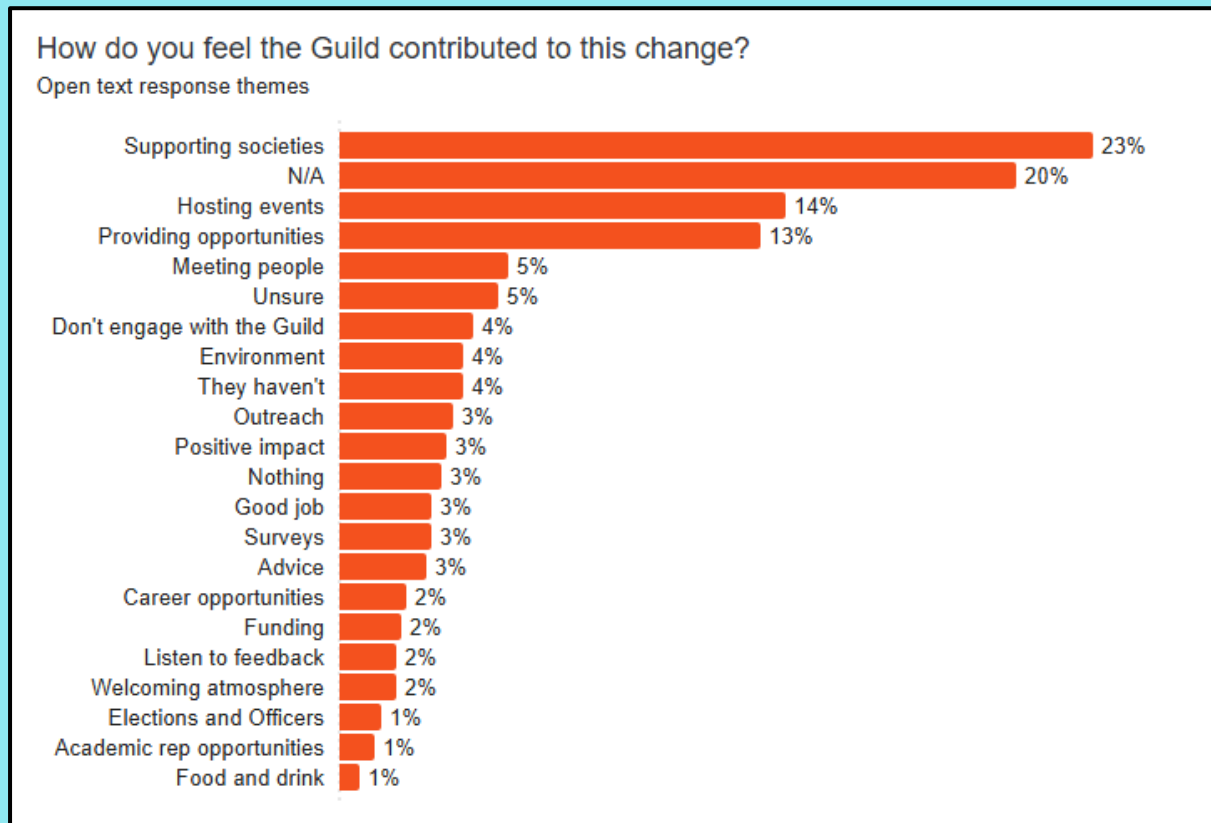


Figure 11 – Question 16: How do students feel the Guild contributed to this change? (Open text response themes)

Students were asked to elaborate on how they feel the Guild contributed to this change. The most common responses were through supporting societies (23%) as well as funding them (2%), and by hosting events (14%) and providing opportunities (13%). Students feel that the Guild has had a positive impact (3%), enabled them to meet new people (5%) due to its welcoming atmosphere (2%) and inclusive environment (4%), overall feeling that the Guild is doing a good job (3%). (Fig. 11)

"The Guild contributed to this change by creating inclusive spaces where students can interact, collaborate, and support each other. Whether through social events, student-led initiatives, or opportunities to get involved in committees and representation roles, the Guild encourages students to step out of their comfort zones. These opportunities helped me engage more actively with university life and build meaningful connections." ~ Masters, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"The guild funds / ensures that societies can run" ~ Year 1, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"The Guild contributed to this change by creating supportive and welcoming opportunities for involvement, such as events, committees, and representative roles, which encouraged me to step outside my comfort zone, build connections, and develop practical skills in communication and leadership." ~ Other, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"supporting lots of societies covering all different interests so it's easy to find people with similar ones to bond with" ~ Year 2, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"Everyone who works for the Guild all seem friendly, inclusive, and willing to help and because of that, the people I met attending Guild events are all super lovely" ~ Year 3, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"putting new people together in one space by giving them a chance to try out something new, while also meeting other people" ~ Masters, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

3% of students feel that the Guild has good outreach, giving advice (3%), and providing surveys (3%) as opportunities for feedback. 2% of students said they feel that their feedback is listened to and that the elections ran by the Guild and Guild officers helped contribute to this change (1%). 2% of student also discussed receiving career support from the Guild, both through careers fairs and CV support as well as campus/Guild jobs, with 1% further specifying academic rep opportunities that they got involved with. 1% of students also mentioned being impacted by the Guild providing food or helping them fund food. (Fig. 11)

"Through the guild i managed to join the society after seeing it advertised on the Guild Instagram page that i otherwise might not have found" ~ Year 2, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"informative website and great at engaging students" ~ Year 3, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

"The Guild helped me deal with a tricky landlord in my second year offering support and advice" ~ Year 4, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"Running these programmes and getting student feedback making us feel our opinions are valued and meaningful" ~ Year 3, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"Based on feedback, more events for postgraduate students were organised" ~ Other, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"Strong body of officers" ~ Year 2, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"Being on the EDI Advisory Board has helped me feel more confident communicating my ideas" ~ Year 1, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"Having the opportunity to gain additional cv-based experience without lengthily applications or competitive processes" ~ Other, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

However, many students had non-applicable responses (20%), as well as 5% feeling unsure. 4% of students stated they don't engage with the Guild, as well as 4% who feel that the Guild have not contributed to this change and 3% who feel that they have contributed nothing. This aligns with the number of students who could not think of any significant changes and do not engage with the Guild (Fig. 10). (Fig. 11)

"They did not contribute whatsoever" ~ Year 3, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"I don't otherwise have any involvement with the university, as I study remotely, and mostly off campus" ~ Other, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

"Since I have not been very involved in Guild activities, it has not had a major influence on me yet." ~ Other, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

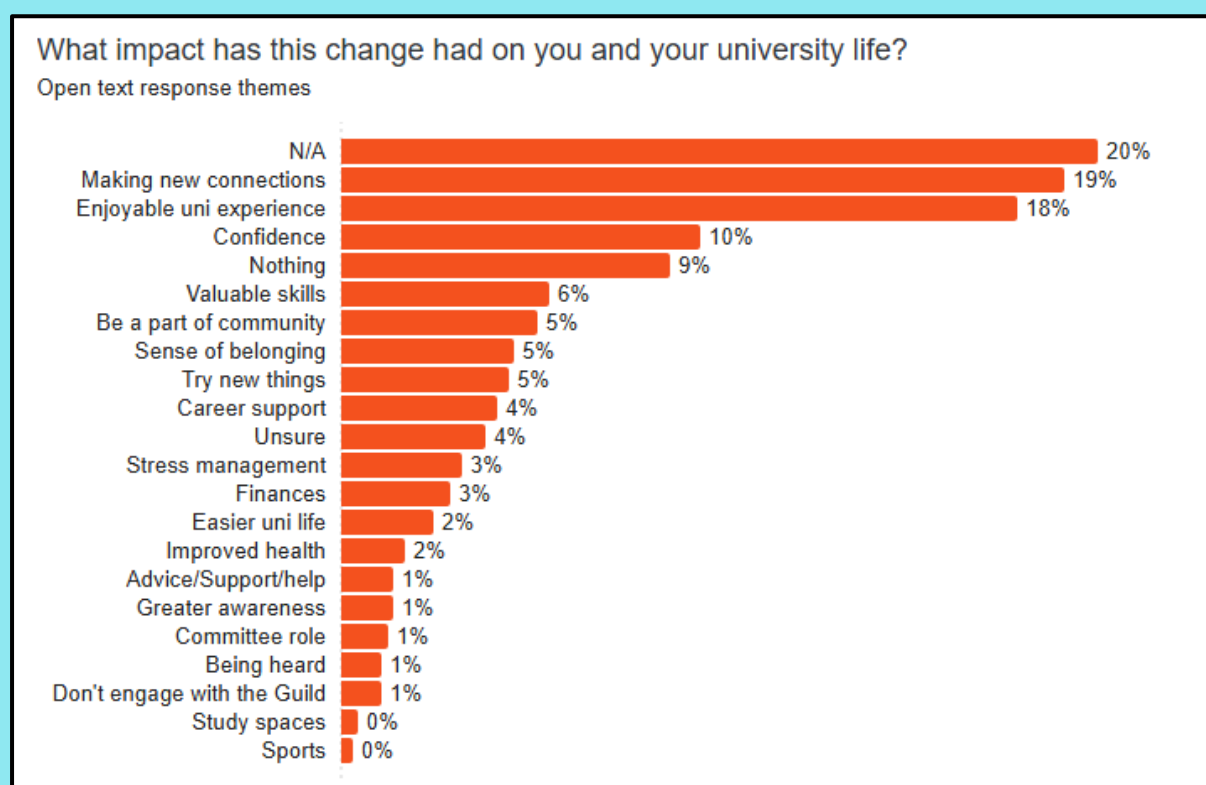


Figure 12 – Question 17: What impact has this change had on students and their university life? (Open text response themes)

We asked students to then elaborate on what impact this change had on them and their university life. 19% of students felt it was the new connections it helped them make, enabling them to be a part of a community (5%) and giving them a sense of belonging (5%). Students feel that they have gained confidence by engaging with the Guild and new people (10%), as well as teaching them valuable skills (6%) and providing advice/support (1%), particularly with careers (4%). (Fig. 12)

"This change has had a very positive impact on both my personal development and my university experience. I feel more confident speaking with new people, participating in group activities, and contributing ideas. It has also helped me build friendships and feel more integrated into the university community. Overall, engaging with the Guild has made my university experience more enriching and has helped me develop skills such as communication, collaboration, and confidence that will benefit me beyond university." ~ Masters, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"I noticed a real change once I started going to guild events. Moving to a new country felt a bit overwhelming at first, but those events helped me meet people quickly and build a small group of friends. Having that support made it much easier to settle in and feel comfortable with my day to day university life." ~ Masters, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"Enable me to form deep relationships, engage more fully in the student community, and develop valuable skills like organization, cooperation, and communication that will improve both my time at university and my future careers." ~ Year 2, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"This change has had a positive impact on both me and my university life, as I feel more confident participating in classes, connecting with peers, and taking on new opportunities. It has made my overall experience more enjoyable, helped me build meaningful friendships, and strengthened skills that will benefit me beyond university." ~ Other, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"Ensure access to service independently to the uni but offering support with the uni, great to have an impartial advice / ear, but with first hand knowledge of university procedures" ~ Year 4, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

"Gaining these skills have been greatly beneficial for me personally and professionally by allowing me to gain skills from a different place than my degree and get valuable work experience I really needed." ~ Year 2, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

Students feel that their mental health and wellbeing have been improved by the Guild, which helps them with stress management (3%) and generally makes university life easier (2%). Overall students feel that the Guild enables them to try new things and generally makes their university experience more enjoyable (18%). Students feel they have a greater awareness thanks to the Guild (1%) and feel that they are heard by the Guild (1%). Some students feel that they have benefitted financially thanks to the Guild (3%) which has helped to relieve stress. (Fig. 12)

"The Guild events not only enabled me to meet new people from various backgrounds, it also encouraged me to have a balance and not focus just on academic work in uni. For example, the craft events allow me to go back to the creativity I had in me that I lost touch with as academics take over. In general, as a socially anxious person, I have built confidence over time and at much more ease than before when interacting with a lot of new people, trying new things and just simply wanting to be a part of more activities at uni" ~ Masters, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

"I feel that it has given me a source of respite and distraction from my stressful course. Being able to go somewhere and practise and meet people has been great and much needed. It has helped relieve stress and help me to have something to do which really helped with seasonal low mood" ~ Year 1, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

"I struggled to make friends at uni because there are too many people that I don't see consistently. Being on committee meant that I see the same few people atleast twice a week, so could build relationships with them. It was also empowering to use my skills to put on great events" ~ Year 3, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"It has made my uni life so much more enjoyable and easier. I feel accepted and valued and I feel like my voice is heard and catered for by the guild making the uni experience better." ~ Year 2, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"This has made me feel more aware about the wider world that i exist in. Thinking before acting and being able to make more informed decisions etc." ~ Year 2, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"It has helped me in times of struggle to buy food at the supermarket" ~ Year 3, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

However, the most common response was non-applicable responses from 20% of student, which is the same as Fig. 7. Similarly, 9% of students feel that nothing has impacted them and 4% are unsure and 1% stated that they do not engage with the Guild, which aligns with previously seen results. (Fig. 12)

"I have not engaged with these activities at the Guild so cannot comment on this" ~ Other, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"It hasnt. Maybe if I lived closer or on campus I could have gotten involved more and felt more of a part of the social side of uni but I wasn't really able to" ~ Year 1, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

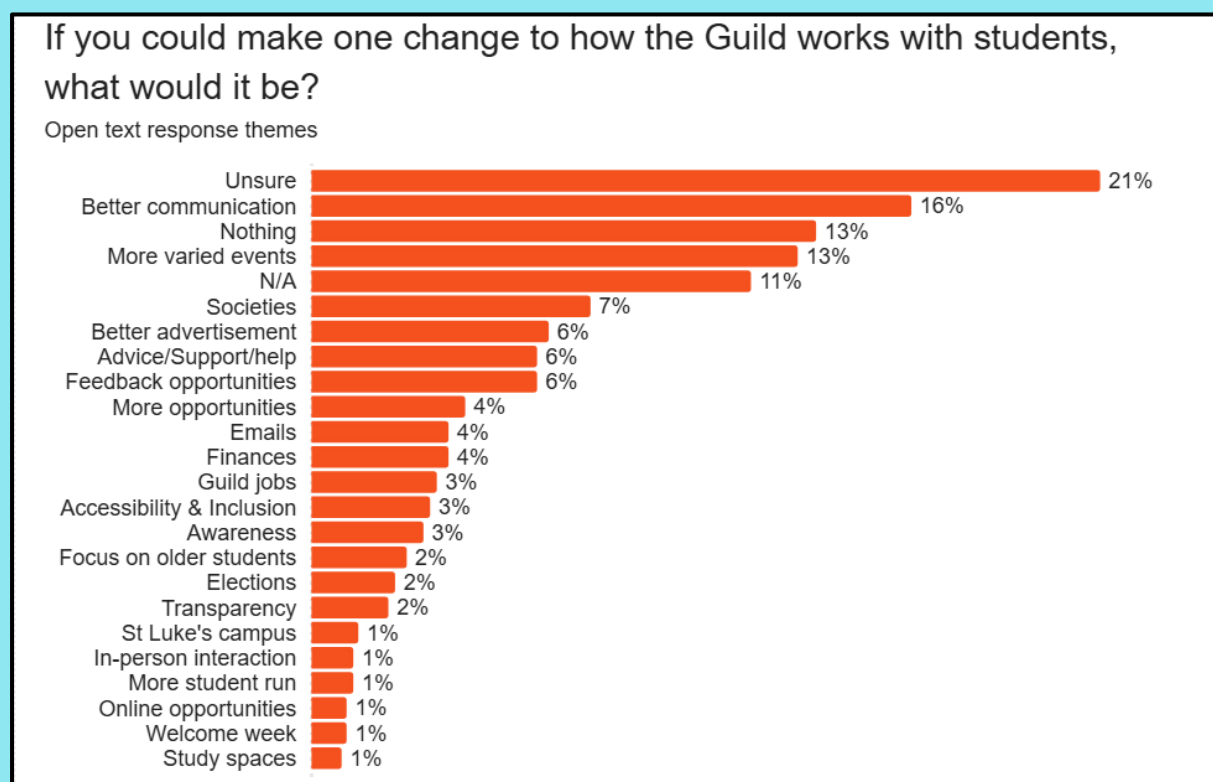


Figure 13 – Question 18: If students could make one change to how the Guild works with students, what would it be? (Open text response themes)

We asked students what one thing they would change about how the Guild works and interacts with students. 16% of students said they want better communication from the Guild and for the Guild to be more interactive with students. A further 4% mentioned communication through emails specifically, and 1% want more in-person interaction with the Guild. Students also feel that there should be better advertisement of Guild events and services (6%), as well as promoting and offering more feedback opportunities (6%) to help students feel heard. 3% of students also spoke about general awareness of the Guild and their role in student life as some students seem to feel unsure about what the Guild does and what its purpose is. Some students feel it should be easier to interact

with the Guild and participating events so would like better accessibility to services and events on better timescales, and better inclusion (3%). 6% of students also discussed wanting more support services and resources that interact with students with faster response times. (Fig. 13)

"If I could make one change to how the Guild works with students, it would be to increase awareness and communication about the opportunities and support that the Guild offers. Many students are not fully aware of the range of events, societies, leadership roles, and support services available to them. Improving communication through more targeted emails, social media updates, and in-class promotions could help ensure that more students benefit from these opportunities. By making information more accessible and visible, the Guild could encourage greater participation and help students feel more connected to the university community." ~ Masters, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"If I could make one change to how the Guild works with students, it would be to improve communication and visibility of opportunities, such as clearer, more regular updates about events, leadership roles, and support services, so that more students are aware of and feel encouraged to get involved." ~ Other, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"more accessible via email. Response times are really slow." ~ Year 4, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

"The guild should have a more accessible way to reach and report instances ie A forum to anonymously report incidents regarding society events" ~ Year 3, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"Make committee support more accessible within a useful timeframe, especially for urgent mentally/emotionally difficult issues" ~ Year 4, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"Make the guild reception a service that is able to give students specific information and that is able to connect students with specific services. The students at reception should be given more information and training so that they can be more helpful to societies. The guild should employ more students so that their services can run more efficiently and not be backed up with work." ~ Year 2, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

13% of students would feel more included and interested in the Guild if they offered more varied events and more opportunities (4%), especially some that cater more towards older students (2%) and students at St Luke's campus (1%) who currently feel that less events are directed towards them. 1% of students discussed wanting more events during welcome week to help people meet people as well as more big events, promotion of events and reps throughout the year and not just during fresher's week. (Fig. 13)

"I would love if it was more interactive / there was a wider range of activities put on - more aimed at the whole university rather than smaller groups." ~ Year 3, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"Potentially doing less crafty events and alternatives such as trying exercises that otherwise people may not have access to if they're not in a society. And offer them throughout the year instead of freshers." ~ Masters, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"More paid opportunities for involvement especially for PGT students with limited working hours, I feel many Guild opportunities are undergrad-oriented and expanding this base would enrich many PG experiences" ~ Masters, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"It would be helpful if the Guild could offer more events and communication specifically designed for PGR students, and international students who may not always feel fully integrated into the wider student community." ~ Other, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"more for mature students (undergrads)" ~ Year 2, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

"More support for commuter student (commuter lounge / day time events)" ~ Year 3, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"Run events for students who don't go home during term holiday or summer holiday! It can get lonely sometimes if you can't go home!2 ~ Year 4, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"promote events more/ make events every term not just for freshers / run events for multiple unis eg. swag" ~ Year 1, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"I would want more transparency and impact aimed particularly at St Luke's campus - because it's forgotten about frequently" ~ Year 5, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

Students would like to see more opportunities offered by the Guild, including online opportunities (1%) and more Guild jobs (3%) and support for those in Guild jobs, particularly committee members who feel that societies need more support and funding (7%). 4% of students also feel that they need better help with funding, for societies especially, but also for students who are struggling as well including more free or cheaper events that they can get involved in. (Fig. 13)

"Make some events online for commuters/online courses/distance learners" ~ Masters, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

"It would be great if guild creates or helps to create more student-based work opportunities" ~ Masters, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"While we have student reps from the guild I'll admit I have never met mine. It would be great if these students had more visibility across year groups including introductions at induction lectures and engagement with committees and societies associated with their courses/campuses." ~ Year 4, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

"Better communication and support for societies. I have not been very impressed with the reply time to emails, and have had many issues with invoices not being paid/approved for events, and the room booking system is not very good. many times our rooms have just been cancelled for Events Exeter to run events and we were not warned or told about this" ~ Year 3, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

"more funds for societies - especially sports societies which have comps" ~ Year 1, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"Some society memberships are extremely expensive. Maybe making a more standardised system across the board" ~ Year 4, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

"More funding to students struggling" ~ Year 4, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

Students also discussed the elections (2%) and wanting the Guild to be more student run (1%) with better transparency (2%). Students discussed disliking the new election systems and the timeframe that society elections now operate on. Students also feel the election campaigns need to be clearer and encourage more students to vote. <1% of students also mentioned wanting more study spaces. (Fig. 13)

"Improve the system for society elections, voting numbers are so low it feels like it's mainly current committee members that vote - it would be good to have voting on a more easy to access platform rather than having to jump through hoops to find it on the website" ~ Year 3, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

"We need more consultation with societies. Since the changes to the activities team this year, far too many decisions have been made without consulting student leaders, or too few. For example, the timelines on society elections - the system (at least from a STEM perspective) worked perfectly fine before, as long as elections happened before the end of the year. Why the elections needed to be mandated at a certain date is beyond me, but it certainly wasn't a decision made in conjunction with STEM societies. We wouldn't have been put in this situation had the Guild consulted with us." ~ Year 2, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

"I think it would have been a good decision to keep all the officer posts running and not reducing it down to two. I feel like that was a big mistake. There have been so many emails and posts and whatnot this year that say 'have your say' as students, but the officers who are in the best position at communicating these things have been taken away. Also it takes away the fun of campaigning etc." ~ Year 3, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"Release your power to the students. You say the Guild is for the students by the students, when it is actually run by 10s of paid staff and trustees behind closed doors. The elected officers are a facade, and they turn over too quickly to really establish and maintain whatever projects they're working on. Let students lead. Give them resources, and step out of the way. Bring back student changemakers. Pay students to lead campaigns. Also compensate students working really hard on committees for free, to the detriment of paid work" ~ Year 3, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy .

"Have a student committee that works with graduates and Guild employees" ~ Year 4, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

13% of students said that the Guild is currently doing a good job and that they would not change anything, with 21% feeling unsure about what they would change which was the most common response. 11% had non-applicable responses. (Fig. 13)

"Can't think of any changes as already find them to be great at working with students and considering students ideas and opinions in their work." ~ Year 4, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"Nothing really, I think they engage with student regularly and more than enough, I like receiving the emails each week about whats going on" ~ Year 1, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

"I don't think the guild needs to change, they are doing a wonderful job" ~ Masters, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

Conclusion

1. How do students engage with and view the Guild?

The main ways that students engage with the Guild are through being a society member, using study spaces, through Guild surveys (excluding Superheroes) and through Guild-run events. Some students also engage through having a Guild/society role, such as being an academic rep or committee member. However, 22% of students don't really engage with the Guild (Fig. 1). This is seen throughout the survey, and some of the main reasons for this are due to feeling disinterested, being unaware of things going on and what the Guild does or having other commitments so there is a lack of time to engage with the Guild.

79% of students feel that the Guild makes it easy to get involved with them and to use their services, with only 4% disagreeing (Fig. 2). The main reasons for this were generally good advertisement of events and services as well as good communication, especially through social media and emails. A few students feeling that sometimes that relevant information is not presented at the right times and that there can be too much information that it feels overwhelming. Other students mentioned difficulties in contacting the Guild, particularly with slow responses. Many students enjoy getting involved in events run by the Guild and feel that it is accessible and easy to do so, and that there are a variety of ways to get involved, such as through societies. However, some students experience barriers when engaging with the Guild. Post-graduate and mature students often feel that events are not aimed towards them and that it is harder to get involved. Students that are not based at Streatham Campus also feel this way, with students at St Luke's feeling there are a lack of events run there compared to the amount in Streatham. Students not based on campus, such as distance

learner or apprentices, as well as commuters also find it harder to engage since they cannot attend in person events (Fig. 3). This is further highlighted by looking at these demographics' agreement with the statement, where it becomes clear that students not based in Exeter find it harder to engage, with less students agreeing, particularly for commuters (Fig. 4). For older students, there is a clear trend of agreement decreases with increasing age bracket, emphasising that older students find it harder to access the Guild (Fig. 5). Following the earlier results (Fig. 1), we continue to see a proportion of students who state they do not really interact with the Guild, for some of them this is due to the previously mentioned problems, along with some students being disinterested in the events that are offered (Fig. 3).

Whilst many students agree that it is easy to engage with the Guild, this percentage decreases (whilst still maintaining the majority) for students that feel that activities and services provided by the Guild add value to their student life, dropping to 62% that agree. Only 7% disagree, however 30% of students neither agree nor disagree which likely includes many of the students who do not engage with the Guild so do not feel strongly either way (Fig. 6). This is further seen in students' responses for why they feel this way, with the most common response being a lack of engagement with the Guild, where 28% stated this, aligning with the previous results but being higher than the proportion of students that felt this way about the Guild being easy to engage with (Fig. 3, 6, 9). This suggests that some students who do not engage with the Guild acknowledge that they could easily be involved, but do not feel that it would add enough value to actually engage with the Guild themselves. For other students the previous reasons still hold, being too busy, feeling that events are not aimed at them (postgrad/not based in Exeter) or that events are not interesting enough for them. This is again highlighted by looking at these demographics' agreement with the statement, where students not based in Exeter and older students very clearly have higher proportions that disagree or feel neutral (Fig. 7, 8). However, many of the students that do engage with the Guild find that events and activities ran by the Guild are fun and have aided them in making friends and meeting new people; helping them to feel a part of a community. They feel that the Guild provides them with new opportunities and helps them to relax by providing opportunities outside of studies to get involved with (Fig. 9).

2. How do students feel the Guild has impacted them?

As suggested by the responses for why the Guild adds value to students lives, the most significant changes that students feel had happened since engaging with the Guild is through connected them with other people. The most common responses were making friends and meeting people through participating with events and engaging with the university community. This has contributed to many students increasing their confidence, as well as the new skills that they

have gained. For many students this has also been through being a committee member, helping them with their leadership skills. Students feel that the Guild has given them greater awareness and allowed them contributing meaningfully, either through their roles or by engaging with surveys. There was still a total of 27% of students that either had no applicable response, stated that they do not engage with the Guild or that nothing has changed for them which is consistent with the previous results that stem from a lack of engagement with the Guild and a feeling that there is little for them to gain by interacting with the Guild (Fig. 10)

Students feel that the Guild has contributed to this change through supporting societies, hosting events and providing opportunities for students to get involved in and meet people. Overall, students feel that the Guild contributes a welcoming environment with good outreach which created a positive impact. The Guild offers advice, career opportunities and feedback opportunities that students generally feel is listened to. Some students still state that they don't engage with the Guild, but this is lower than previously seen, instead there is a rise in students with non-applicable responses contributing to a total of 24%. In addition to this, some students feel that the Guild has not contributed to this change for them, or that nothing has changed from them as a result of the Guild, which remains consistent with the proportion of students that we have seen previously that either do not engage with the Guild or do not feel impacted. (Fig. 11)

Remaining consistent with previously seen results 30% of students feel that there has been no impact on them or their university life, that they don't engage with the Guild (which contributes to only 1%, the lowest seen in the survey) or they have a non-applicable response (also 20% as seen in the previous question). For students that do feel there has been an impact, the biggest one has been making new connections, giving them a sense of belonging and community. Students feel that this change had made their overall university experience more enjoyable, giving the opportunities to try new things and build valuable skills, confidence in particular. Students have received advice and career support, as well as financial help. Many students feel that overall, this change has made their lives easier, happier and less stressful by providing outlets and connecting them to support networks. (Fig. 12)

However, if students could change one thing about how the Guild works with students, many of them would like better communication and advertisement of events and services. Students, in particular societies and committee members, need faster responses from the Guild, with emails especially, and more checkups for people in student/Guild roles, as well as financial support for struggling students and societies. Students also want more varied events and more opportunities, especially for students not based at Streatham and for postgrads/mature students as seen previously. Students also feel that they would benefit from more feedback opportunities to voice their opinions, in particular some students have issues with the changes to election formats and

wish for this to be heard and addressed. However, 45% of students in total had responses indicating that nothing needed to change, they were unsure about what they would change or had non-applicable responses. This suggests that many students are happy with how the Guild currently interacts with them. (Fig. 13)

Overall, many students enjoy participating in Guild run events or societies, finding that they are enjoyable and easy to engage with due to the welcoming environment provided by the Guild. They provide them with enjoyable experiences and ways to relieve stress by having new experiences. Most importantly, engaging with the Guild helps to connect students, with many students meeting new people and finding their friends through Guild events. Students build skills and confidence from engaging in the Guild, particularly those in Guild/student roles. However, a significant portion of students maintained that they do not engage with the Guild or do not feel impacted by the Guild, with the main reasons being disinterested, lack of need or being too busy. The biggest issues that need to be addressed however, were students not engaging with the Guild due to lack of opportunities directed at them, particularly for distance learner, apprentices, commuter and students at St Luke's campus; as well as postgraduate and mature students that want events specially focused on them to help them connect with other postgraduate/mature students since their courses can feel more isolating.

Recommendations

- Students want to see more focused events for demographics that feel that Guild events are not aimed at them
 - Postgraduate and mature students feel that most events are not designed for them and want events where they can socialise with other postgraduates and mature students.
 - Students that are not based in Exeter, such as distance learners, apprentices and commuters, find it harder to attend in person events. They want more online opportunities to get involved with the Guild and to meet other people.
 - Students at St Luke's feel that the Guild has less presence there and would like to see more events hosted there as well as a stronger Guild presence and hub.
- Students want to see a greater variety of events and opportunities, tailored to different interests
 - Some students feel that events and opportunities provided by the Guild do not align with their interests, so they do not engage. By providing a wider range of opportunities, the Guild can involve more students who do not currently feel interested.

- Students want better communication from the Guild and better advertisement of the Guild
 - When trying to contact the Guild, particularly via emails, some students feel frustrated at the slow response times when seeking help.
 - Students want better advertisement of Guild services, surveys and events across more platforms and in class promotions.
 - Students want more awareness and clarity of what the Guild does, how the Guild works and how students can get involved.
- Students want to see improvements to the election system
 - Some societies have complaints about the new election system, finding that the timeframe is not convenient. This should perhaps be reviewed in a meeting with committee members so that they can have their input.
 - Students want more clarity on Guild elected roles for officers and reps; they want to know more about what they can do and offer to help inform their votes.
- Students want to see more support from the Guild for societies and committee members
 - Committee members want to see more communication and check ins from the Guild so that it is easier to access support and work with the Guild.
 - Some committee members have mentioned trouble receiving payments and would like better support and communication from the Guild about this.

External Resources

If you are a current University of Exeter student, please find some resources below to help you:

- [Exeter Students' Guild](#), Exeter Students' Guild
 - [About Us](#), Exeter Students' Guild
 - [What's On](#), Exeter Students' Guild
 - [Get Involved](#), Exeter Students' Guild
 - [Find Support](#), Exeter Students' Guild
 - [Make Change](#), Exeter Students' Guild
- [Talk to Us](#), Exeter Students' Guild

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	242 (67%)	Female	721	501 (69%)
HAS	379	261 (69%)	Male	236	134 (57%)
HLS	248	158 (64%)	Non-Binary/ Genderfluid	31	21 (68%)
INTO	10	4 (40%)	PNS*	12	9 (75%)
Campus			Identification with Gender Assigned at Birth		
Streatham	831	554 (67%)	Yes	946	627 (66%)
St Luke's	142	96 (68%)	Sometimes	22	14 (64%)
Distance	27	15 (56%)	No	23	17 (74%)
Domicile			PNS*	9	7 (78%)
UK	739	527 (71%)	Ethnicity		
International (EU)	47	24 (51%)	White	625	424 (68%)
International (Rest of World)	214	114 (53%)	Latin	13	11 (85%)
Mode of Study			Black	36	18 (50%)
Full-Time	951	633 (67%)	Asian	240	121 (50%)
Part-Time	49	32 (65%)	Arab	12	8 (67%)
Study Level			Mixed	51	33 (65%)
			Other	11	5 (45%)

1 st Year	250	152 (61%)	PNS*	12	7 (58%)
2 nd Year	228	166 (73%)	Sexual Orientation		
3 rd Year	172	126 (73%)	Gay	18	10 (56%)
4 th Year	54	38 (70%)	Lesbian	24	22 (92%)
5 th Year	13	11 (85%)	Bisexual	142	106 (75%)
Masters	220	129 (59%)	Pansexual	18	13 (72%)
Other	63	43 (68%)	Asexual	19	16 (84%)
			Queer	30	19 (63%)
Age Bracket			Heterosexual	636	394 (63%)
Under 20	553	384 (69%)	Other	2	2 (100%)
21-30	396	246 (62%)	Unsure	23	14 (61%)
31-40	35	24 (69%)	PNS*	88	57 (65%)
41-50	15	11 (73%)	Disability Status		
51+	1	0 (0%)	No known disability	647	473 (71%)
Widening Participation			Learning disability	110	34 (31%)
Parent	17	10 (59%)	13 (29%)	45	29 (64%)
Carer	21	18 (86%)	91 (48%)	190	124 (65%)
Care experienced or care leaver	4	3 (75%)	19 (83%)	23	18 (78%)
Estranged from family	12	8 (67%)	35 (63%)	56	39 (70%)
Refugee or asylum seeker	1	1 (100%)			
None of the above	945	625 (66%)			