

# Travel Costs

March 2023

# Project Overview

## Objectives

This research was carried out on behalf of the VP for FE in order to support the Move It campaign – which is calling for free transportation for all students and learners

## Methodology

**Online Survey:** A total of 3746 students in HE and FE were consulted via an online survey. The survey was promoted via the NUS database

The survey took around 10 minutes to complete and was in field between 1<sup>st</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023. Respondents were offered the chance of winning a share of £150 for taking part.

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## Reading the report

Were there are any **significant differences** within demographic groupings, selected differences are highlighted on the chart. All demographic grouping tables are available on request

# Summary



**Students are travelling 30 minutes plus to their place of learning each day and the majority either walk or rely on buses**



**Those using cars to travel to their place of study indicate the lengthy public transport journeys, prohibitive costs or the lack of transport links to get them where they need to go**



**Over half are concerned with the costs of travel, with one in five missing a class because they couldn't afford to get to their place of study**



**Reliability and availability of public transport is average, while most students do feel relatively safe.**

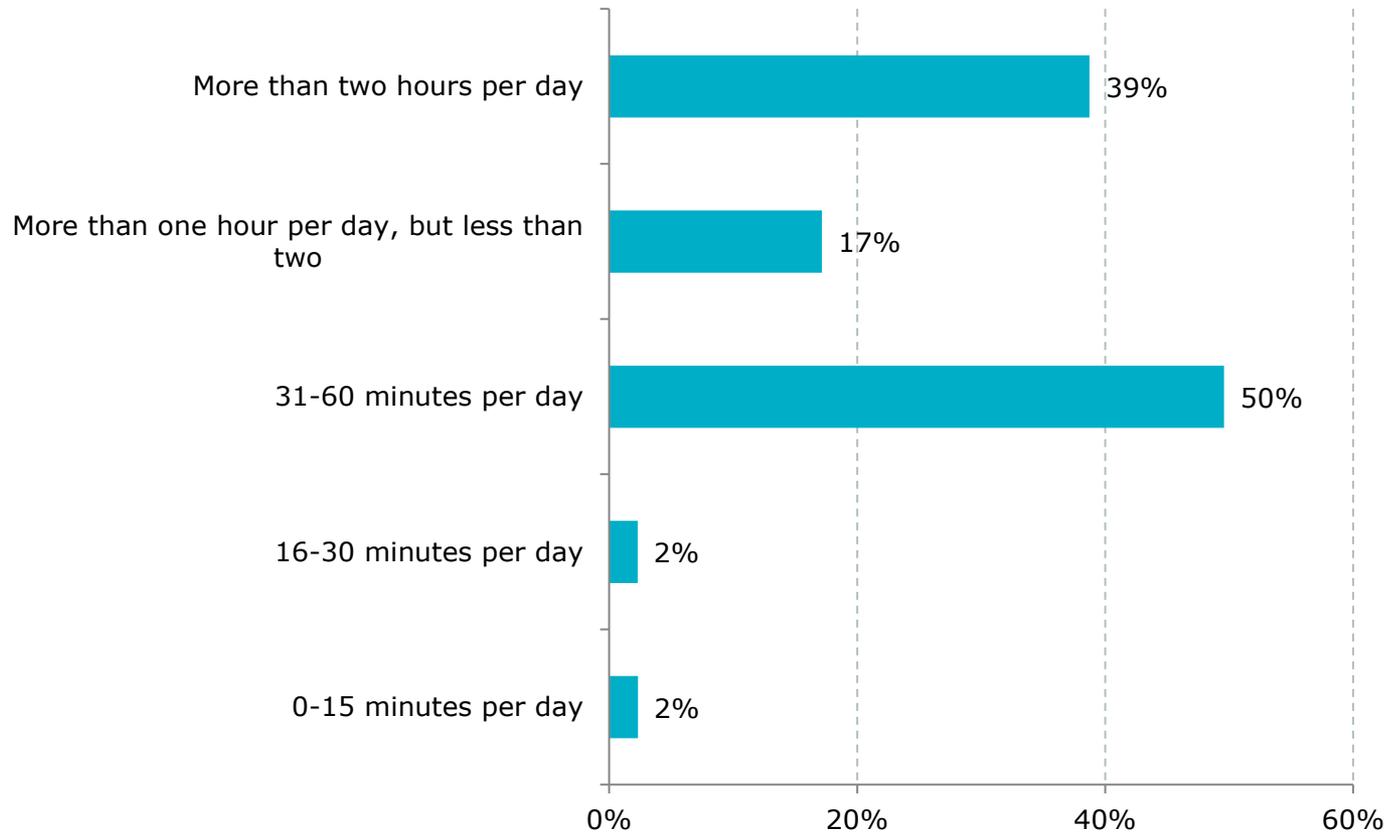


**Disabled students are concerned with accessibility and availability of public transport, so are more likely to take their car**

# Method of travel to studies

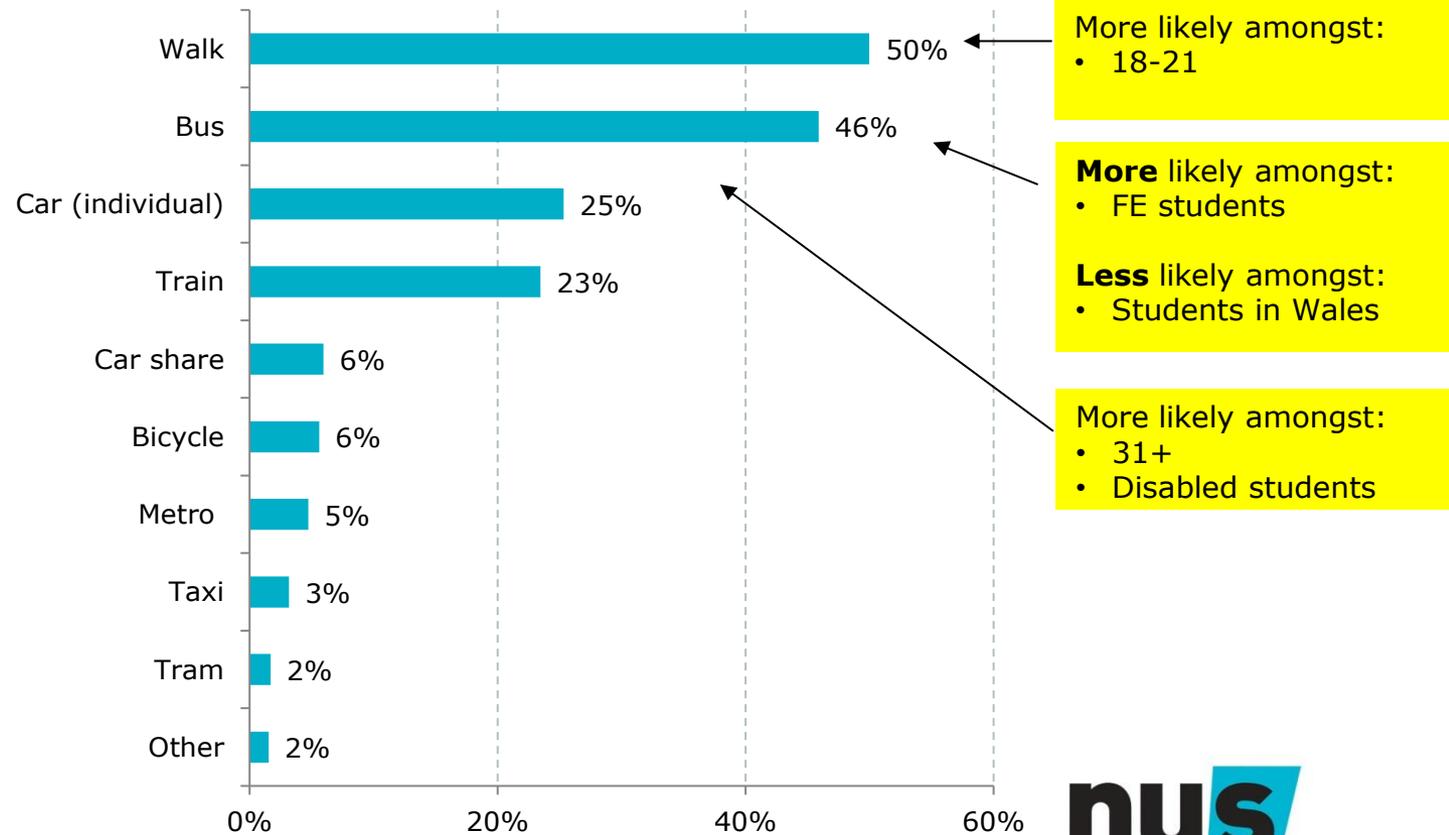
Students most commonly take between 31 minutes and an hour to get to their place of study. Almost two in five take more than two hours a day.

### Length of time travelling to place of study



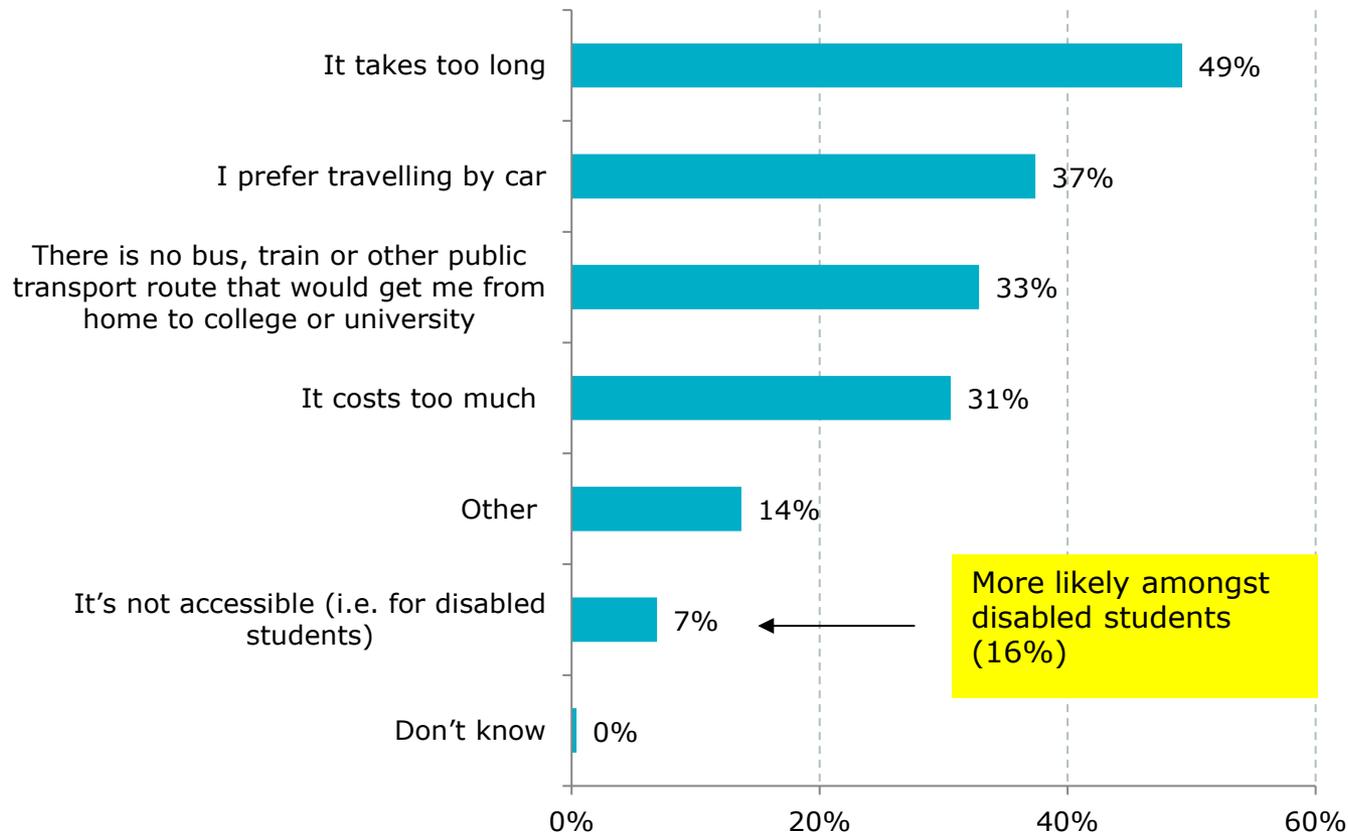
Walking and taking the bus are the most common modes of transport for getting to their place of study. Taking the bus is more likely for FE students but less likely for those students who study in Wales. Disabled students are more likely to use their car

### Mode of transport to place of study



Most students who use a car indicate that public transport takes too long while a third say there are no transport links for them to use, or that it costs too much. 16% of disabled students who take their car to their place of study claim that public transport is not accessible for them

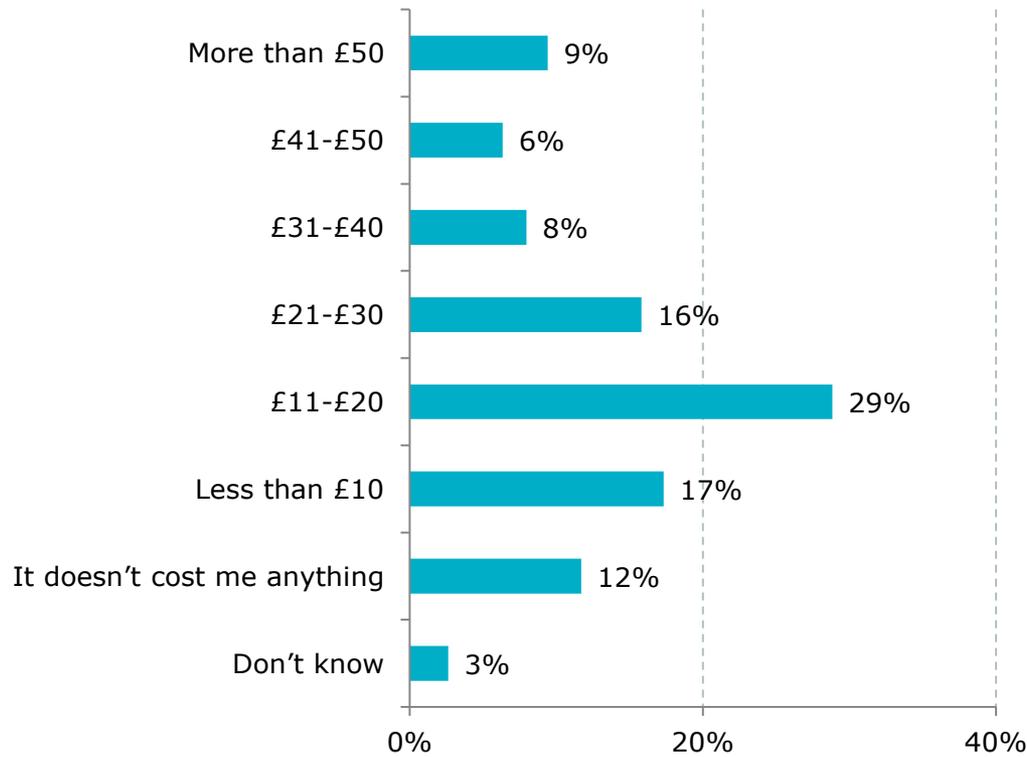
### Use of car or taxi over public transport



# Cost of Travel

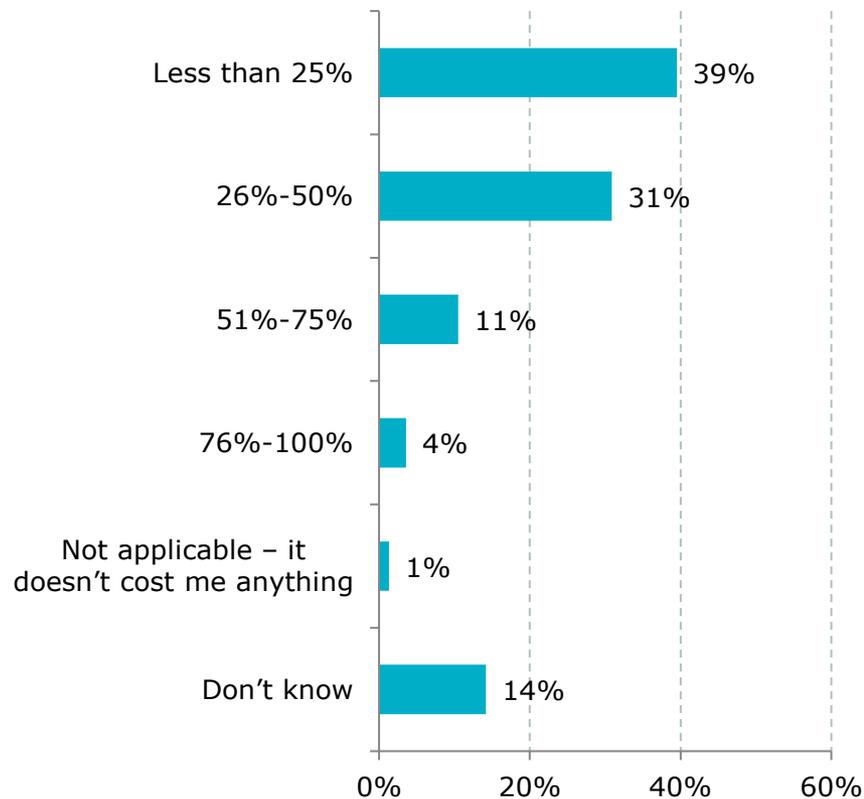
Almost one in 10 students spend more than £50 per week to get to their place of study

### Cost of travel – non walkers



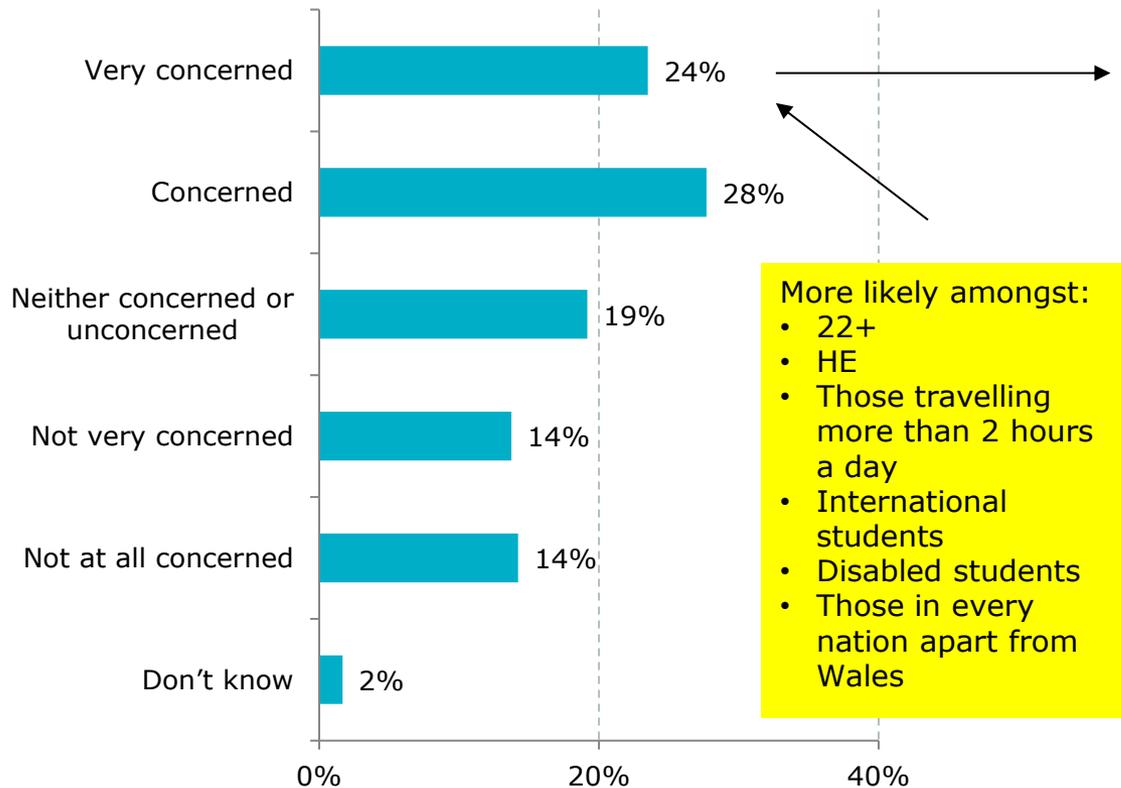
One in five indicate that their spend on travel takes up less than a quarter of their weekly budget, while almost a third say it uses up between a quarter and a half.

### Proportion of weekly budget on cost of travel



Over half are concerned to some extent about the cost of travel. Concerned students indicate the cost of living and the rising costs of travel

### Concern about cost of travel



### Reasons for concern about cost of travel

- Cost of living crisis
- Big expense / large proportion of income
- Rising costs of travel – fuel, tickets

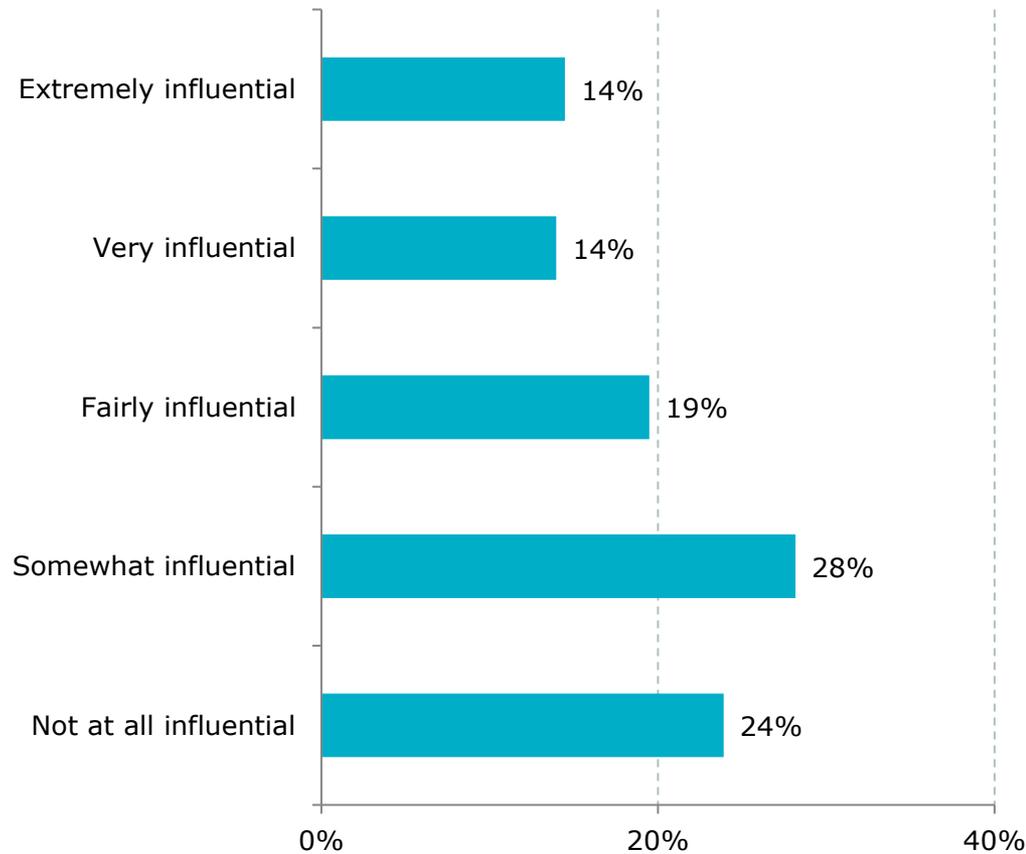
Weighted base: 3742 Respondents.

**C3. How concerned are you personally about the cost of travel to your place of study, work placement or apprenticeship??**

**C4. Why are you concerned about the cost of travel to your place of study, your work placement or apprenticeship?**

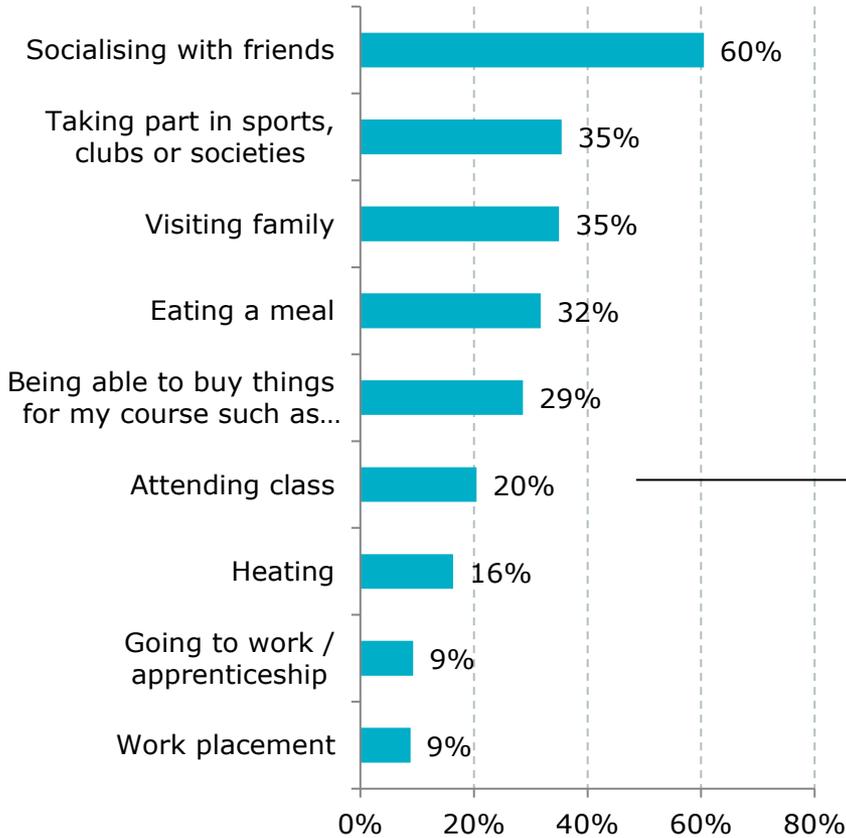
Almost a third of students indicate that the cost of travel was very to extremely influential on where they decided to study.

### Influence of cost of travel on decision of where to study

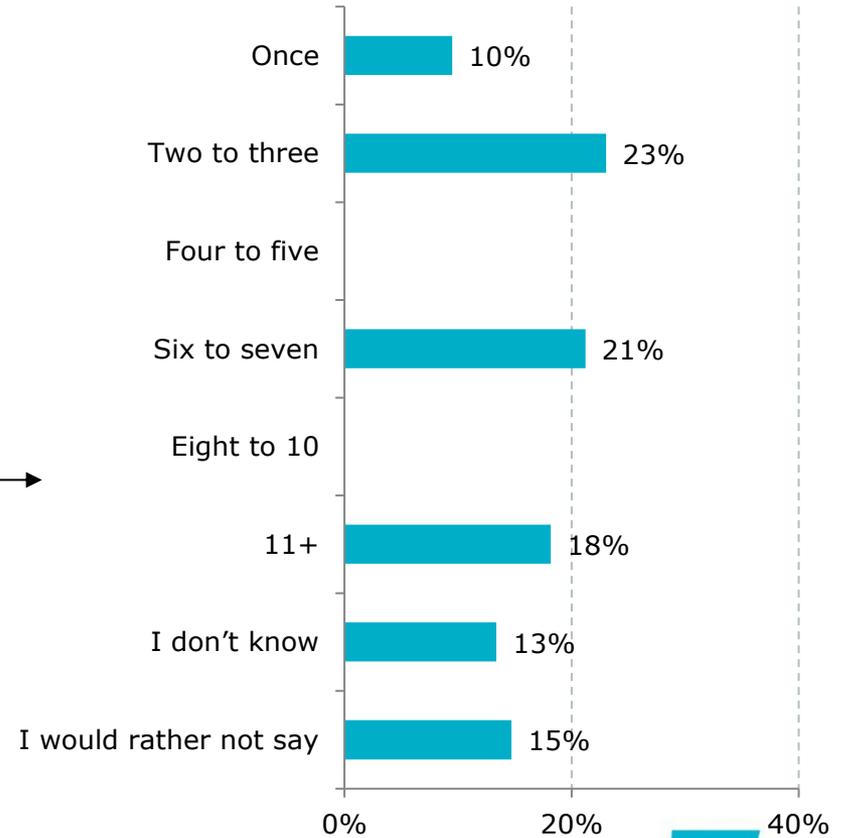


Socialising with friends has taken the biggest hit in terms of prohibitive costs of travel. One in five have missed class.

### Have missed out on because of the cost of travel...



### How many times class has been missed



Weighted base: 848 Respondents. Balance: human error meant question wasn't presented to initial respondents

Weighted base: 176 Respondents. Balance: Those who have not missed class

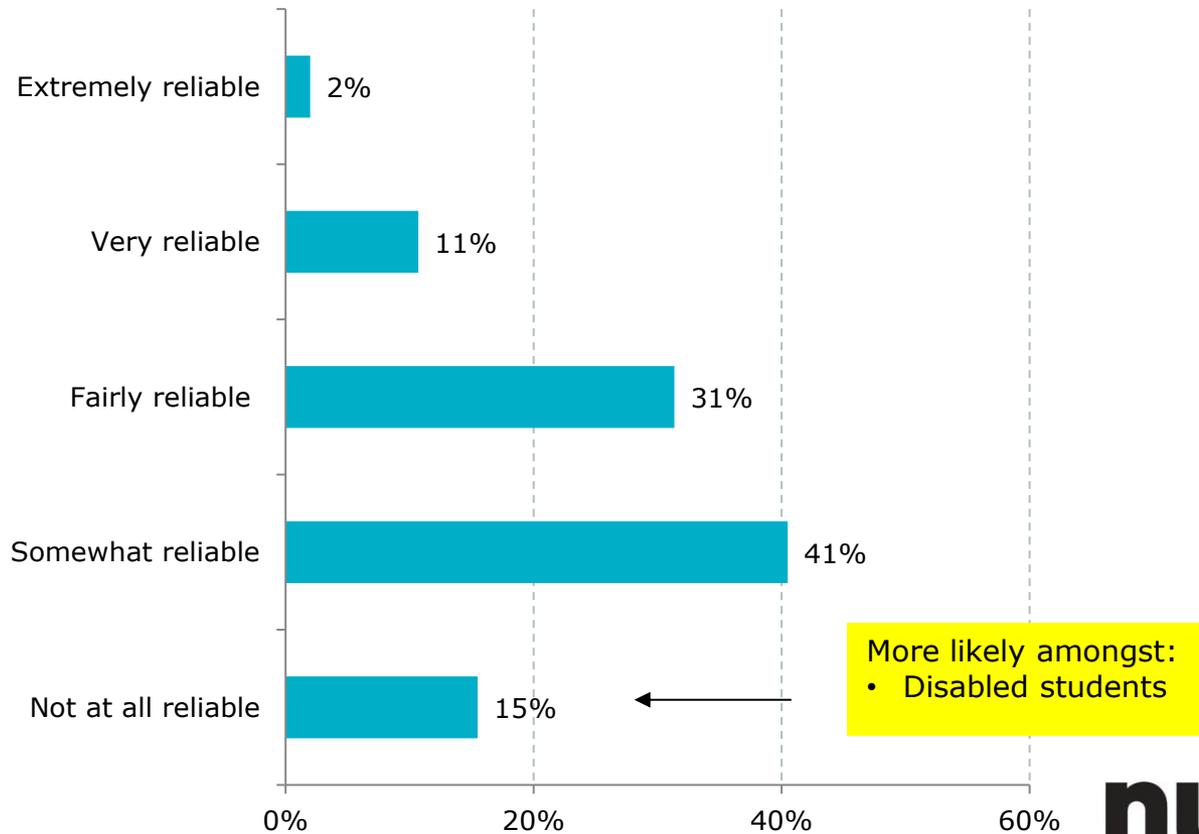
**C6. Which of the following have you missed out on because of the costs of travel?**

**C7. Since the start of your academic year, approximately how many times have you missed class due to the cost of travel?**

# Experiences of travel

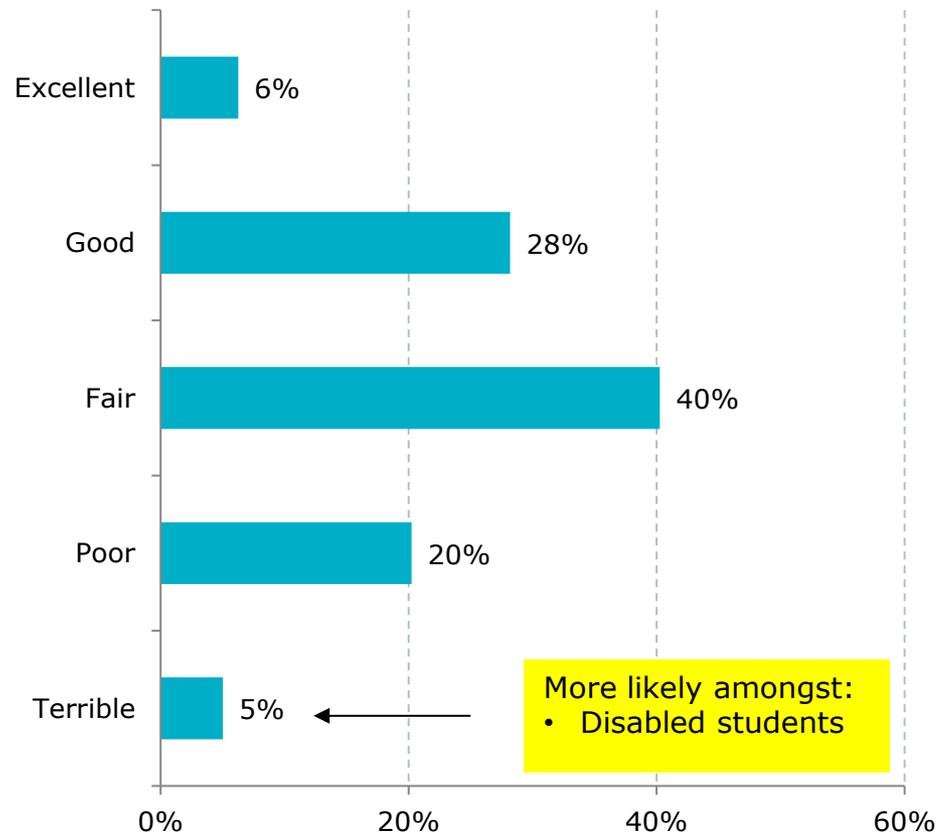
15% of students do not find public transport reliable at all

### Reliability of travel



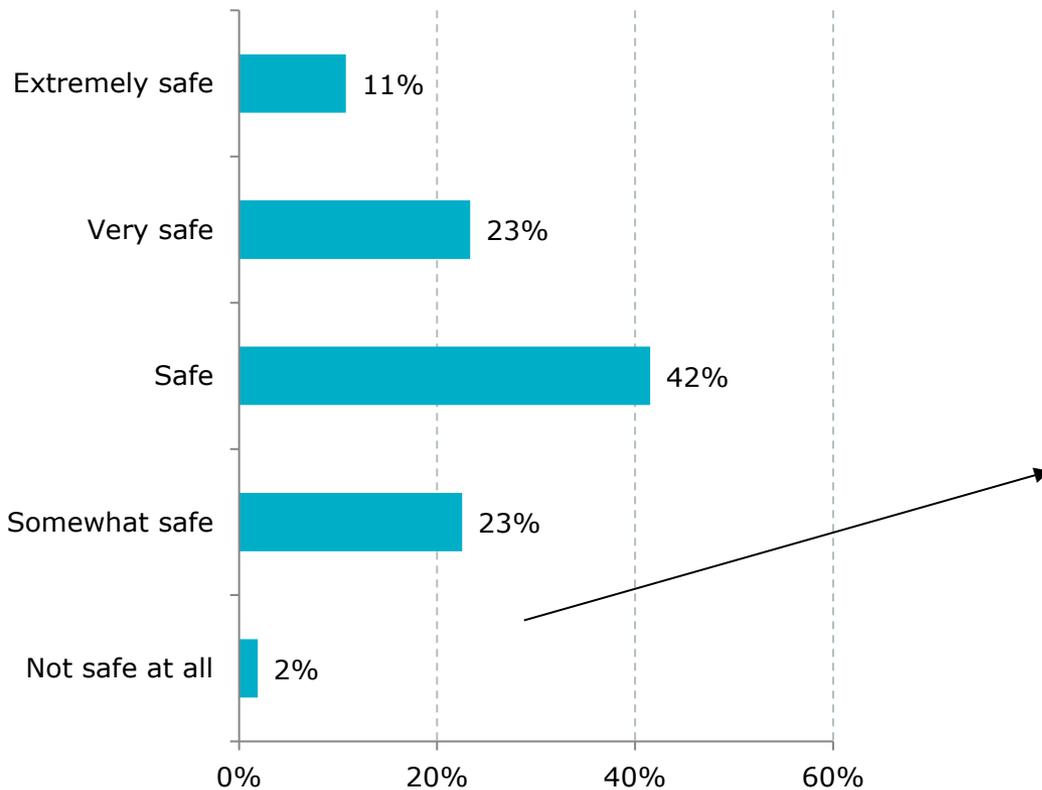
A quarter of students believe the availability of public transport is poor or terrible, particularly disabled students

### Availability of public transport services



A third feel very to extremely safe using public transport. Those who don't feel safe at all indicate their use of public transport at night and being anxious about other people's behaviour

### Safety of travelling to place of study



### Reasons for concern about safety

- Night time travel / dark / don't feel safe travelling at night
- Other people: strangers/ drunk / aggressive behaviour
- Being female / worried about harassment

Weighted base: 2951 Respondents. Balance: Those who don't use public transport

D4. Please tell us more...

D3. Thinking again about how you travel to your place of study, your work placement or your apprenticeship, how safe do you feel

Negative experiences of the cost of travel centre around the unreliability of services, which can have an impact on their daily schedules, such as being late for class. Others indicate the lack of availability of public transport links.

## Negative experiences of the cost of travel

### Key themes:

**Unreliability of public transport**

**Missed class / late for class**

**Availability of public transport and transport links**

**Don't feel safe**

**Needs to be cheaper**

*"The transport can be unreliable and cancelled last minute, leaving me late out of my control."*

*"The problems are availability and cost as the bus only runs twice a day and costs £900+ an academic year making so I have to pay a large sum a year to afford to get to college. I have to meet 2 strict deadlines to get the bus with no backup bus or route for me to take making it difficult if I miss the bus with not being able to get to college or get home."*

*"Buses are cheaper than trains but still very expensive, not at all reliable and often overcrowded. During the day I feel relatively safe on them but if I ever go to see shows at Collage and need to get the bus home late I feel much less safe on the bus - people on it at that time of night are often drunk."*

*"It doesn't feel very safe after a long night shift. The cost is increasing all the time."*

*"The reliability is very bad, as busses are perpetually late or don't show up at all. There is very limited availability of busses to begin with and some periods in the week there is only a bus every 1.5-2 hours. I would love to see better punctuality and more frequent buses."*

**nus**

national union of **students**

D5. Please tell us more about your experience of travelling to your place of study, work placement or apprenticeship. How does the cost, reliability, availability and safety of transport affect your life and education? What changes would you like to see?

# Demographics

## Key demographics and characteristics

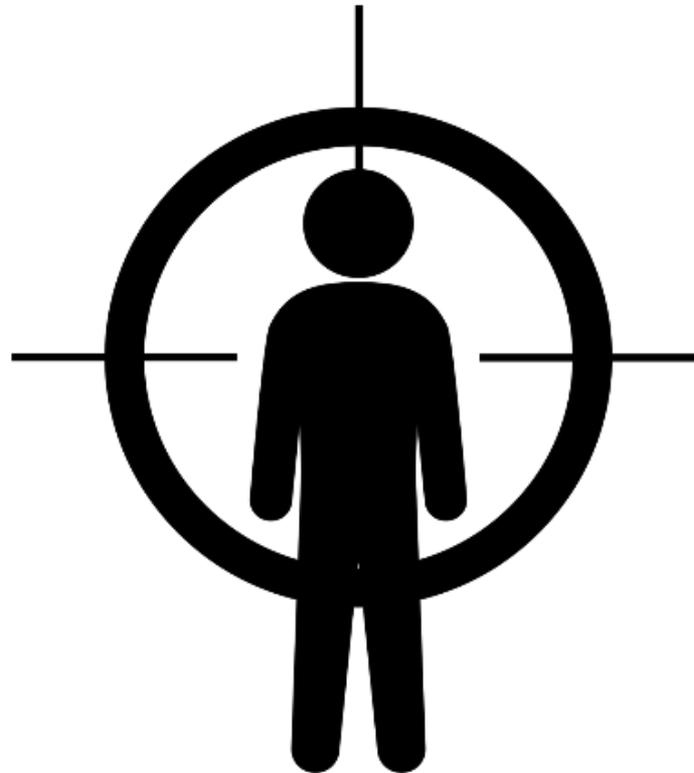
46% of respondents are aged 16-22, 20% aged 23-29 and 35% aged 30+

31% of participants have a disability, impairment or long-term health condition

27% are FE, 66% are HE

83% are full time and 13% are part time

54% of the respondents are women and 39% are men



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