

Session Title:	Home or Halls? Understanding the factors shaping students' decisions
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Speaker/Institution Bio/Information:	Paul is Sales Director at The Student Room, where he has worked for 11 years.
Overview/Aim of session:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why they decided to do the research - Home v Halls insights - Cost of living - Questions, comments and feedback
Workshop Content	<p>There is a bad press when it comes to the cost of living at university, which often comes from the Daily Mail.</p> <p>It's important to remember that Daily Mail readers children go to university!</p> <p>The research:</p> <p>Aim: explore the decision to stay at home or move away for university, and the reasons for this choice.</p> <p>Survey: 993 prospective undergraduate students (aged 16+) completed the survey</p> <p>Results:</p> <p>A quarter of the students were planning to stay at home.</p> <p>The data therefore shows a skew towards moving away for university.</p> <p>Which students are choosing to stay at home?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● First in their family to go to university. ● Students in London or the North East are more likely to stay at home ● Free school meal students

- Students that live in a city
- Students interested in clinical subjects

Which students are deciding to move away?

- Students whose parents/ carers went to university.
- Students in the South West and South East.
- Students who live in more rural areas.
- Students interested in the Arts and Humanities.

Reasons for staying at home:

- To save money
- Support networks
- Good university nearby
- Keep existing commitments

Reasons to move away:

- Gain independence
- Experience new things
- Meet new people
- 'Better' universities further away
- Not practical or too expensive to commute

Students are worried about shortages of student accommodation, and this influences their university decision making.

Student Ambassadors:

The lived experience of Student Ambassadors is invaluable.

Prospective commuting students want to hear about other students' experiences.

They also want practical information for example the cost of parking and spaces available on campus.

Cost of Living:

- Students are more concerned about the cost of living at university than tuition fees.
- Students are worried about the financial impact of university on their parents / family.
- In turn, parents are worried about funding their children's studies.
- Students need support when it comes to personal budgeting and preparing for university.

What can we do to support students?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Personalise cost of living information.
<p>Case Studies/Examples:</p>	<p>The Student Room have a lively student accommodation forum, where more and more conversations about moving away, staying at home and accommodation options are happening.</p>
<p>Scenarios/Roundtable discussions:</p>	<p>How important is the social side of university:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Everyone was surprised that the social side of university wasn't a more important factor in students' decision making. ● The question 'what does 'social' look like?' came up. This is something that everyone felt is changing in society. For example, students might see gaming with their friends as social.
<p>Questions and Answers:</p>	<p>Who in the room moved away from home for university and why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The cost of student accommodation was much more affordable 10-12 years ago. ● Staying at home for university wasn't an option people considered when I went to university. <p>Who in the room stayed at home for university and why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The role of the press- after tuition fees rose to £9000, lots of students chose to stay at home. ● Being a mature student with family responsibilities. <p>Why do you think students decide to stay at home for university?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cost ● The length of the course and the associated cost ● Care responsibilities ● Cultural reasons ● Course is available at a local university ● Type of course <p>Why do you think students move away from home for University?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Experience ● Independence ● Course isn't offered at local university <p>How are you supporting students with budgeting / cost of living?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Free parking on campus

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timetables organised so students on intense programmes can work part-time. • More Student Ambassador job opportunities available on campus. <p>What data are you most surprised by?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surprised that a student's choice regarding staying at home / moving away isn't binary.
<p>Summary Key takeaways:</p>	<p>Surprisingly, those planning to move away were more likely to say their decision was made out of necessity.</p> <p>The decision to move away / stay at home is often planned!</p> <p>Students are making these decisions early i.e. in Y12, before submitting their UCAS application.</p> <p>BUT the choice isn't binary, students reported actively considering the alternative option.</p> <p>If money and personal circumstances were no object, around half of respondents planning to stay at home would have made the same decision.</p>