

Statistical bulletin

Coronavirus and higher education students: England, 27 September to 4 October 2021

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

Contact:
Chris Johnston
publicservicesanalysis@ons.gov.
uk
+44 1633 560479

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1 . Main points

- The majority (90%) of students said they had already been vaccinated against COVID-19 at least once; significantly more students reported having had two vaccine doses (78%) than reported having one dose (12%).
- A minority (7%) of students said they had not been vaccinated against COVID-19; of those, 31% said they were very or fairly likely to take a vaccine if offered and 58% said they were fairly or very unlikely to do so.
- Over half (53%) of students who had been vaccinated at least once think that COVID-19 poses a major or significant risk to them; this is significantly higher than those who had no vaccine doses (36%).
- Nearly half (49%) of students reported trying to keep a 2 metre distance from people outside their household always or most of the time; this has decreased from 83% in late May 2021, consistent with rules on social distancing being relaxed.
- A majority (55%) of students had taken a COVID-19 test in the previous seven days.
- If they developed symptoms, 90% of students reported they would request a test.
- When asked what they would do if they developed symptoms, 58% of students reported they would stay at home for 10 days; this is significantly lower than in late May 2021 (75%).
- The average life satisfaction score for students was 6.5, significantly higher than reported in late May 2021 (5.9); however, this is still lower than for those aged 16 to 29 years in general (6.9) and significantly lower than the adult population in Great Britain (7.1).
- Over half (53%) of students reported that their academic performance had been significantly or majorly affected since the start of the coronavirus pandemic.

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

2 . Coronavirus and higher education students data

[Coronavirus and higher education students](#)

Dataset | Released 22 October 2021

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

3 . Measuring the data

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

The SCIS paused after the release on 17 June 2021 because of the end of the 2020 to 2021 academic year. This is the first wave conducted for the 2021 to 2022 academic year. Please note that the population of students sampled is therefore different from previous waves of this survey and comparisons made between this and previous waves should take this into consideration.

The survey was conducted between 27 September and 4 October 2021 using an online survey tool and all answers were self-reported. A total of 120,000 students in English universities were invited to take part via their email address held by the National Union of Students (NUS) with an email sent from the NUS, with a response rate of 0.8%. This survey was conducted early in the 2021 to 2022 academic year and this may have affected the response rate. We would like to thank and acknowledge the important role the NUS had in conducting this survey.

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

Weighting

Estimates in this report are based on weighted counts that are representative of the population of students studying at universities in England. Population totals are taken from the [Higher Education Statistics Agency \(HESA\)](#) 2019 to 2020 estimates. Estimates are weighted for sex, age and region of university provider.

Uncertainty in the data

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

Adult population in Great Britain

Where possible, comparisons have been drawn with the [Opinions and Lifestyle Survey \(OPN\)](#) to compare the experiences and behaviours of students with the adult population in Great Britain. The comparisons are used to give a broad idea of the different experiences of each group but the statistics measure data from different timeframes, slightly different questions and different sampling methods so are not directly comparable. The period of the OPN used for comparison was 22 September to 3 October 2021.

Statistical significance

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

4 . Related links

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

Dataset | Released 18 March 2021

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

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

Dataset | Released 5 November 2020

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

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

Dataset | Released 18 November 2020

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

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

Web page | Updated as and when data become available

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

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

Article | Updated as and when data become available

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

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

Interactive tool | Updated as and when data become available

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