

Office for
Students



Information, advice and guidance

Providing clear information for students

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HELOA National Conference

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@DiscoverUniUK

We will cover

- OfS approach to student information, advice and guidance
 - IAG Strategy
 - Discover Uni
 - The new, authoritative source of information for students
 - What it covers and plans for further development
 - Information from universities and colleges
 - Improving the consistency, accessibility and clarity of information for students



Who we are

- The independent regulator for higher education in England
- We aim to ensure that every student, whatever their background, has a fulfilling experience of higher education that enriches their lives and careers
- Our work covers all students:
 - undergraduate or postgraduate
 - young or mature
 - full-time or part-time
 - studying on a campus or by distance learning
 - regardless of nationality.



Our objectives

Every student, whatever their background, has a fulfilling experience of higher education that enriches their lives and careers.

Participation

Objective 1

All students, from all backgrounds, with the ability and desire to undertake higher education, are supported to access, succeed in, and progress from higher education.

Experience

Objective 2

All students, from all backgrounds, receive a high quality academic experience, and their interests are protected while they study or in the event of provider, campus or course closure.

Outcomes

Objective 3

All students, from all backgrounds, are able to progress into employment, further study, and fulfilling lives, and their qualifications hold their value over time.

Value for money

Objective 4

All students, from all backgrounds, receive value for money.



What we do

- Our functions, powers and duties are set out by the Higher Education and Research Act 2017. Our regulatory framework explains how we will perform these duties.
- We regulate registered English higher education providers. We do this by:
 - creating and maintaining a register of higher education providers who must meet a range of conditions
 - working to ensure that students and prospective students have access to high quality information, advice and guidance
 - providing pressure and support to providers to improve equality of opportunity
 - promoting excellence and innovation in teaching
 - working with providers and employers to address skills gaps and make graduates more employable.



Why this matters

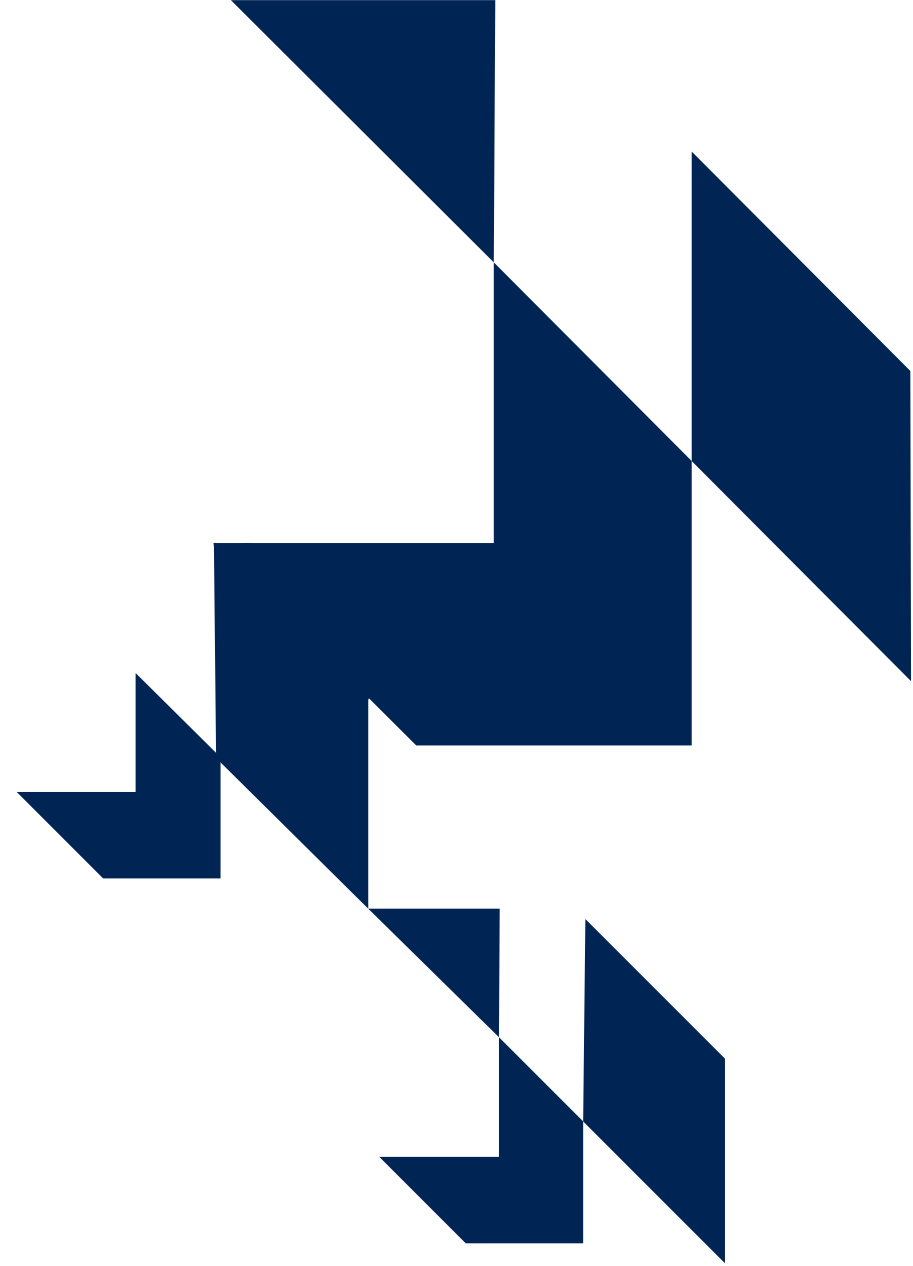
- Our work is important for all students. We want to ensure that all students, from all backgrounds, can:
 - access courses that meet their needs and aspirations
 - enjoy courses which stretch and inspire them, and lead to positive outcomes
 - leave courses equipped with the knowledge, qualifications, skills and attributes they need to find employment, embark on further study or to set up their own business
 - flourish in the world as it is today and might be tomorrow.

Our Approach

OfS's approach to regulation puts informed student choice and institutional autonomy at its heart.

It sees the dynamic of providers responding to informed student choice as the best mechanism for driving quality and improvement, creating the conditions for informed choice, competition.

It will publish student outcomes and current and future employer needs as a way of informing student choice. It will incentivise focus on student outcomes, and support mechanisms that allow student transfer





Aims of Student IAG Strategy

Aim 1

Identify gaps and opportunities for adding value to the current information available to students

Aim 2

Ensure that provider websites provide accurate, high quality, accessible information that matters to students

Aim 3

Create and maintain a partnership approach to the delivery of IAG, working with those providing information and advice to students to improve their impact

Aim 4

Secure effective information, advice and guidance for all students in relation to career choices

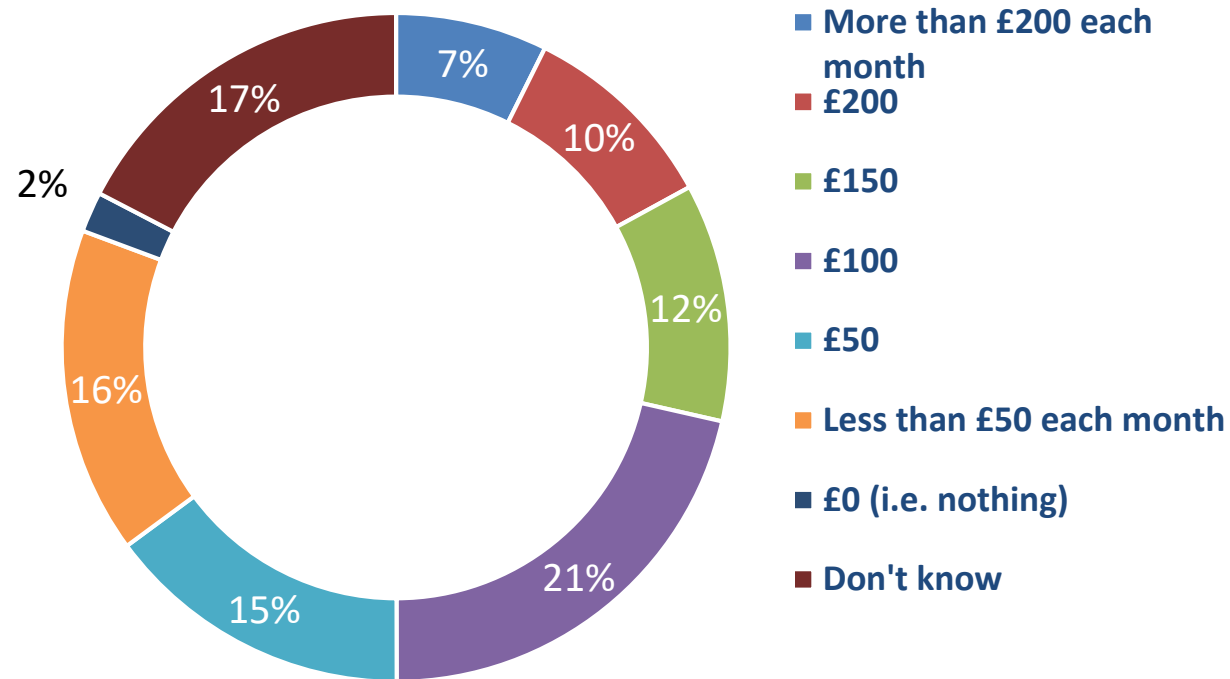


Common misconceptions

- New polling by YouGov
- Around three quarters of parents said that they felt confident in supporting their children to make decisions about university
- Common misconceptions about key questions facing prospective students include
 - student loans
 - satisfaction scores
 - where students study.

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 8851 adults, of 1038 were parents of children between the ages of 11 - 18. Fieldwork was undertaken between 21st - 27th August 2019. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).

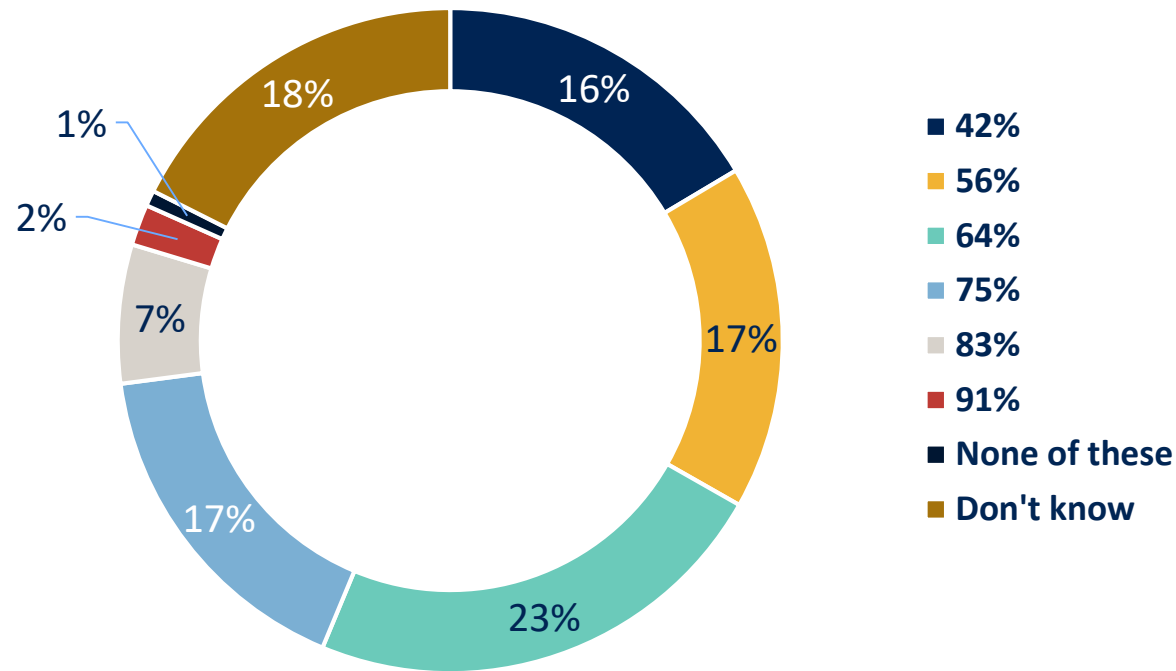
If a graduate earnt £30,000, how much of a £50k loan would they repay from their salary per month?



- 82 per cent of all responding parents overestimated, or did not know, what a graduate on a salary of £30,000 would repay on a weekly basis. The correct figure is £32.06 per month but 29% of all respondents said it was over £150



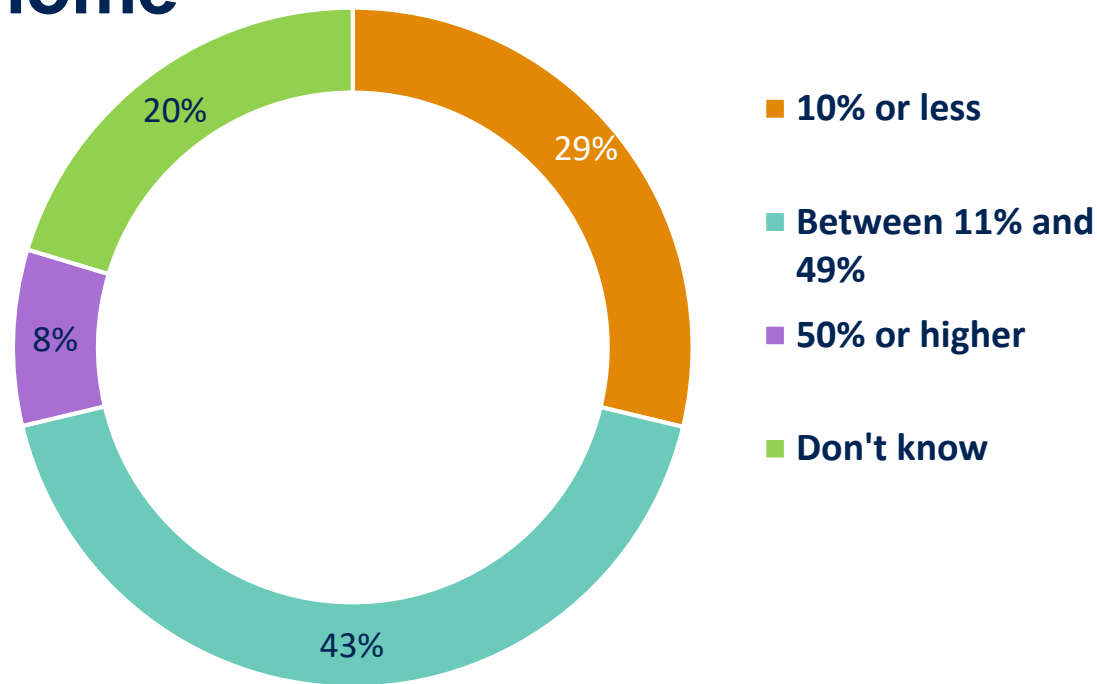
What proportion of students do you think said they were satisfied or very satisfied with their university course



- Most underestimated how satisfied students are with their courses – only 7 per cent of parents correctly identified that 83% of students who responded to the National Student Survey in 2018 were satisfied with their course in 2018. A third of parents thought it was 56% or less



Approximately, which of the following percentages do you think comes closest to the proportion of students that study at a university in their local area of the UK, whilst continuing to live at home



- More than a quarter of respondents thought that the proportion of students who live at home whilst studying at university was 10 per cent or less. In fact, majority of young people (55.8% in 2014/15) stay local, attending a university less than about 55 miles away from their home address.



DiscoverWhat
DiscoverWhere
DiscoverHow
DiscoverTheir Potential





Discover Uni

- Is authoritative, impartial and trustworthy
- Connects or signposts to help navigate the information landscape
- Dispels myths and misunderstandings
- Presents data responsibly in a way that is meaningful to students
- Supports students at different starting points
- Is inclusive – reflects the diversity of the HE sector and the student body across the UK



Our users UK WIDE



PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS



**YOUNG
AGE**
16 - 20

**MATURE
AGE**
21 PLUS

BOTH GROUPS INCLUDE

FIRST IN FAMILY
To go to University

PARENTS and CARERS

WELSH SPEAKERS

**CARE LEAVERS and ESTRANGED
STUDENTS**
No family support, Financial problems

WIDENING PARTICIPATION
Ethnicity, Disabilities, POLAR (Postcode
classification)

INFLUENCERS



PARENTS

Little knowledge of higher education
Outdated knowledge of higher education
Specific ideas of what they want their
children to do

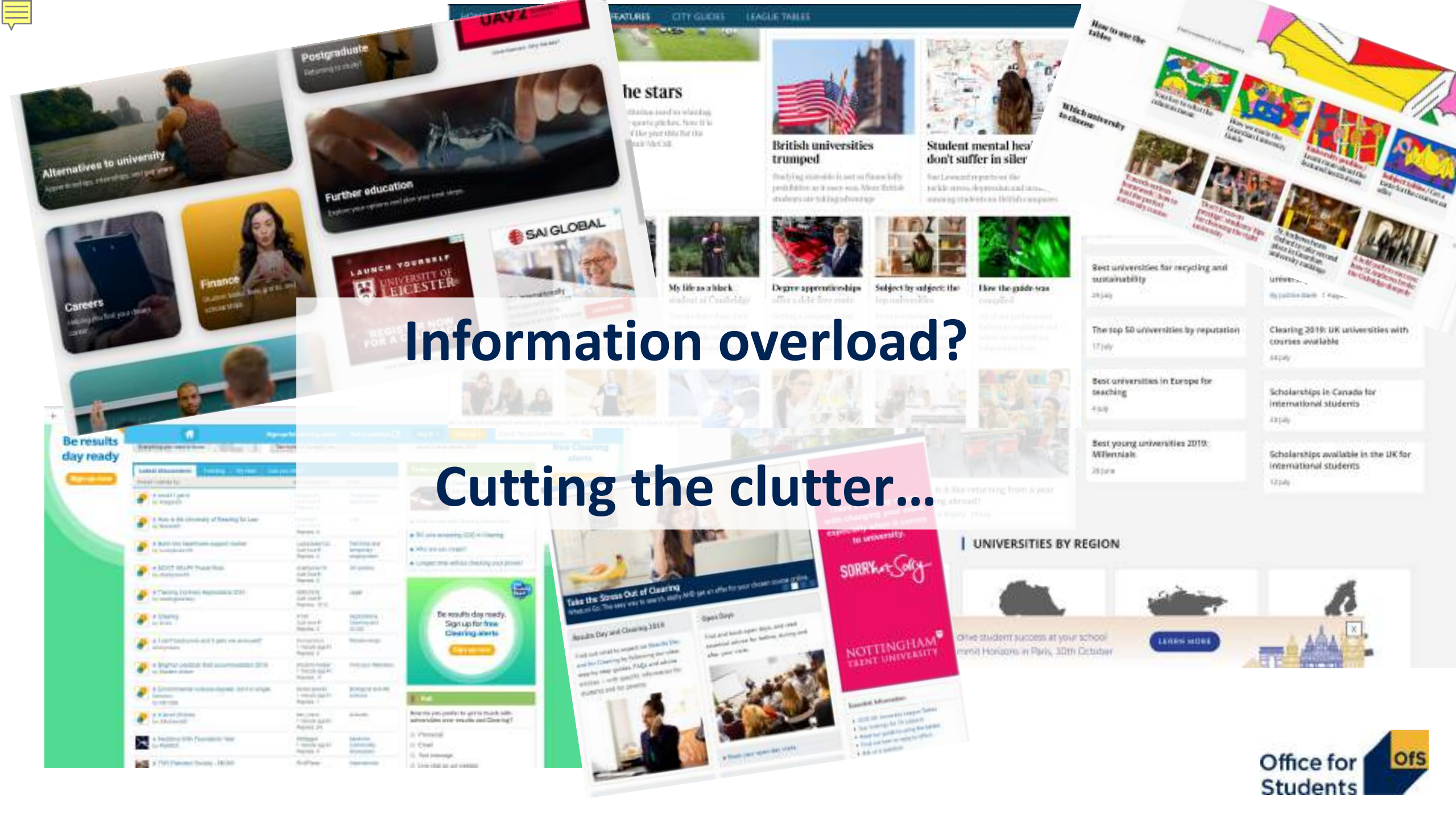


**TEACHERS AND
CAREERS
ADVISORS**

Subject teachers, Careers advisors

DON'T FORGET...

Accessibility
Assisted digital
Digitally excluded



Information overload?

Cutting the clutter...



Discover how you can inspire

Deciding whether to go to uni, let alone where and what to study, is a big deal for your students. And we understand how important teachers are in that decision.

So we want to give you a hand to help your students expand their horizons.

Discover Uni has all the official, trustworthy and independent information you need. Cutting through the clutter to help your students find the information relevant to them.

Discover their potential

Make your discovery at
www.discoveruni.gov.uk

Help them to:

- Decide if uni is right for them
- Think about what's important to them
- Choose where to go
- Choose what to study
- Find and compare courses

Discover more:

- Learn about different ways to study, student finance and things to consider when choosing a course.
- Find and compare official course data – including how satisfied students are and what they go on to do after they graduate.
- Hear straight from students – videos and experiences from people like them who went to uni and the challenges they faced.



Student videos

Users want to see:

- People like them
- Challenges and how they have overcome them

They include:

- Care leaver
- Apprentice
- Carer
- Disabled student

From a range of backgrounds UK-wide

The site also feature an animation introducing student finances





**Discover
Uni**

Next Steps for 2020

Changes to
data and its
presentation

Better
search and
filtering

Personalisation
and
interaction

Transition
and transfer

Course level
links with
UCAS

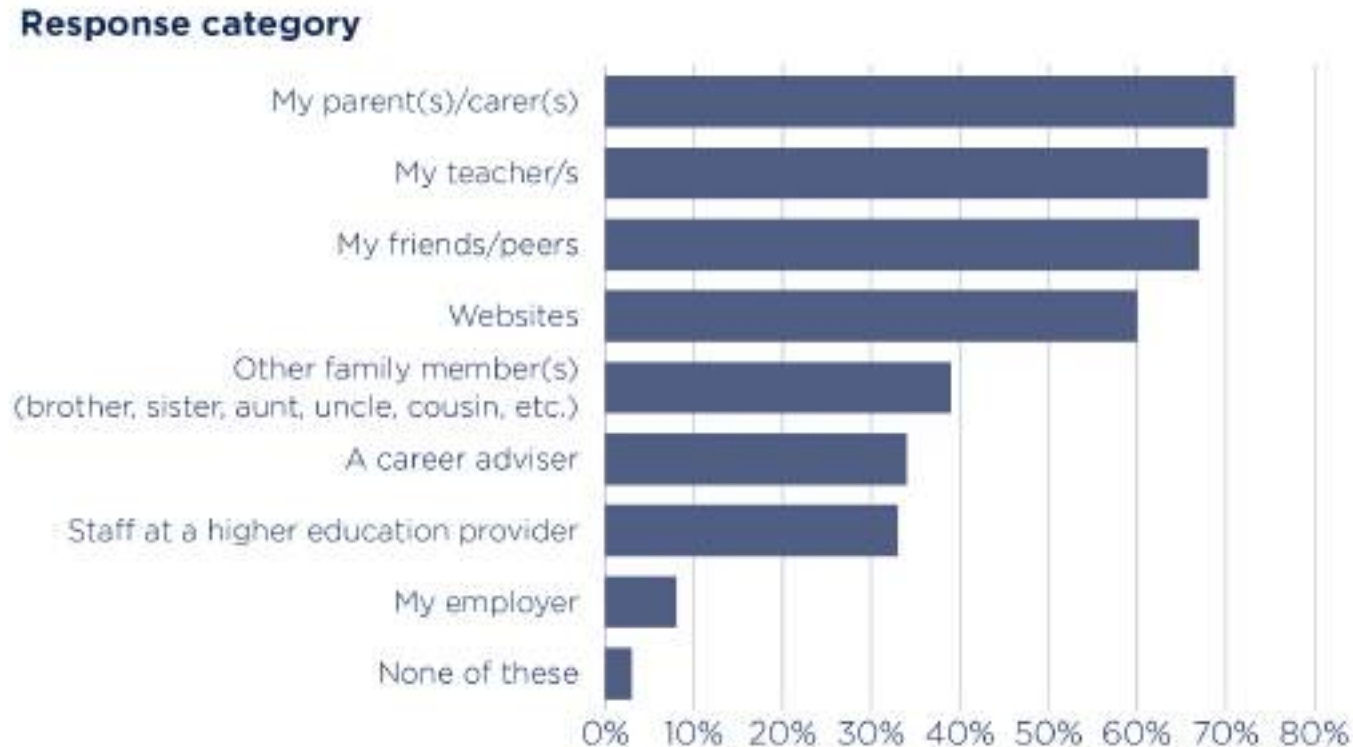
Integration
with the
register

Content for
International
students

Searches by
region

Further user
testing

Who do applicants consult as part of their decision?

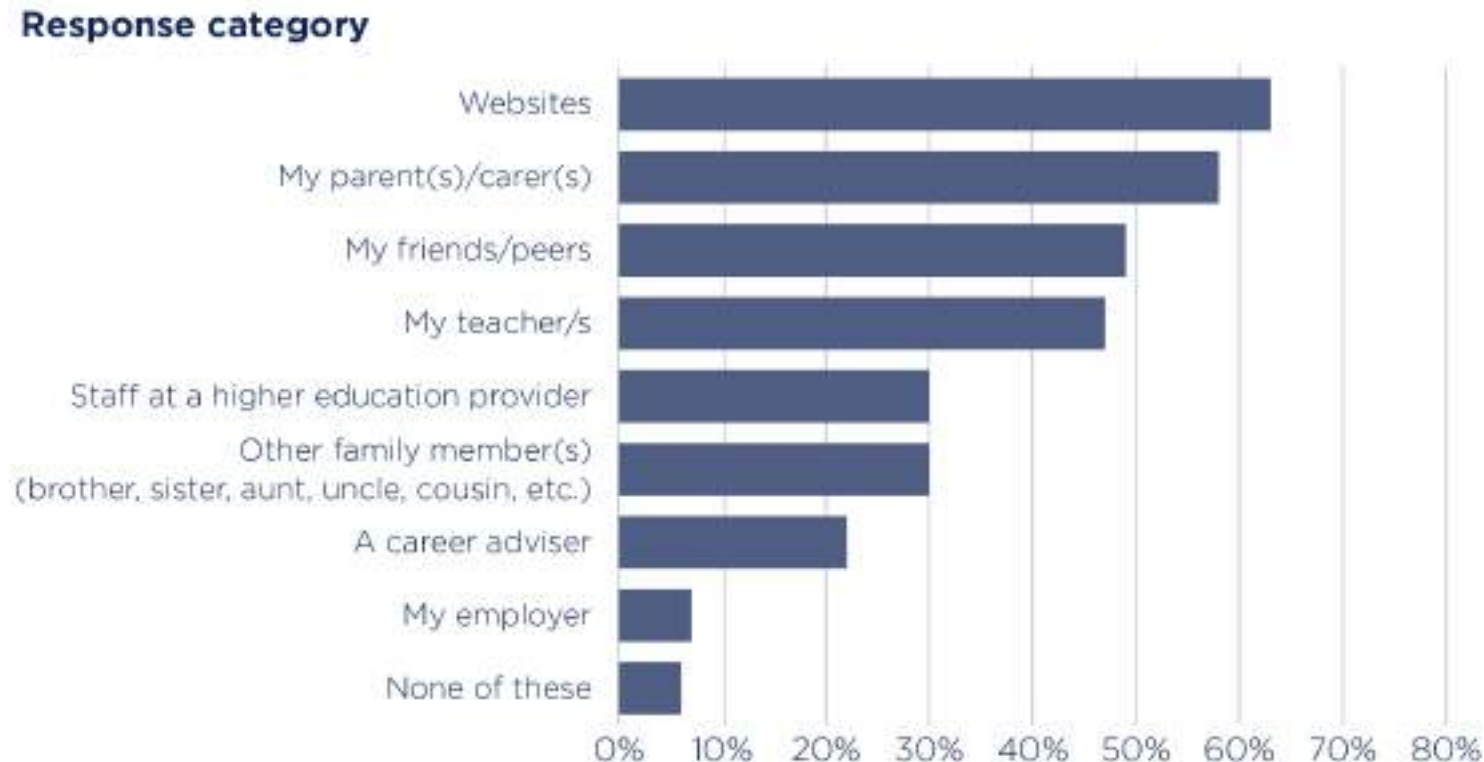


Applicants are more likely to go to their parents, teacher and peers than websites

YouthSight interviewed 529 university applicants across the UK between 10 and 17 September 2018

The YouthSight poll was conducted in September 2018 with 2,119 participants. The sample was split between university applicants (including prospective applicants) (529), undergraduate students (531), postgraduate students (529) and graduates (530). All participants were members of The OpinionPanel Community, YouthSight's proprietary research panel, which comprises over 140,000 members aged 16 to 30, including 80,000 students

Where did students and recent graduates go to help them make their choice?



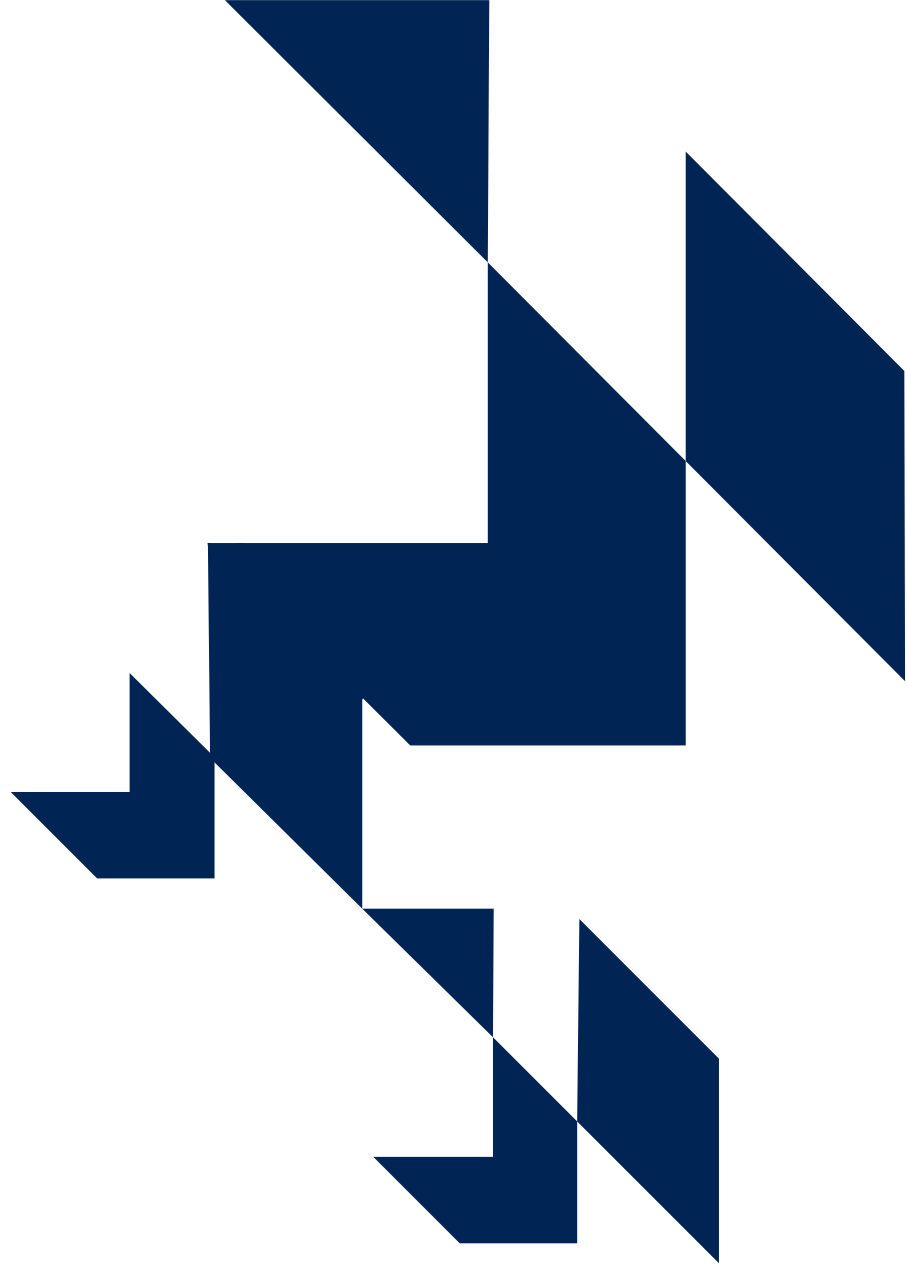
Students and graduates were most likely to have gone to websites, followed by their parents or carers

YouthSight interviewed 1590 students and graduates across the UK between 10 and 17 September 2018

The YouthSight poll was conducted in September 2018 with 2,119 participants. The sample was split between university applicants (including prospective applicants) (529), undergraduate students (531), postgraduate students (529) and graduates (530). All participants were members of The OpinionPanel Community, YouthSight's proprietary research panel, which comprises over 140,000 members aged 16 to 30, including 80,000 students



Improving information from universities and colleges





Information from universities and colleges

- Information from universities and colleges forms an important part of the student decision making process
- Often the main source of information for course content, teaching and assessment details, costs, timetable etc.
- This information can be difficult to find, understand and compare across courses and providers

Information from universities and colleges

- The responses to our recent consultation highlighted the need to challenge providers on the information they provide. Feedback from higher education providers suggests that Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) compliance has sharpened the sector's focus, particularly amongst central marketing teams
- This is reflected in the findings of the 2016 compliance review by the CMA¹
- However, clearer and more specific guidelines would be welcomed by some providers and by most students

¹<https://www.gov.uk/cma-cases/consumer-protection-review-of-higher-education>



Information from universities and colleges

- Provide universities and colleges with clear guidance
- Build on CMA 2015 guidance
- We will work with key partners to create clear, specific expectations for the information from providers, to include course information, scholarships and bursaries, which facilitates comparison between providers
- Ensure students receive the information they need to make confident decisions about what and where to study

Thank you for listening

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