CHECK-INS
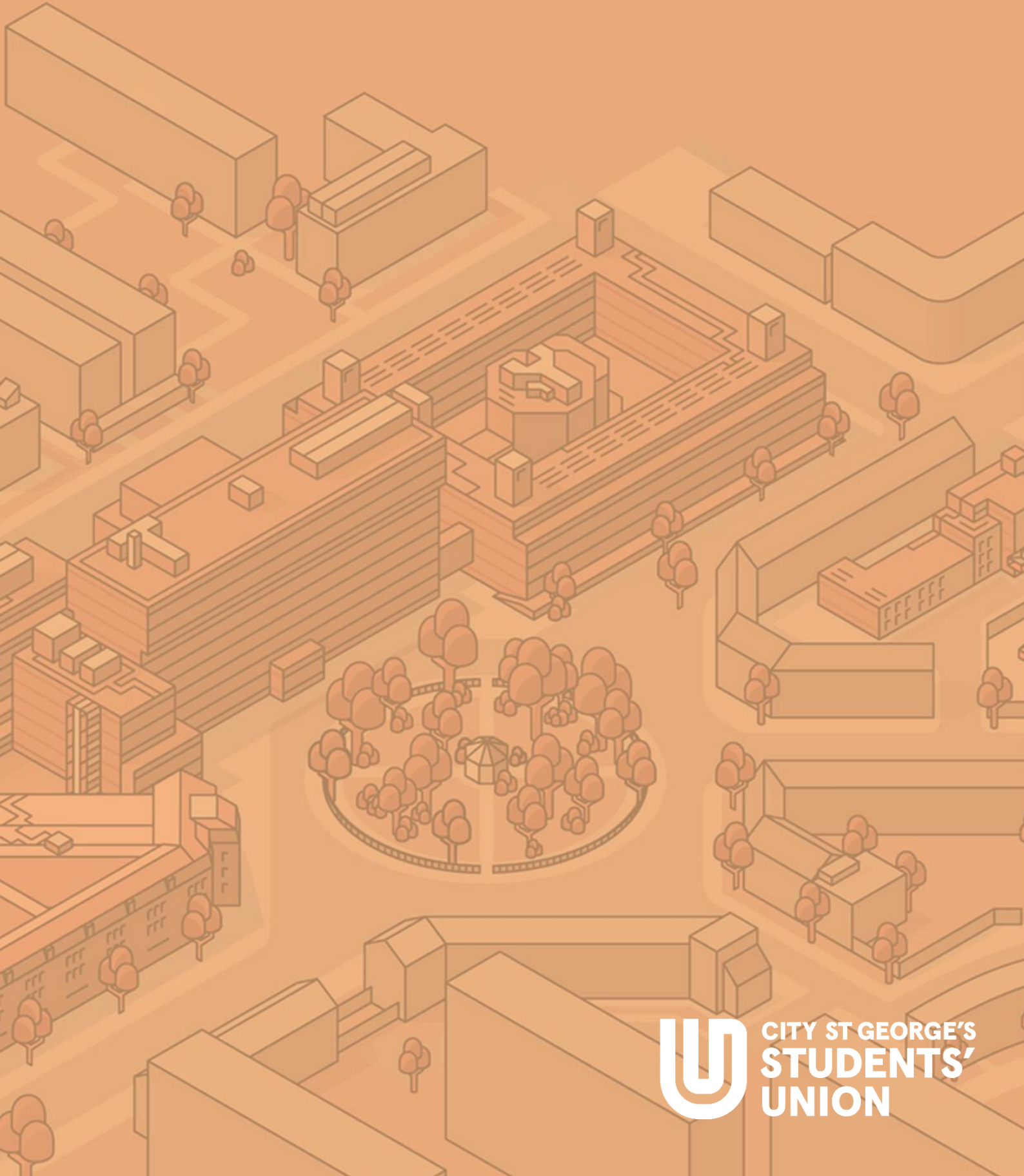
CHECK-INS ⓤ

Check-ins Report Term 1 2024/25

Executive Summary

The student check-ins project is a wellbeing and insight project delivered by City St George's Students' Union that conducts telephone interview calls with new students. The check-ins have been an ongoing termly project since the pandemic year, funded by the university, offering students with support information and gathering insight into the term experience. The calls act as a signposting opportunity to seal potential information gaps to students on the various support and services available to them and operates on a peer-to-peer support system with student callers handling calls.

Our operational strategy for the check-ins project this year geared towards completing calls that follow a shorter script with core questions and signposting information, and had shifted focus towards student's leading the conversation with callers providing more responsive information to queries they may need further support on.

The project was delivered on campus by a team of 29 trained student check-in callers between 4 November to 15 November 2024. Over the 10-day period, **the Union made 9,158 calls to City St George's students and completed 2,311 check-ins in total.** 1 in every 4 calls made were continued on to complete a check-in. Of these completed check-ins calls, 92% of Check-in calls were completed with students from Clerkenwell and Moorgate, and 8% of calls with students from Tooting. The below headlines breakdowns call performance across City St George's sites.

City St George's, University of London

810+ hours of call-time	**9,158** phone numbers dialled	**2,311** students had a check-in call

→ **Clerkenwell/Moorgate**

8,567 phone numbers dialled	**2,120** students had a check-in call	**21%** of first years called

→ **Tooting**

591 phone numbers dialled	**191** students had a check-in call	**36%** of first years called

The check-in calls collected feedback on various aspects of the experience in the middle of term. Conversations were framed around **campus experience, course experience, cost of living, student communications** and **student support.** The full question set can be found in Appendix 1.

2,311 completed check-in calls

Clerkenwell & Moorgate: **21%** of first years called
Tooting: **36%**

Campus experience

84% of Clerkenwell
96% of Tooting

had an overall positive campus experience during term one.

Community

86% of City St George's students felt a part of a community. This was:

86% at Clerkenwell & Moorgate
92% at Tooting

Support

89% of City St George's students felt **supported**

Cost of Living

1 in 2 students are cutting back on spending.

64% were concerned about financially managing.

Course experience

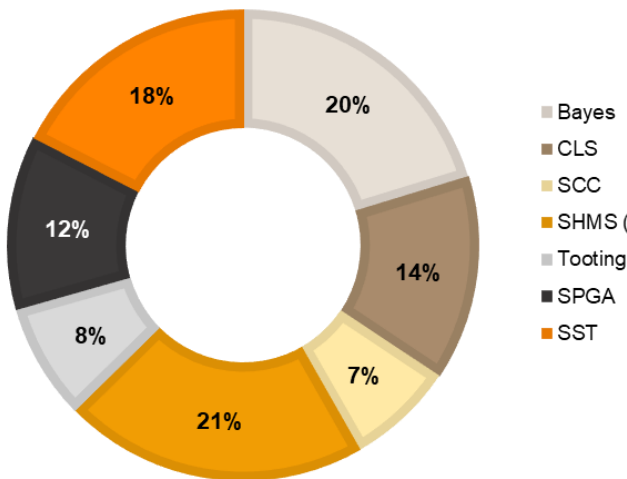**91% + 87%** of City St George's students rated Teaching experience and assessment support as good.
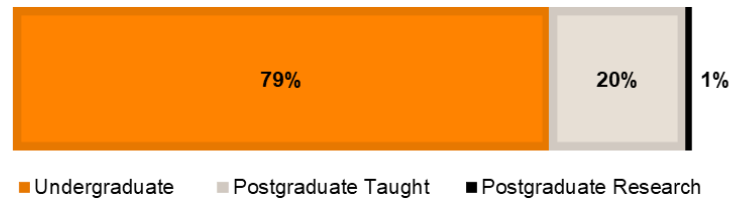
Demographics

The response rate of 2,311 students for this terms' check-ins reflects around 21% of students in their first year of study at City St George's. A demographic breakdown of students who received a check-in call are highlighted below to show the range of students reflected in our check-ins call data. Results of demographic breakdowns (level of study and fee status) do not include Tooting students due to Tooting Student ID numbers not currently being embedded within our reporting systems.

Keeping proportional to sizes of schools, check-in calls were completed with the following school populations: 21% of the check-in calls were completed with the School of Health & Medical Sciences (SHMS) and 8% with Tooting, followed by 20% from Bayes Business School (Bayes), 18% from the School of Science & Technology (SST), 14% from the City Law School (CLS), 12% from the School of Policy & Global Affairs (SPGA), and 7% of the School of Communication & Creativity (SCC).
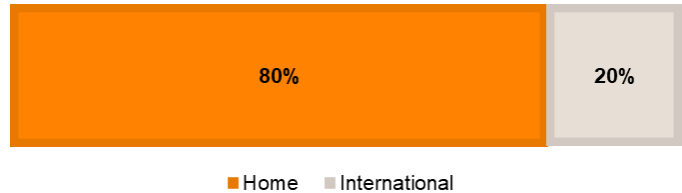
Schools

- Bayes
- CLS
- SCC
- SHMS (not including Tooting)
- Tooting
- SPGA
- SST

Level

■ Undergraduate   ■ Postgraduate Taught   ■ Postgraduate Research

Domicile

■ Home   ■ International

- **Level:** All students who received a check-ins call were registered as being in their first year of study at City St George's. Of these students, 79% of calls were had with undergraduate level students, 20% with students from postgraduate taught programmes and 1% with postgraduate research level students.

- **Domicile:** 80% of students who received a call based on the Clerkenwell/Moorgate campus were home students while 20% were international students.

- **Living arrangements:** The data captured on calls show differences in living statuses among first years based at Clerkenwell/Moorgate and Tooting. Among students called who are studying at Clerkenwell/Moorgate campuses, 65% of students were living with parents or family members, 21% were in rented housing, and 12% are living in student accommodation. Students studying at Tooting were more likely to be living in student accommodation, with 65% of students living with parents or family members, 5% of students renting, and 29% were living in halls.

Analysis

The check-in's call data recorded responses to 18 questions from 2,311 City St George's students. Each call invited feedback on the **campus experience** and sense of **community** in term one, the level of **student support** received, the **course experience**, and students' experiences with the **cost of living**,

This section explores the analysis of the student experience in these following areas, providing insight into trends from different profiles of students.

Campus experience

85% of students agreed to having a 'positive' campus experience at City St George's. 9% responded with 'neutral', 5% responded with a 'mixed' campus experience, and 1% had a 'negative' experience.

	Clerkenwell/Moorgate	Tooting
Positive	**84% (+10pp from 2023)**	**96%**
Neutral	**10%**	**2%**
Mixed	**5%**	**2%**
Negative	**1%**	

Clerkenwell/Moorgate:

Students' response on overall campus experience for term one was generally positive with most of the responses referring to early campus experience as ample opportunity to meet new people and a flow of events happening on campus. Many students cited that the **welcoming and friendly interactions** with academics, staff and peers during Welcome and term one has helped students transition into life at City, as well as references to the **facilities and new spaces** across City St George's campuses available to students, particularly referring to the availability of study spaces.

Experiences that had negative or mixed traction related to **timetabling issues** and student's having **difficulty navigating** around campus. Student's experiences with timetabling entailed a range of issues including back-to-back schedules, oppositely schedules with large gaps in the day, daily classes, or days with a standalone lecture, all of which limits student's use of time and money. The check-in calls consistently recorded that the disparities in timetabling joined with the challenges of commuting into campus can negatively impact the student experience for first year students.

While students mentioned the positive use of CityNav app and campus spaces mostly being accessible after getting used to, there were suggestions for GPS features and using pictures to direct students to different parts of the buildings. Reports of out of use lifts scattered across university were also reported during the check-ins calling period, with students unable to attend classes as a result.

76%

of students are satisfied with the amount of activity on campus. 8% of students felt enough wasn't happening.

	Clerkenwell/Moorgate	Tooting
Enough activity	76%	94%
Not sure	16%	3%
Not enough activity	8%	3%

There was a general sense of activity happening on campus reported by students on both sites. A large majority of this attributed to meeting friends, followed by organised networking activities and meet and greets run by various societies, course departments and the Students' Union. Other comments from student's based in Clerkenwell/Moorgate highlight that students have enjoyed attending activity relating to Careers and networking events.

Based on feedback from students at Clerkenwell/Moorgate, many students who hadn't engaged in activity happening on campus mentioned that having more tailored activity would further add to their campus experience. Students also emphasised the importance of being kept in the loop of the range of activity organised in communications and accommodating time of activity outside of lecture times to their availability. The following areas were recurring feedback for activity suggestions across both sites:

- More **postgraduate** taught and research specific events that cater to students on the same programme/departments and across City St George's. Institutional-wide events like Welcome should also have a focus on postgraduate students as sometimes this may be too undergraduate focused.
- **Networking** opportunities with prospective employers.
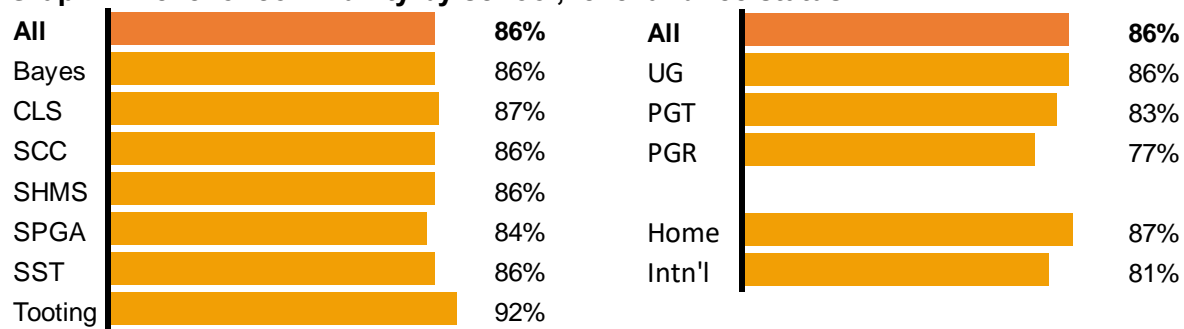- Academic and social **trips**.

Community

86%

of students felt a part of a community at City St George's. This has seen an 8 percentage-point increase since last year. 7% disagreed and 7% were unsure.

	Clerkenwell/Moorgate	Tooting
High community	86% (+8pp from 2023)	92%
Not sure	7%	6%
Low community	7%	2%

Increasingly since last year, the check-ins call with first year students reports more students at City St George's feel a part of a community. As shown in graph 1, there is generally a similar level of community across schools at City St George's, with students from Tooting (92%) reporting higher on feeling a part of a community.

CHECK-INS

Graph 1: Level of community by school, level and fee status

All	**86%**
Bayes	86%
CLS	87%
SCC	86%
SHMS	86%
SPGA	84%
SST	86%
Tooting	92%

All	**86%**
UG	86%
PGT	83%
PGR	77%
Home	87%
Intn'l	81%

Overall, undergraduate students (86%) and postgraduate taught (83%) are more likely to feel a sense of community at City on average than postgraduate research students (77%). Home students (87%) generally felt more a part of a community at City St George's compared to international students (81%).

For more than half of the responses, many students highlighted at the point of the check-ins call, there needs no improvements to strengthening community so far due to it still being early in their studies, general satisfaction with current provisions or low interest or time in this aspect of their student experience.

The sense of community could be amplified by improving the campus experience in the following ways as per collective Clerkenwell/Moorgate student suggestions:
- Coordinating regular **course related events** and socials to meet other people in their cohort.
- Introducing more **sports** events including tournaments and women's only sessions, and more availability for friendly sports sessions.
- Having more inclusive activity for students who are **parents** or have caring responsibilities.
- Faster communications when accessing **support services** or primary contacts for when issues arise.
- Providing more noise-controlled **study spaces** on campus for students to use.
- Offering **postgraduate** focused events and activity with postgraduates in mind.
- Promoting timely and regular **communication** to students on activity happening on campus including from societies.
- Coverage of events in **buildings** that are not main campus such as Bunhill Row building.
- Hosting events at **City Bar**.

Students from Tooting have reported the following ways to boost the sense of community:
- Organised **socials** among year groups and hosting events in the Student Common room.
- Ensuring facilities in the **games room** are up to standard to be used for leisure and break purposes.
- **Advertising** events and activity better with notice of event timings.
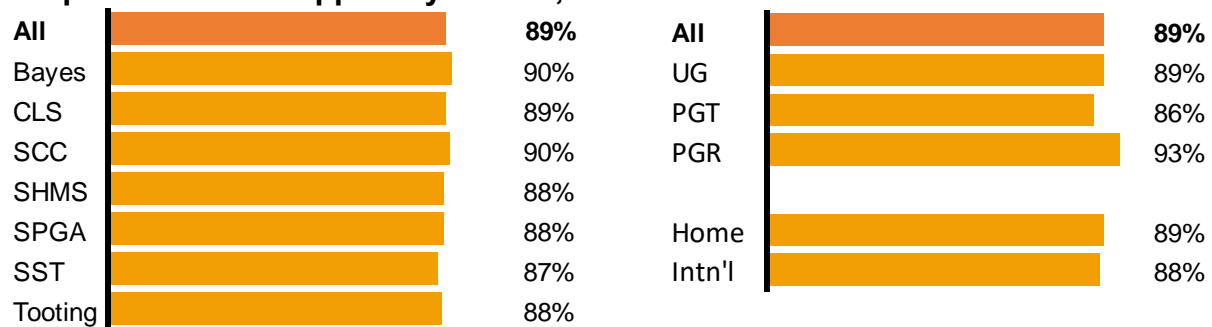- Stronger collaboration with **societies**.

Support

89%

of students have stated they generally feel supported at City St George's. 3% of students did not feel supported and 8% felt neutral about support. Students generally were confident in knowing where to go if they ever needed support.

	Clerkenwell/Moorgate	Tooting
Supported	89% (**+8pp** from 2023)	88%
Neutral	8%	12%
Unsupported	4%	

The amount of first years who feel supported so far at City St George's is higher by 8 percentage-points since last year. Students generally felt similar levels of support across all the schools and fee status as shown in graph 2. Postgraduate research students (93%) generally felt higher levels of support compared to postgraduate taught students (86%).
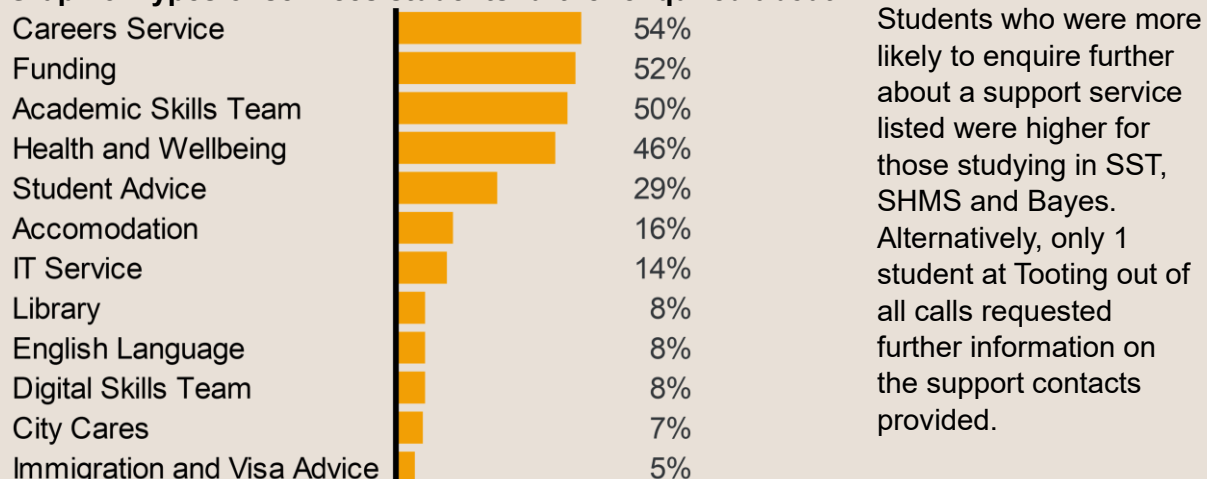
Graph 2: Level of support by school, level and fee status

All	89%
Bayes	90%
CLS	89%
SCC	90%
SHMS	88%
SPGA	88%
SST	87%
Tooting	88%

All	89%
UG	89%
PGT	86%
PGR	93%
Home	89%
Intn'l	88%

Clerkenwell/Moorgate:

Each call embedded signposting information to support services and primary contacts across both sites, mainly the Student Support Hub and the Student Life Centre. At Clerkenwell/ Moorgate, 8% of students that received a check-ins call wanted further information on a service or team, with the majority not requesting information at this point of call. The main departments students enquired about related to **Careers, Funding** and **Academic skills** as shown on graph 3.

Graph 3: Types of services students further enquired about

Careers Service	54%
Funding	52%
Academic Skills Team	50%
Health and Wellbeing	46%
Student Advice	29%
Accomodation	16%
IT Service	14%
Library	8%
English Language	8%
Digital Skills Team	8%
City Cares	7%
Immigration and Visa Advice	5%

Students who were more likely to enquire further about a support service listed were higher for those studying in SST, SHMS and Bayes. Alternatively, only 1 student at Tooting out of all calls requested further information on the support contacts provided.

57% of students have met with their personal tutor this term. 43% have not yet.

	Clerkenwell/Moorgate	Tooting
Have met	56%	75%
Have not met	44%	25%

At the point of the check-in calls during week 6 and 7 of term one, over half of students at Clerkenwell had met with their personal tutors and three-quarters of students at Tooting. Differences in having met personal tutors can be seen at school level, with students from SHMS (76%), Tooting (75%), and CLS (70%) having higher reports of students meeting their personal tutors. This was the lowest for Bayes (34%) and SPGA (35%) at the time of the call with a third of students having met their tutors. For research students (72%), a high number of students called had reported having met their supervisor leads, and postgraduate taught students (63%) were more likely to have met their tutors compared to students on undergraduate level programmes (53%).

Graph 4: Personal tutor attendance by school and level

School	%		Level	%
All	57%		All	57%
Bayes	34%		UG	53%
CLS	70%		PGT	63%
SCC	56%		PGR	72%
SHMS	76%			
SPGA	35%			
SST	59%			
Tooting	75%			
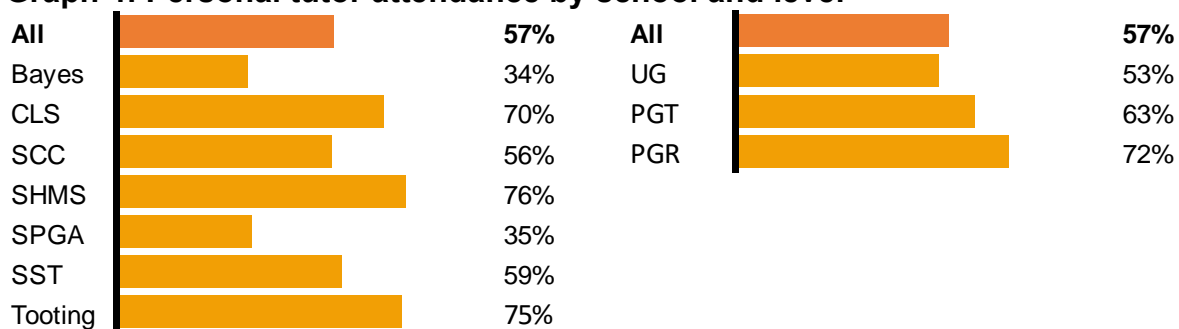
Qualitative comments gathered on the calls highlight that student had met with personal tutors earlier in the term, and most took place online with some being arranged as a group. Students reported that check-ins with their personal tutors have been friendly and informative, and having a staff contact for support has generally been helpful for their orientation.

Clerkenwell/Moorgate:

The data for Clerkenwell/Moorgate calls found that the main reason for a high level of incomplete personal tutor meetings at this point of the check-ins period was due to not knowing who their personal tutor was, scheduled meetings planned towards the end of term one, or in some cases students missing their meetings. Students found finding which personal tutor was assigned to them difficult and some had not been notified of this information by email. Some students mentioned on their calls that they had not met their tutors in-person but have received an email from their tutors instead.

Tooting:

Students in Tooting mentioned on their calls the main reason for not having met their personal tutors or supervisors at the point of the check-ins calls was due to not having booked an appointment yet or not having a response back from tutor.

Course experience

91%
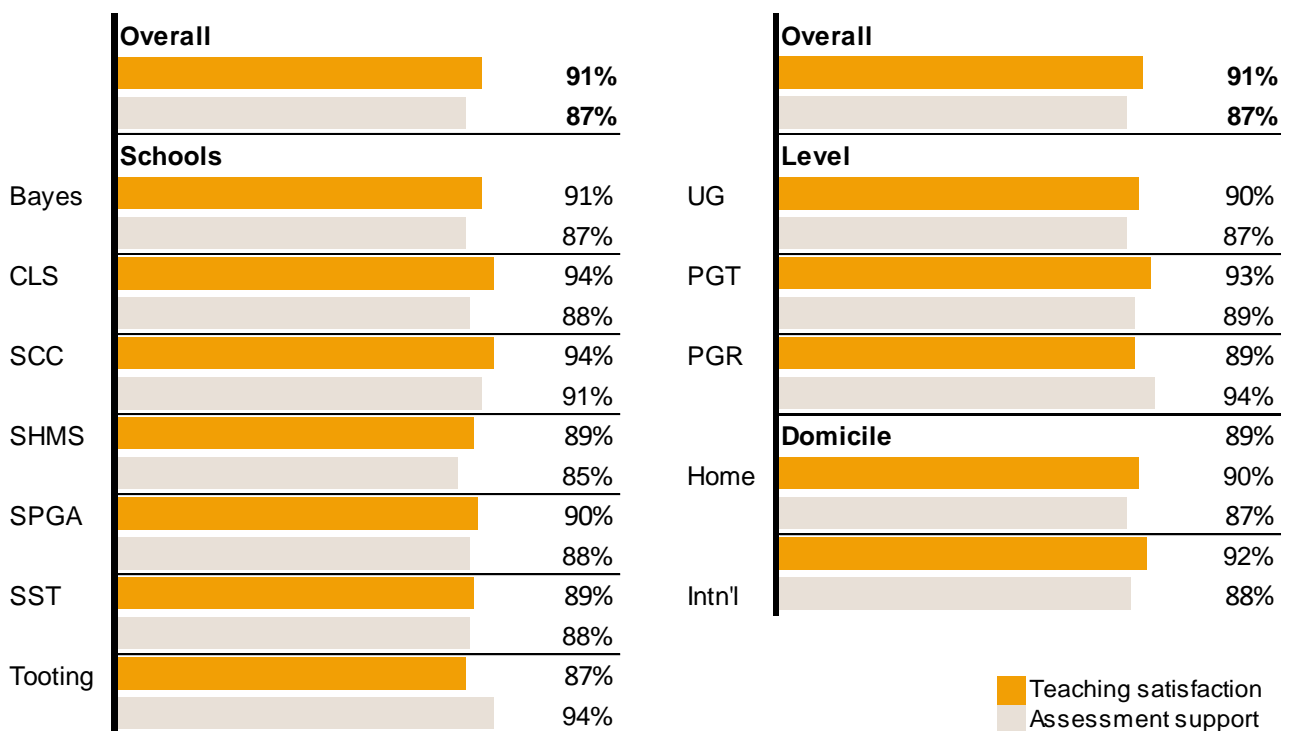of students rated their teaching as 'good' or 'very good'. 8% were neutral. 1% of students rated it as poor.

	Clerkenwell/Moorgate	Tooting
Good	91% (+2pp from 2023)	94%
Neutral	8%	4%
Poor	1%	2%

87%
of students felt supported for their assessments. 4% felt unsupported and 9% responded with neutral.

	Clerkenwell/Moorgate	Tooting
Supported	87%	87%
Neutral	9%	10%
Unsupported	4%	3%

In general, students were more satisfied with the quality of teaching during term one than overall support received for upcoming assessments and exams. Graph 5 shows the differences in both aspects of the course experience.

Graph 5: Teaching and assessment experience by schools, level and fee status

Overall		Overall	
Teaching satisfaction	91%	Teaching satisfaction	91%
Assessment support	87%	Assessment support	87%

Schools

		Level	
Bayes	91%	UG	90%
	87%		87%
CLS	94%	PGT	93%
	88%		89%
SCC	94%	PGR	89%
	91%		94%
SHMS	89%	Domicile	89%
	85%	Home	90%
SPGA	90%		87%
	88%		92%
SST	89%	Intn'l	88%
	88%		
Tooting	87%		
	94%		

■ Teaching satisfaction
□ Assessment support

- Satisfaction with teaching is higher for students from CLS (94%), SCC (94%), students from postgraduate taught courses (93%) and international students (92%) compared to their counterparts.
- Students from Tooting (94%), SCC (91%), CLS (88%), SPGA (88%) and SST (88%), were more likely to be more satisfied with assessment support than the overall average as well as higher satisfaction for postgraduate students (89%) and international students (88%).
- Students who rated their teaching experience and assessment support as poor were more likely to feel generally less supported at City St George's and had lower levels of community. This can suggest that course satisfaction has a direct link with how supported students generally feel at City St George's.

Clerkenwell/Moorgate:

Teaching:
Many conversations highlighted that students are enjoying their classes and that the teaching experience has been positive with reference: to high quality content, well delivered **teaching**, supportive academics, interactive and smaller **seminars** and the availability of helpful resources like **recorded content**. Feedback relating to the combination of online and in-person teaching in the same day was mixed with some appreciating the flexibility and others asking to consider fully online or fully in-person so that the teaching is assigned to a suited space. Modular experiences of less interactive classes were raised with feedback such as lecturers reading off slides or teaching at a fast pace, making it difficult to stay engaged. In parallel to campus feedback, students consistently raised the need for more compacted and balanced **timetables**.

A major concern raised among students were the recent spate of in **class disruptions** from people not studying at City St George's and video content escalating on social media. Students affected by this were dissatisfied with interrupted teaching, as well as issues around **security** of general campus and access to lecture rooms, and the implications on the university's reputation. Additionally, student behaviour issues of talking during class were also discussed in some lecture experiences.

Assessment:
There has been several gleaming feedback on the support students have received from lecturers in providing guidance to assessments, offering office hours and general communication response times. There has similarly been positive feedback on the revision materials where provided for upcoming assessments and exams, although there is a preference for more example **past papers**. Some students have commented on there not being enough information on assessment structure/formats and exam dates that are needed to help students prepare. Where students have received minimal communications on assessment preparation by mid-term, this has affected student's confidence in performing well for those assessments. Several comments have cited that **Moodle** has been helpful for accessing resources and contacting staff if needed.

Students cited their experiences with accessing **reasonable adjustments** and subsequent support plans put in place with the Health and Wellbeing team. However, there were some cases of students studying at Clerkenwell/Moorgate and Tooting facing slow communication and wait times delays in appointments with the Disability and Neurodiversity service in order to get confirmation of adjustments in time for upcoming assessments. This was a major concern for students affected. Some were unaware of how to approach the service and didn't understand evidence requirements needed for extra support.

Tooting:

Teaching:
Students were generally satisfied with teaching and many of the calls noted experiences of students getting on with **self-directed learning**. Engagement during lectures were referenced for some modules, with students agreeing that the **teaching experience** can be negative when lecturers read off slides, long lectures that reach 3 hours without breaks, poor audio and cases of unfriendly lecturers. Feedback on **online lectures** was mixed with some students preferring in-person classes. Tooting students mentioned that some modules are organised and taught better in terms of lecture delivery and timing arrangements of lectures and seminars than for others.
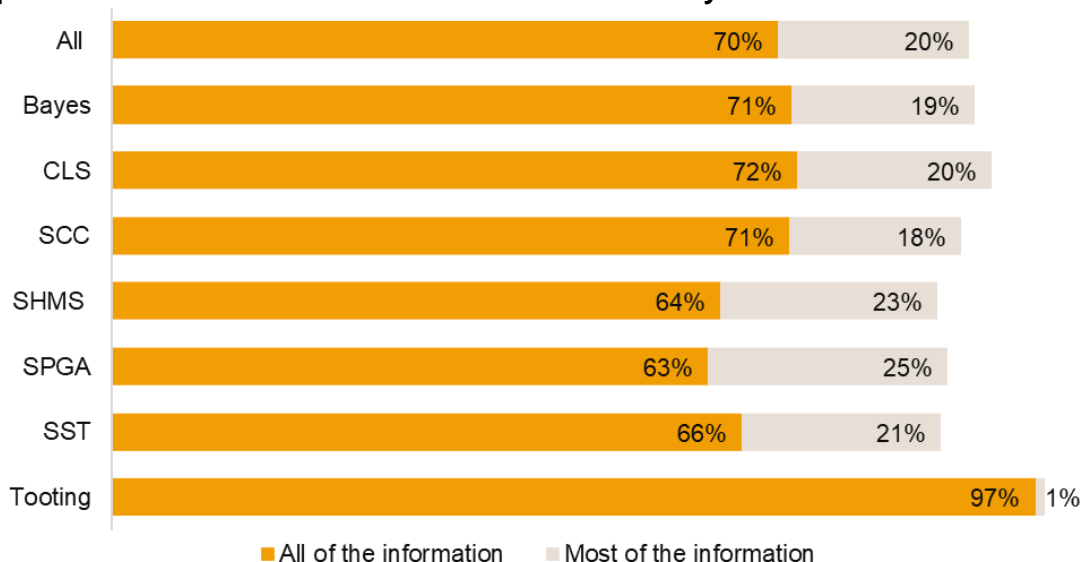
Assessment:
Generally, there was a mix of feedback on assessment support students have received for upcoming exams. Some students raised that they received an assessment brief while other students raised having last minute formative assessments during placement. Students highlighted that additional assessment support should cater towards having more access to **practice questions and** small group revision sessions spread out in the year.

70% of students felt they received all information needed in communications. 20% felt 'most' was provided, and 10% felt there was 'some' communications.

	Clerkenwell/Moorgate	**Tooting**
All of the information	**68% (-9pp from 2023)**	**97%**
Most of the information	**21%**	**1%**
Some of the information	**11%**	**2%**

Compared to last year, fewer students agreed that they have received all information required from their course and school. Graph 6 shows that student satisfaction with communications vary across schools, suggesting that student's experiences with communications has been better than average for students from Tooting (97%), as well as students from the schools CLS (72%), Bayes (71%) and SCC (71%). Students who had responded with receiving 'some information' were higher than average for students from the SHMS (23%) and SPGA (25%).

Graph 6: Level of school and course communication by school

School	All of the information	Most of the information
All	70%	20%
Bayes	71%	19%
CLS	72%	20%
SCC	71%	18%
SHMS	64%	23%
SPGA	63%	25%
SST	66%	21%
Tooting	97%	1%

■ All of the information   ■ Most of the information

Cost of Living

64% of students are cutting back on their spending due the cost of living. 50% of students are concerned with financially managing.

Graph 7: Number of students cutting back and concerned about the cost of living
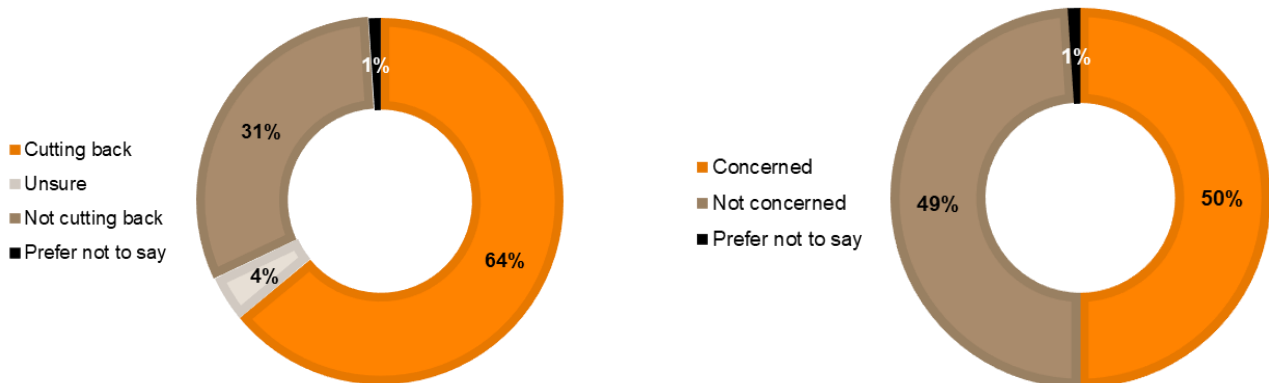

Last year, 60% of responses from check-ins call indicated that students are cutting back on spending, with 46% of students indicating they were concerned about financially managing. This shows there increasingly continues to be cost of living impacts on students. This year, 49% of students stated they are not concerned about financially managing. Students from Tooting are more likely to be cutting down on their spending (67%) and expressed concerns on financially managing (55%) than students from Clerkenwell/Moorgate.

Similar to last year, the main financial pressures for City St George's students were **travel costs**, with 75% of students called sharing that the costs to commute into university is the most leading financial strain. Our callers noted in their call feedback that travel costs were one of the main concerns generally flagged on calls and referenced student frustrations with the online TfL website disruptions. Student feedback highlighted that the impact of increasing travel costs has meant students choosing transport options like buses that may take longer to commute or selecting which days they can afford to come to campus. Other sources of financial pressures included **food prices** in supermarkets, with students citing expensive and unhealthy food options on campus and affordable options often running out. For both campus sites, feedback for healthier food was raised including having fruits available. Comments on the calls also highlighted that **rent** prices are worrying students, with current accommodation students beginning to think about their second year living choices.

The below graphs show student's reported primary financial pressures. Based on feedback from Clerkenwell/Moorgate based students, other expenses include childcare costs, reducing work hours due to study restraints, course material costs and socialising. Students based in Tooting highlighted financial worries on paying off tuition fee loans as well as rent and mortgages costs.

Graph 8: Leading strain on student's finances

Clerkenwell/Moorgate

Travel	75%
Food	25%
Rent	18%

Tooting:

Travel	72%
Rent	18%
Food	14%
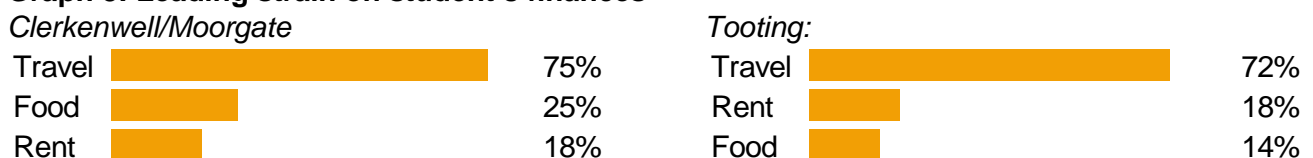
Appendix 1

Check-in calls question set

Campus Experience

1. Where are you currently living?
2. Which school are you a part of?
3. How the general experience on campus been so far since you started at City?
4. Would you like any further information on any of the services I mentioned?
5. Do you think there is enough non-teaching activity happening on campus?
   a. What has been good about activity happening on campus? *or*
   b. What activity would you like to see more of?

Community

6. Would you say you feel part of a community at City St George's this year?
7. What can be improved to help you feel more a part of a community at City?

Course experience

8. How are you finding the teaching experience at City?
9. How supported do you feel for upcoming assessments and exams?
10. If there was one thing City St George's University could do to improve your course so it meets your expectations, what would it be?
11. Generally, how has the level of communication you have received from your School and course been, on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being none of the information and 5 being all the information?

Cost of Living

12. If you don't mind me asking, are you cutting back on your spending because of the cost of living?
13. How concerned are you about your ability to manage financially at present?
14. What might be causing the most strain on your finances?

Support

15. Have you met with your personal tutor yet?
16. Generally, how supported would you say you feel at City St George's?
17. Before I go, is there any further questions or feedback that you have?