

Appendix F Student Union consultation



UWE Students' Union: Student Response to the New Campus Consultation

Throughout the month of October UWESU have run an online survey and held events on St Matthias, Glenside and Bower Ashton campuses and in order to get student feedback on the New Campus. This round of consultation has been the main opportunity for students to get involved and share their views as previous consultation had taken place in the summer. In addition to the student focused events we also considered the new campus developments as an organisation and our requirements in the development.

Student Response

The Students' Union hosted an online survey which received 1005 responses. The survey was designed to be quick and easy to fill-in and help students engage with the consultation process. Question 1: *Please list the following in order of what you think should be the most important for the new campus. 10 is most important and 1 is least important.*

The results from this question show that the majority of students want better learning spaces and facilities for their courses with 49.69% of students placing "More specialised areas and facilities for your course" in their top 3. There was also strong support for green spaces to be incorporated and for the new campus to be environmentally friendly. Another top priority is a new Students' Union building, which had over a third of respondents place it in their top 3.

Aspect	Average Score	Rank	% of responses ranked 10	% ranked 8-10
Improved learning spaces which inspire you to learn	6.71	1	23.19	48.99
More specialised areas and facilities for your course	6.68	2	18.27	49.69
A new Student Union building including new bars, clubs and social spaces.	5.58	5	11.95	33.43
Increased sporting facilities including a swimming pool	5.56	6	10.24	31.12
A centralised "heart" of the campus where the main buildings are focused	5.12	7	6.02	21.48
Making student facing services such as Student Services more visible and accessible to students	4.94	8	2.51	18.27
A bigger range of accommodation on campus i.e. postgraduate housing, an eco village and accommodation for those with families.	4.66	9	5.42	19.57
Environmentally friendly buildings and renewable energy sources to power the campus	5.72	3	11.65	30.73
A new Centre for Performing Arts that can host theatre productions, classical concerts and other performances	4.50	10	5.92	18.87
A green "park" space for socialising and informal sport	5.60	4	5.32	28.11

Question 2: *Are there any other new/improved buildings or services you think should be included in the new campus?*

The majority of students expressed strong concerns around the future of car parking and access to Frenchay. The current provision is already felt to be insufficient and unable to cope with demand and many students feel that traffic management must be improved as quickly as possible. In addition it was also felt that pedestrian and cycling paths and facilities needed to be extended and improved to encourage more people to use these methods to travel. Many students also felt that attention needed to be paid to creating a community feeling on Frenchay campus. There were also suggestions for increased IT facilities, an expanded library, extended medical facilities (eg to have an on-site dentist), expanded prayer facilities, increased retail and coffee shops, allotments and wildlife/conservation areas.

Question 3: Do you think the expansion of Frenchay campus is a positive move by the University?

From the responses to this survey just over 70% thought that the move was a positive one by the University, suggesting that there is strong student support for the expansion. 19.3% thought it was a negative step and 10.5% were unsure at this time. Although the survey did not ask respondents what campus they studied on, it was clear from analysing the results that the majority of respondents who responded positively were Frenchay based and were keen to see improved facilities and were very supportive of the University investing in the future of the campus. There were also positive comments around uniting the University and increasing the diversity of the students here at Frenchay. Some example comments follow;

"Yes, it shows great ambition from the University to promote what is an excellent place to study within the academic world."

"Yes, it is a great opportunity to improve facilities and make the university more appealing to potential student"

"Yes, I think centralising the university campuses will enhance the 'university' atmosphere, be more inclusive and equally distribute facilities between the different faculties. It should also be able to support / encourage cross working between different schools / faculties"

From the negative comments it was clear the many of the students who responded negatively were based at St Matthias, Glenside and Bower Ashton and think that the closing of these campuses is a negative move and their campus was one of the things that attracted them to studying at UWE. Many of these students feel that Frenchay is already too big and impersonal and has no sense of community.

"No. I think that by losing St Matts (and Glenside) you are losing a very valuable and important part of UWE. Students like the old quirky feel of St Matts and when compared to the likes of Frenchay there is not a single person I know who would like to swap for the gray, depressing and uninspiring look and atmosphere of Frenchay. Especially with creative arts an inspiring atmosphere is needed, and I think that there is a great feel of fear in that places such as St Matts and Glenside could be lost in the move to what could potentially become another Frenchay or probably just another boring, average and uninspiring uni campus. Also the fact that St Matts, especially, is small really helps people to move in and to create a feeling of security and home."

"I don't think it is, the course I'm doing on Glenside is a lovely location, and it very quiet so moving everyone in one wouldn't appeal to me"

"Although I recognise that it will be cheaper for the university in the long run, I believe that the campuses of St Matthias, Glenmore, and Bower Ashton, are all perfect for the courses they teach. All give the atmosphere of the subject that they teach which cannot be replicated in the expansion of Frenchay, which lacks character and inspiration, and will also mean the loss of the community feel that is present on the smaller campuses."

Campus Events

St Matts- there is a strong feeling from St Matts students that their eminent move to Frenchay campus is a negative step, echoing the survey results. The students there have a strong attachment to the campus, particularly the old buildings and the strong community spirit. The only positive aspect they see to their move would be improved facilities for Drama students such

as a performance venue incorporating a full equipped theatre, rehearsal rooms and dressing rooms. However many students



are disappointed that these facilities are not in place before their move to Frenchay and feel their student experience will be compromised.

Many of the students were keen to see the things they loved about St Matts incorporated into the new campus such as green spaces, a building to be named “St Matts” and the strong community feel.

Glenside- as with St Matts, many Glenside students are strongly attached to their campus because of the buildings and community. In a similar fashion to Drama students, many were excited about the possibility of improved facilities such as an MRI scanner and other specialist equipment. Many raised the issue of accommodation for placement students and felt it was imperative that these students were not housed with non-placement students due to the shift patterns they work and possible disruption due to noise etc. There were positive comments around the opportunity to meet more people from different courses and the reduction in complications from being a split-campus university.

Bower- on the whole Bower Ashton students were quite disengaged with the process and due to the long timescale they didn't feel it would be relevant for them to comment now so far ahead of any move. However they did appreciate the consultation event being held there and want to be involved in the future planning.

Student Union Response

While we appreciate that planning for individual buildings has yet to take place and the overall design is still at a concept stage we feel that it is important as an organisation to put forward our initial thoughts on how we and our membership could best benefit from the redevelopment. Firstly as a Students' Union we do not require to be in a single location. The student facing services of the Students' Union such as reception and the print shop, the officers, student representation, clubs and societies, student media, the Advice Centre centre and the Jobshop would all prefer to be centrally located, around the Academic street/Heart building at street level as a single entity. Our retail services and bars could be located in different locations where they are best suited for students and the University. The Students' Union are keen to retain our trading services and to see these expand. If a Performance Space is realised then the Students' Union would strongly support this space to be multifunctional and to be bookable by the Union and others for events.

UWE Student's Union

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