



Pearson

UK Higher Education Student Survey

Global Research & Insights
March 2020



About the Survey

Why

An online direct to student survey to discover attitudes to support with academic writing:

- Level of available support
- Appropriateness of support
- Expectations
- Confidence.

When

The survey was in field from January 28^h-to February 14th 2020; it was timed to coincide with the first 6 months of term time.

Who

The online survey was served to around 450K UK students. Of those that completed the survey, 1517 were undergraduates and 249 postgraduates.

The sample collected represented a range of age groups and grade levels but was predominantly comprised of 18-21 year-old undergraduates.

Key Highlights

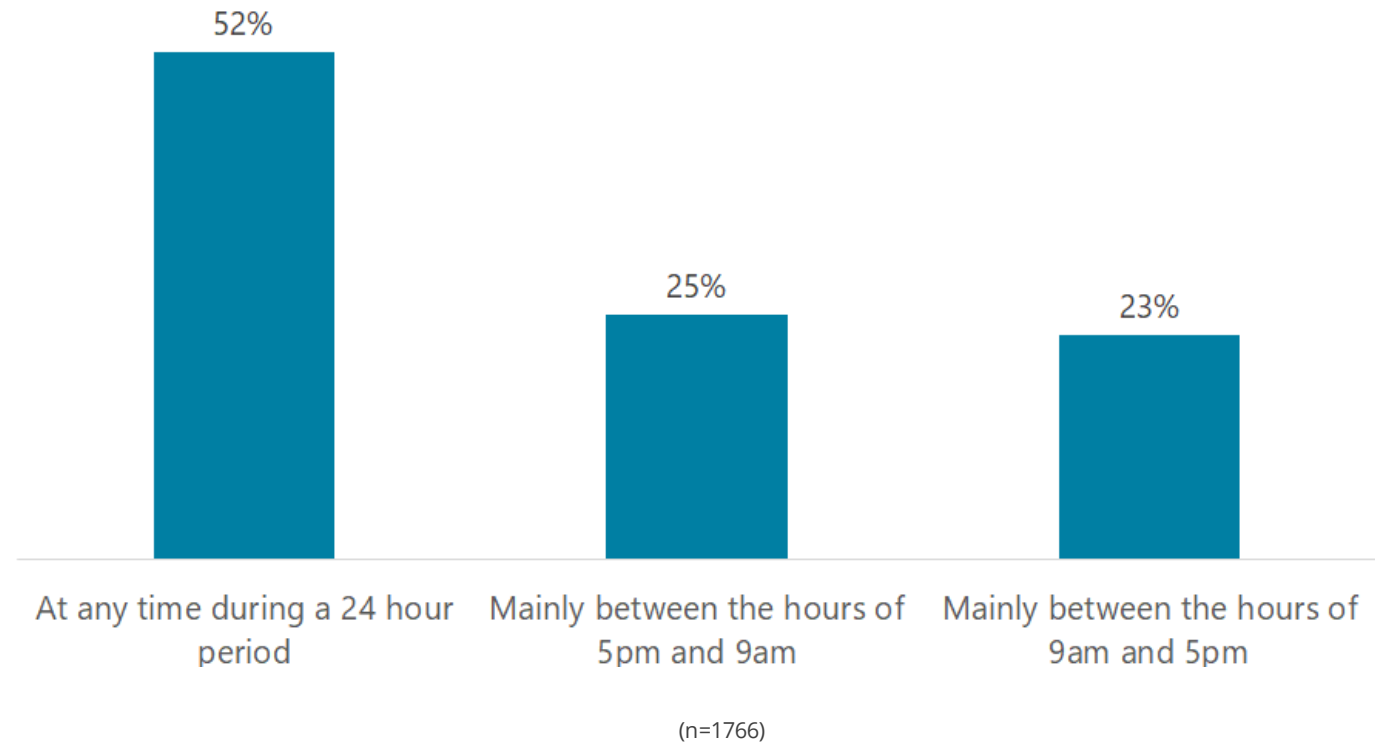
- The majority of students work on their written assignments 24 hours a day.
- Most also therefore would find it very valuable to have access to live feedback outside of business hours.
- A substantial number of students reported low confidence levels when asking for support or knowing when to ask for support with written assignments. These issues, together with the fact that in-person support is not favoured by 13% of students, suggests that universities need to broaden their support offerings.
- Anxiety, embarrassment, fear and SEN factors are repeatedly cited as reasons for not reaching out for help with assignments.



**Student studying
behaviour**

Most students are "always-on" - working on their assignments at all hours of the day and night

When do you work on your assignments?



Question for reference:

- Q18: When do you work on your assignments?

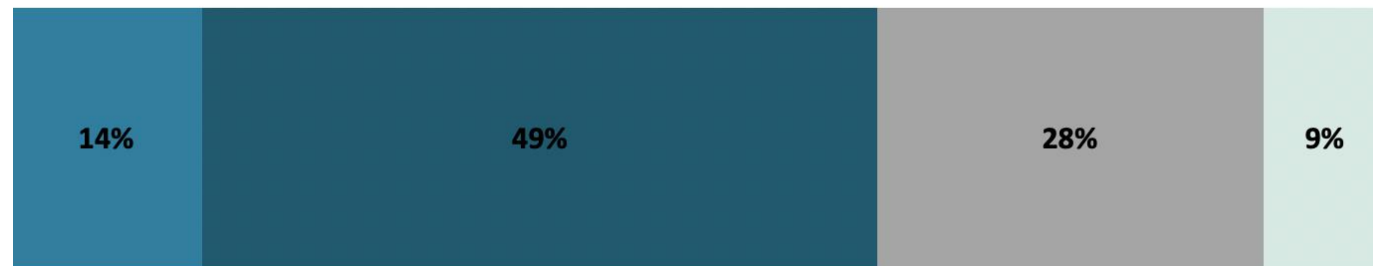
At least one third of students are not confident in identifying when they might need help with an assignment, nor with asking for support

How confident are you with identifying a potential problem with your written assignments:

■ Very confident ■ Quite confident ■ Not confident ■ Not confident at all



How confident are you when asking for support in order to feel you are producing and submitting your best work:



Questions for reference:

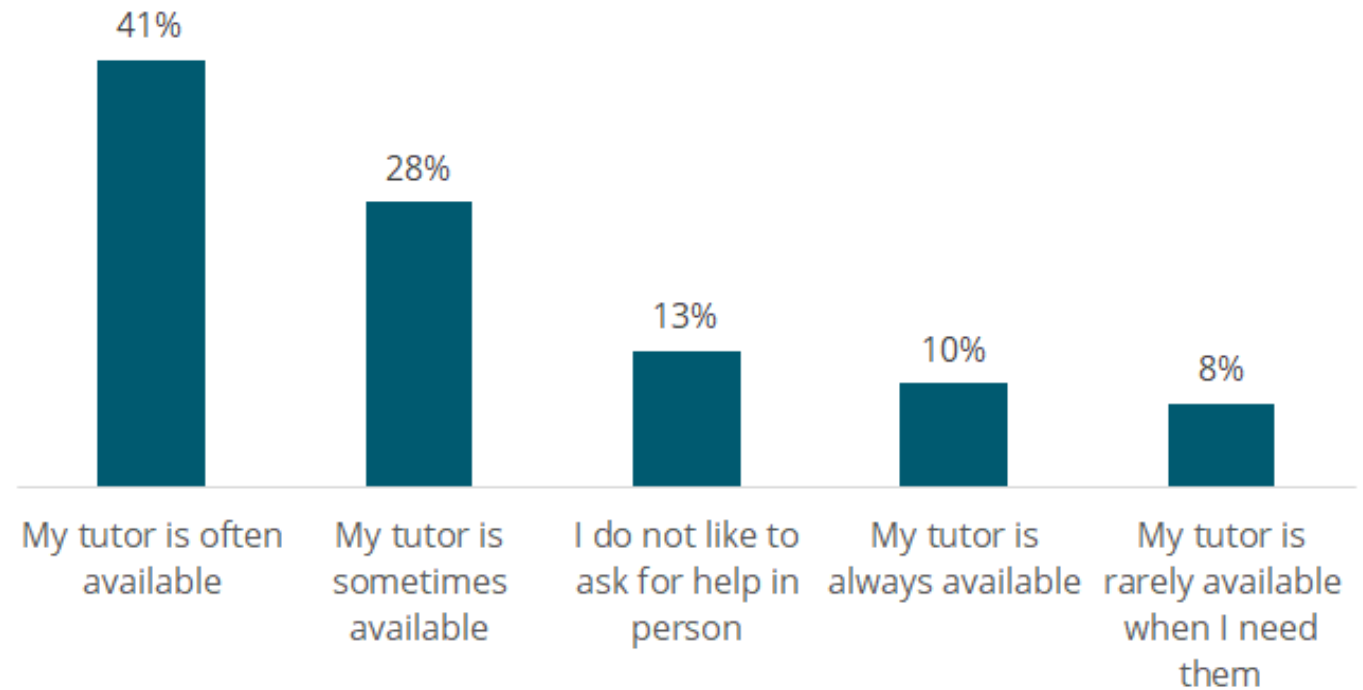
(n=1766)

- Q22: How confident are you with identifying a potential problem with your written assignments?
- Q23: How confident are you when asking for support in order to feel you are producing and submitting your best work?

69% say their tutors are available to give feedback on assignments at least some of the time

Interestingly 13% reported not liking to ask for help in person, with the majority of reasons cited focusing on anxiety, embarrassment and a fear of it having a detrimental impact on grades

Ease of access to tutors for feedback



(n=1766)

Question for reference:

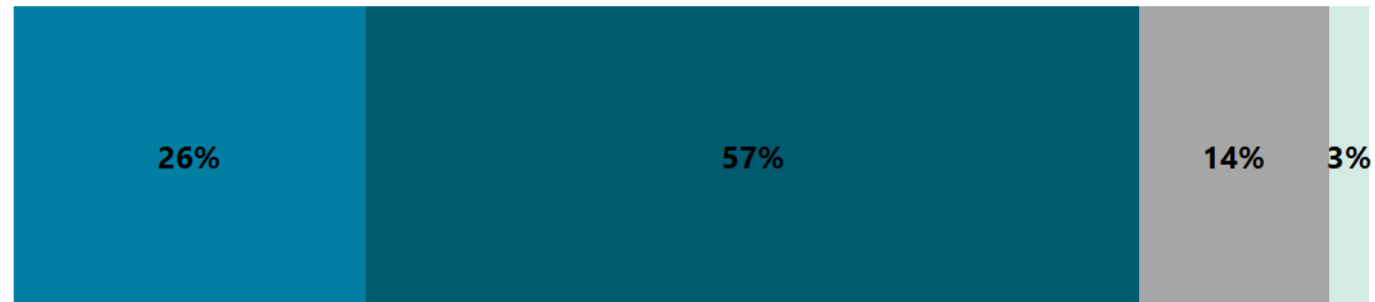
- Q20: When you want to see an academic to ask about your assignments to gain feedback do you find that:

83% of students say that having access to an academic outside of business hours is valuable or essential.

87% feel it would be helpful to have access to this kind of support out of hours.

Having access to an academic outside of 9-5 hours...

■ Is essential ■ Is valuable but not essential ■ Would have limited value to me ■ Would have zero value to me



(n=1766)

Questions for reference:

- **Q17:** Concentrating on when you want to see an academic to gain feedback on your assignment do you find that:
- **Q19:** Would it be helpful to be able to access feedback on your assignments and writing support outside of the hours of 9-5?

I don't want to feel like I'm wasting their time.

*I am **embarrassed** that they might think I have not done enough on my assignment or I do not work as hard as other students which will **influence** their decision to give me a lower mark.*

*It feels like I shouldn't be asking for support unless I'm **really desperate** for it..*

*It can be **frustrating** when you need feedback or help and the tutor hours are very limited.*

*I believe there can be a **detrimental effect in asking for too much help.***

*I think in person appointments are too short for **detailed feedback** and you actually get more substantial comments and support through online support sessions.*

*I prefer to access online help rather than in person as this would make me feel **very nervous** and I may not pay as much attention to the feedback being given.*

Question for reference:

- Q21: Please tell us how you feel about your answer to the previous question:

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