
How UCAS supports student choice

Carys Fisher

Senior Policy Executive UCAS

With UCAS you can... Discover your future

- We're an independent charity with a commercial subsidiary, UCAS Media. Our annual revenue is **£50m**
- We understand the demand for higher education and publish **open data and insights** throughout the year
- Every year, we help around **700k** students from over **200** countries, apply to full-time undergraduate courses, at nearly **400** UK universities and colleges

Who is the student?

58% of 18 year old UK applicants hold **3 or more A levels**

13% of applicants are aged **25 and over**

20% of applicants are from **outside the UK**

12% of UK 18 and 19 year old applicants are from **FE colleges**



13% of UK applicants disclose a **disability or mental health condition**

29% of applicants are from **POLAR4 Q1 and Q2**

14% of accepted applicants are placed through **Clearing**

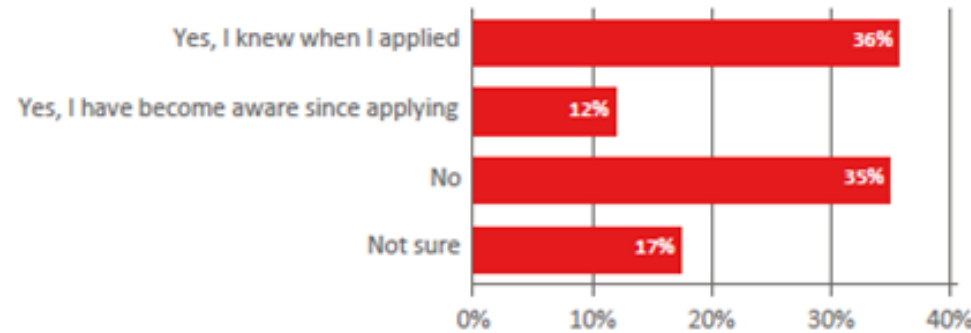
c.20K apply **directly to Clearing**

What is important to students?

Lower Tariff			Medium Tariff			Higher Tariff		
1	Range of modules		1	Range of modules		1	Range of modules	
2	Communication		2	Student reviews		2	League table position	
3	Student reviews		3	Social life		3	Social life	
4	Earning potential		4	Communication		4	Student reviews	
5	Location		5	Location		5	Location	
6	Work experience		6	Earning potential		6	Accommodation quality	
7	Social life		7	Accommodation quality		7	Accommodation availability	
8	Fit with other students		8	Fit with other students		8	Fit with other students	
9	Ease of travel		9	Work experience		9	Earning potential	
10	Accommodation quality		10	Accommodation availability		10	Accommodation proximity	

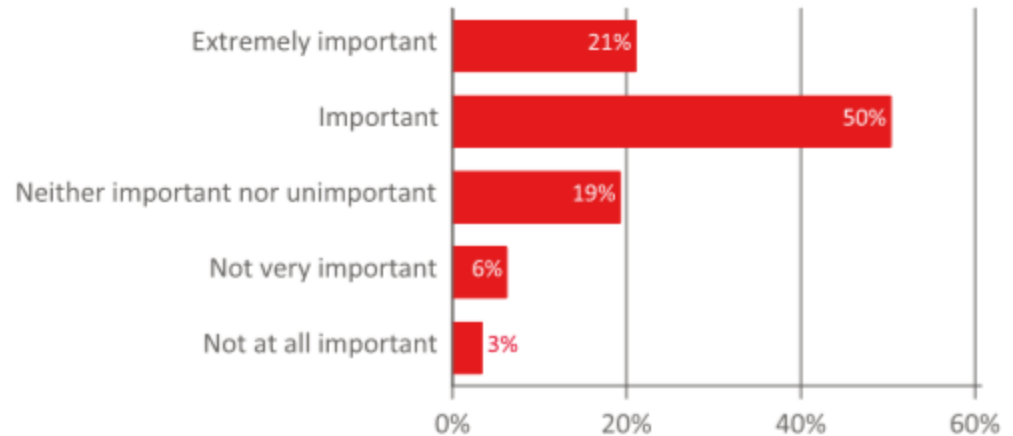
Had you heard of the TEF before applying?

- More than one third of applicants (36%) who secured a place in 2020 had an awareness of the TEF when applying
- ...However, a similar proportion did not (35%)
- Awareness seems to be growing (slowly) – up on 32% in 2019 and on 30% in 2018



How important were the TEF ratings when deciding which university or college to apply to?

More than 70% described a university or college's TEF rating as important or extremely important



The impact of COVID-19: decision-making for the 2020 cohort



Our Covid experience

Coordinating announcements

Supporting stability

- Extending deadlines
- Data led decisions
- Student surveys

Going social:

- FB Live sessions
- BBC Bitesize content
- 80% increase in social interactions

Maintaining services:

- No service interruption
- Core staff on site over results day



Sentiment vs reality

What they said in June

- **8%** of students told UCAS they wanted to **defer**
- **One in five** said they would change their firm choice decision
- **35%** of students said they anticipated they would need to use Clearing

What happened

- The proportion of students with a confirmed deferred place is **similar to last year** (5.7% in 2020, 5.4% in 2019).
- Less than **one in 10** have used 'decline my place' to change a choice (up 25% up on last year)
- We project a record **80%+** of applicants will be placed at their firm choice

2020 cycle headlines



- More than **515k** placed applicants (+4%)
- No 'spike' in **deferrals** (+0.3 ppt increase in proportion of deferred accepts)
- **EU** a 'challenge' with travel limitations and imminent visa changes (-2%)
- **International** picture is cautiously optimistic (+9%), with key markets of China (+27%) and India (+24%), demonstrating impressive growth
- Higher **Tariff** growth (+12%) has not been at the expense of others. Recruitment to medium and low Tariff has remained stable.

98%

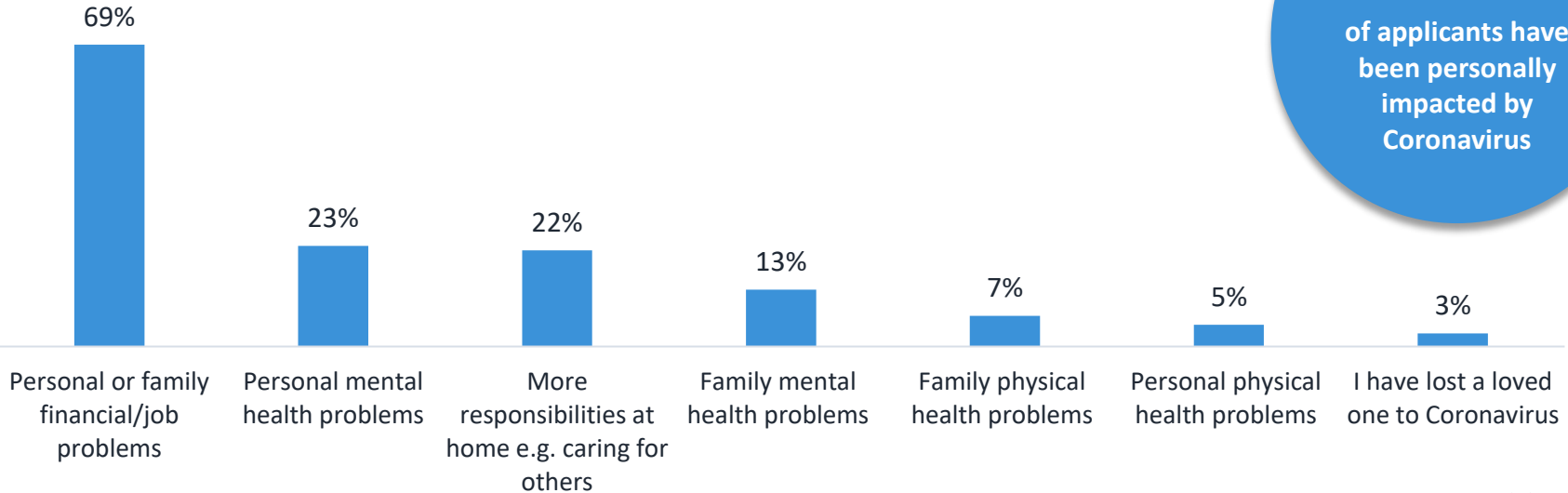
of applicants have
concerns about starting
university in Autumn

Q5. Which of the following, if any, are you personally worried about?
Base: All respondents (522) May 11th 2020



YouthSight

Covid-19 will have a lasting impact on our young people...

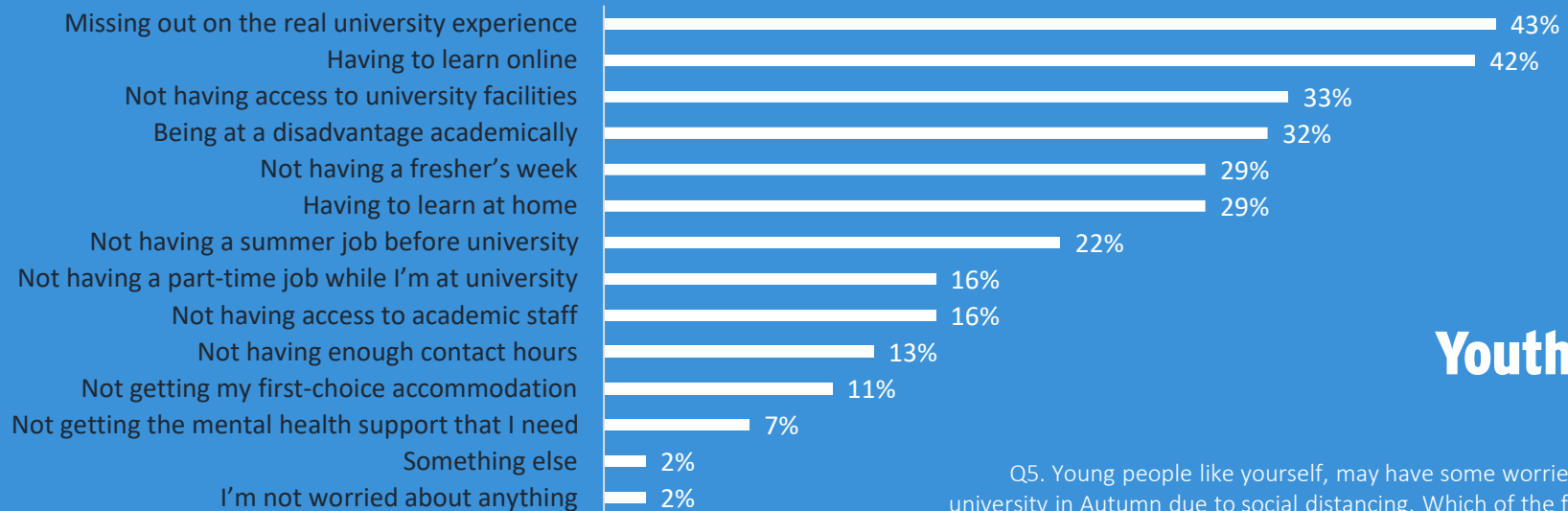


Q6. Young people like yourself may have been impacted by Coronavirus in different ways. Which of the following, if any, have impacted you as a result of Coronavirus? Base: All respondents (519)

YouthSight

Applicants need a lot of different reassurances this year

% who ranked each in their top 3 worries



YouthSight

Q5. Young people like yourself, may have some worries about starting university in Autumn due to social distancing. Which of the following, if any, are you personally worried about? Base: All respondents (522) May 11th 2020

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A view to the future: 2021 and beyond

30%

of year 12s reported
zero hours contact time
during lockdown



We have more than 200k pre-applicants

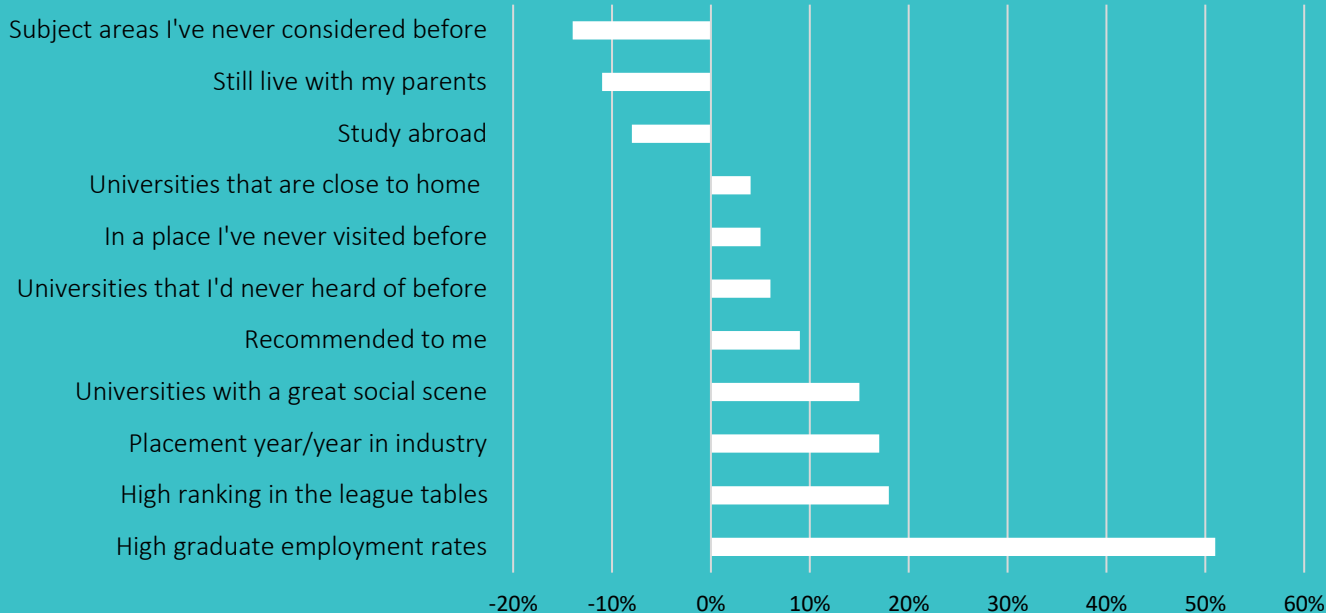
Joint YouthSight research shows:

- 80% committed to go to university in 2021
- 87% started research, but only 27% have made their five choices
- Only 41% say they have enough information to make a decision
- 59% are worried that they haven't been able to visit universities

YouthSight

Covid is changing priorities: jobs, placements, and rankings

Decision-making factors



Yr13s want
'recession
proof'
degrees

How UCAS is shaping the 2021 cycle

- Enhanced wrap-around package of information and advice – UCAS: ‘the application coach’
- Speeding up reference writing
- The enhancement of Clearing Plus
- Visibility of Grades on Entry in adviser tools
- January start date filter



Looking ahead



- Partnership is key

BBC
Bitesize

Which?



YouthSight

88%

of 17-21 year olds
say they
experienced
difficulties in the
application process

22-32 year olds (73%)
and 33 year olds (67%)

- Engaging information and advice is critical
- Parity of options is crucially needed

- The global HE market will be tougher than ever
- The reform which incentivises students to reach their potential has begun

Thank you

c.fisher@ucas.ac.uk