

Retention Project - Faculty of Education, Health and Human Sciences

Term 2 Summary

2023/24

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greenwich
students'
union

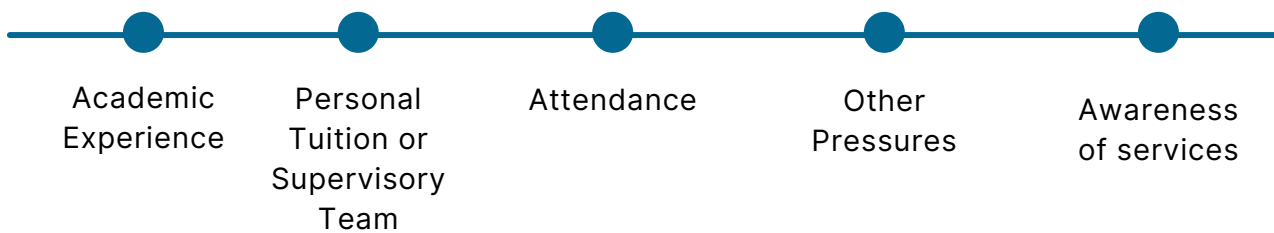
Retention Project

What do we talk to students about?

Our student callers have a 1-1 structured conversation asking students about their experience at Greenwich and reminding them of the support available.

We make it clear we're calling from the SU, that we hold their confidentiality unless they consent for us to share information and that students can be open with us about issues they are facing.

During the calls we ask questions around the following:



If at any stage during the call we identify an additional support need we'll ask the student for permission to refer their case to the relevant service

Who we called

We prioritise calling students who are most at risk of being withdrawn due to nonattendance and students at risk of withdrawing or interrupting themselves.

- January starters
- Students not in attendance
- PGR students
- Students on courses with a large awarding gap

This term we changed our focus from the number of calls made to increasing the quality of the calls made. This meant that we made less calls, however callers were encouraged to spend more time with each student to delve into their experiences. As a result, we have more case studies throughout this report than in previous reports.

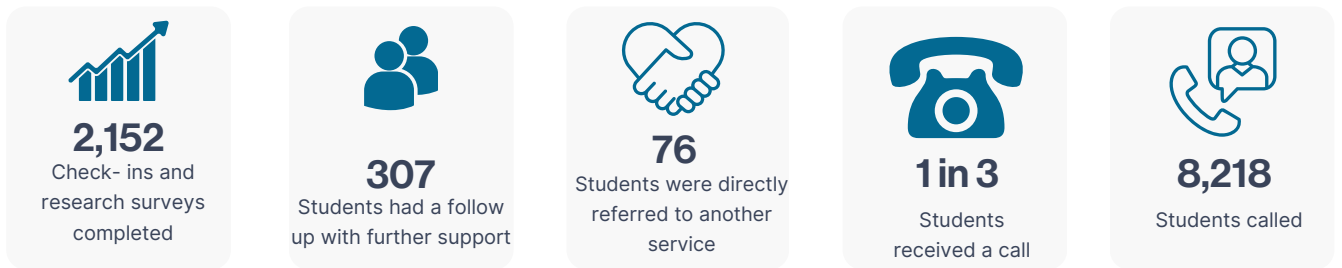
We also had some technical issues to work through this term. This means that some data has been lost regarding how many individual calls were made, and therefore We are very grateful to have had our computers replaced, which means that we are in an excellent position going forward to avoid any further technical problems.

'This term we have seen a higher number of students giving positive feedback about the phone calls from GSU, and wanting to follow up with GSU. We have seen improved feedback from Steph regarding the follow-up of these calls and this has alerted us to student issues we were otherwise unaware of.'

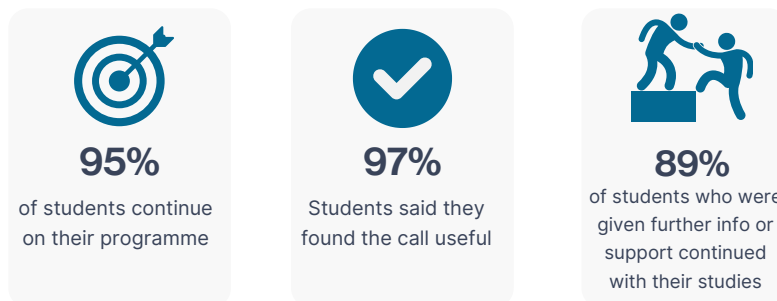
Feedback from a Retention and & Success Officer

University Summary

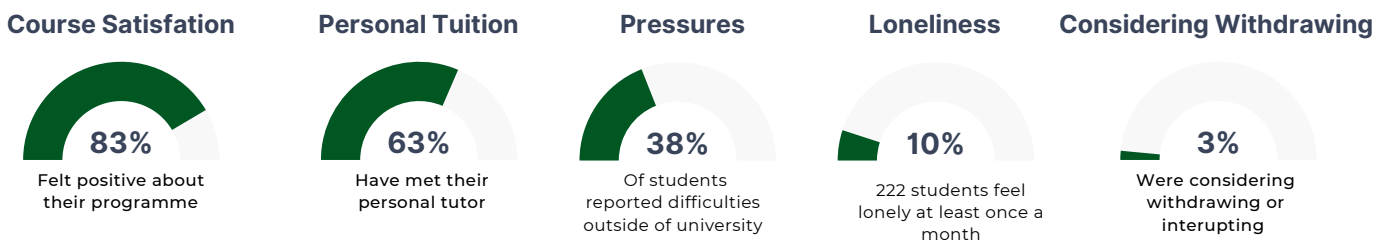
KPI overview



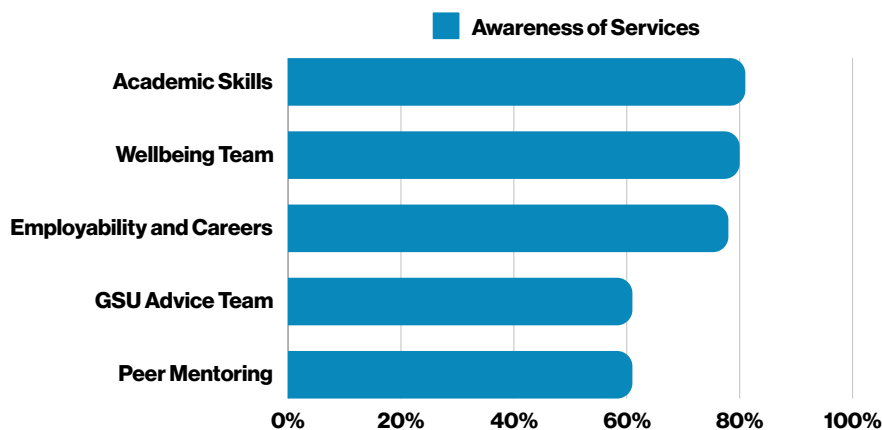
Our Impact



What are students saying?

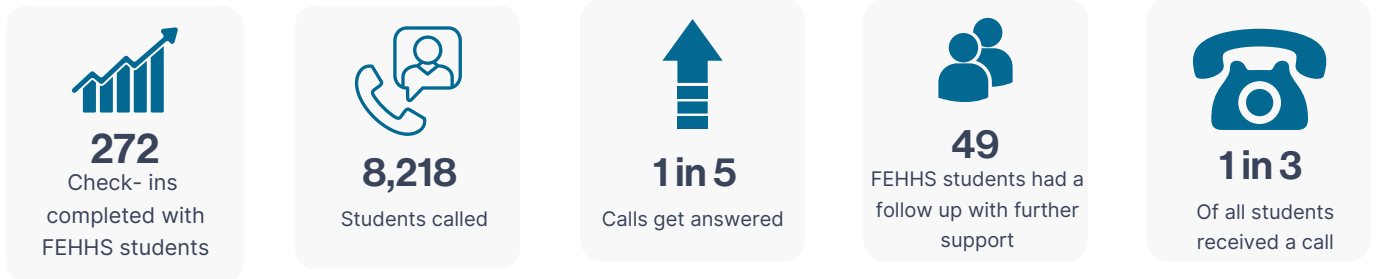


Support Service Awareness

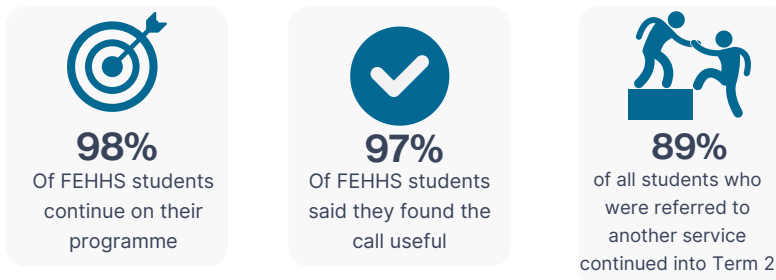


Faculty of Education, Health and Human Sciences

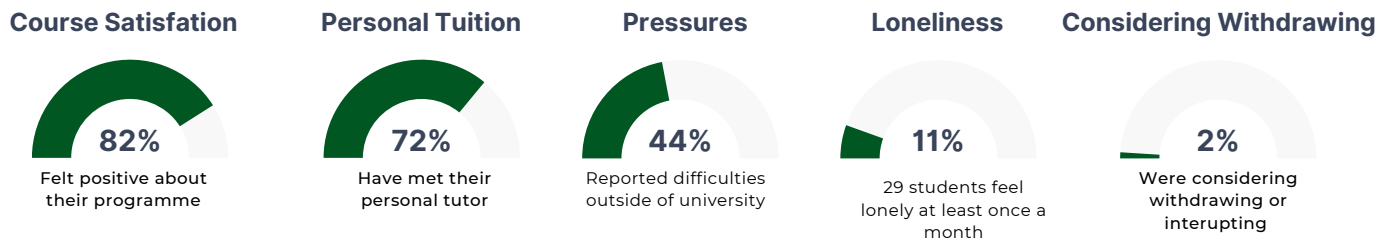
KPI overview



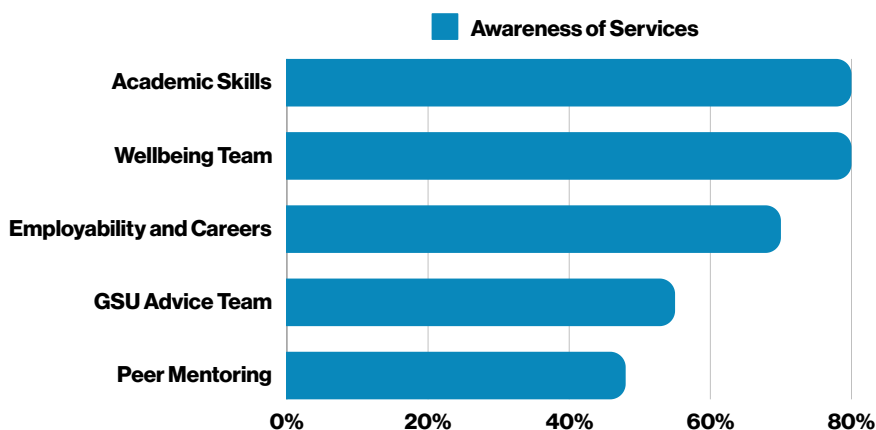
Our Impact



What are FEHHS students saying?



Support Service Awareness



Term 2 Project Overview

This report gives a summary of the key findings, themes and recommendations from the Retention calling project in term 2 of 2023/24.

Who we call

- January starters
- Students on courses with a large awarding gap
- Students not in attendance
- PGR students

These groups are therefore over-represented in the findings below.

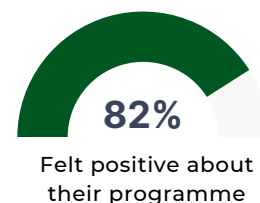
Inclusivity Research Project

This term we partnered with the GSU Voice and Rep team to work on their inclusivity research project. Our calls called 281 individual students and completed 553 surveys regarding modules with a significant awarding gap. The Voice and Rep team have then included this data in their research for this project.

Course Satisfaction

82% of FEHHS students felt positively towards their course and only 5% negatively, with the remaining 13% offering a neutral response.

Overseas students also ranked greater course satisfaction (85%) than their home counterparts (80%).



“[It has been] a great learning experience. Interesting lectures and seminars.”

FEHHS undergraduate student

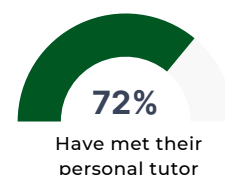
Personal Tutoring

72% of FEHHS students knew and had met their personal tutor and 11% knew, but had not met them.

Personal Tutor Feedback

Students who do not know who their personal tutor is are told on the call who they are.

GSU more generally has fed back on the personal tuition review being conducted across the university.



Linking students with support

We aim to link students with the right support at the right time.

We believe if we support students with the underlying issues they are facing they will be more likely to continue on their course of study.

This is why we prioritise making contact with students who are likely to be withdrawn because of poor attendance or who we know are more likely to withdraw because of their personal circumstances.



49

FEHHS students had a follow up with further support

Direct Referrals to other services

14 FEHHS students were referred for support to another university service who aim to follow up with the student within 5 working days as per an agreement set out in service level agreements.



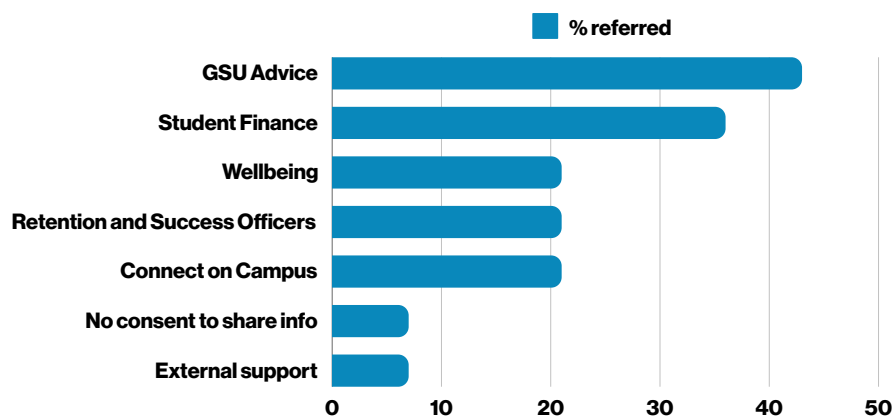
14

FEHHS students had a direct referral made to another service



89%

of students who were given further info or support continued with their studies



Case Study

We spoke to a student who had had trouble with Student Finance England on returning to her studies following a period of illness, delaying her registration. She wanted to ensure that she would do her best in her studies and felt she had missed too much teaching this year, and so wanted support to interrupt. As well as preventing a complete withdrawal, we were led by the student and her wishes - we empowered her to make the best choice for her and her studies.

In addition to those students who were directly referred for support, 41 FEHHS students told us about financial concerns, social support, and course issues. We send these students additional information in support packs.



23

FEHHS students told us they were concerned about their finances, and were sent a finance support pack



20

FEHHS students told us they felt lonely, and were sent a social support pack



10

FEHHS students told us they were struggling with their course, and were sent a course support pack

The finance support pack includes information on ways to access cheaper food shopping, such as Too Good To Go or local community pantries, the free breakfasts and dinners provided by GSU on campus, university hardship funds and bursaries, budgeting tips and the opportunity to get a free Totum card.

The social support pack includes information on the Global English courses, Vygo (the peer mentoring app), GSU's buddy schemes, a downloadable calendar and colouring pages and information on GSU societies.

The course support pack includes information on the interruption and withdrawal process, how to contact your personal tutor, financial, academic and wellbeing support and information for international students on the visa implications of interrupting or withdrawing from their studies.

So far reading [the financial support pack], it's really useful and I'll be applying for some financial help.

FEHHS
undergraduate
student

Absences

157 FEHHS students who completed the survey were called due to non-engagement.

The most frequent reason for non attendance cited was due to illness (32%). Other significant and reoccurring reasons are issues with attendance recording systems and personal circumstances such as bereavement or childcare issues.

Continuation Rate

95% of all students called continued on their programme.

These were broadly consistent across faculties with FEHHS had the highest continuation rate and the Business school had the lowest.

Faculty	Continuation %
Faculty of Education, Health and Human Science	98%
Greenwich Business School	93%
Faculty of Engineering and Science	96%
Faculty of Liberal Arts and Science	94%



98%

Of FEHHS students called continue on their programme

Those considering withdrawing

6 FEHHS students told us they were considering withdrawing or interrupting. Of these 6, 4 continued on their studies. 1 had already completed the withdrawal form before speaking to us, and the other interrupted their studies.

All students considering withdrawing or interrupting this term were home students. 5 were UG students, 1 was a PGT student.

All students who are considering withdrawing or interrupting receive follow-up support including signposting to Retention and Success Officers, their personal tutors and to any other additional support tailored to their situation.



6

FEHHS students told us they were considering withdrawing

2

withdrew (or were withdrawn) or interrupted their studies

4

students continued on their studies

£175,900

of fee income retained in FEHHS School this year*

Co-Curricular Experience

Loneliness

29 FEHHS students we spoke to reported feeling lonely in Term 2 equating to 11% of respondents in the faculty. This is slightly higher than the % for all students.

Of these, the majority (55%) reported feeling lonely on a weekly basis. 76% of those who feel lonely are home students.

Cost of Living Concerns

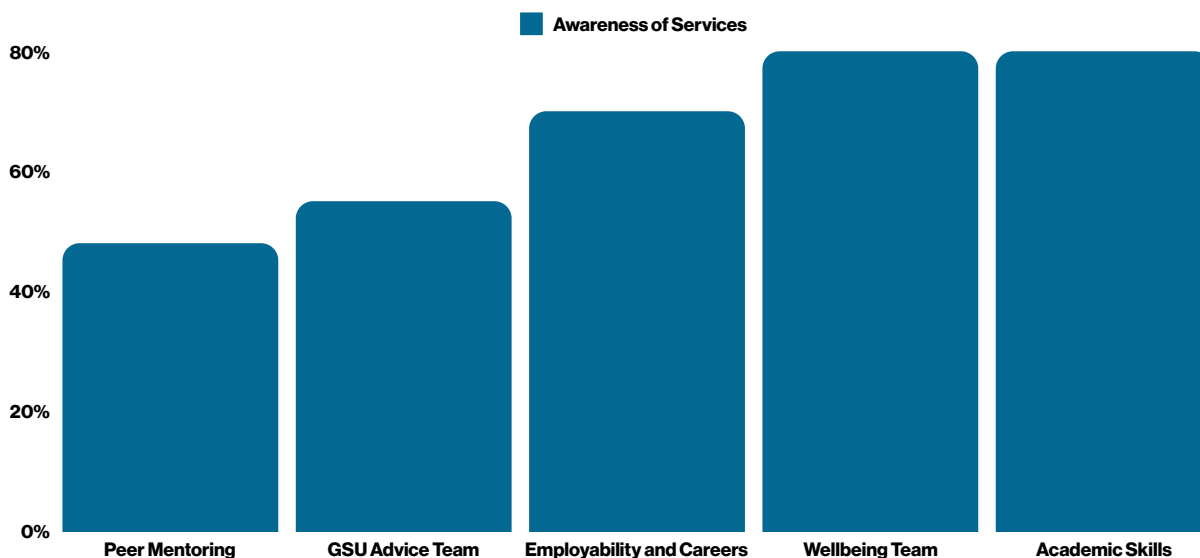
13% of FEHHS students are concerned about supporting themselves financially or paying their fees which is slightly lower than 15% of all students called.

Commuting and travel came up as a consistent concern across all faculties. This was spread fairly consistently across all campuses, and consisted of comments regarding the Medway bus, parking issues and students who live far from campus. For FEHHS students this was particularly regarding the costs associated with travel to placement.

Support Service Awareness

During the calls, students are asked if they are aware of and have used, the following services.

All students called were reminded about the support that these teams offer, and many students commented at the end of the call regarding how useful it is to be given this information.



Recommendations

The recommendations made here stem from the conversations had with students and the themes that emerged. It is proposed that these are reviewed by university services, faculties and the GSU.

Timetabling



The issue: Timetabling has been a recurrent theme again this term

Students said: Timetables can be sporadic which result in frequent journeys to campus and difficulty with balancing other commitments. There have also been reports of last-minute timetable changes and overcrowded teaching spaces.

The Retention Project recommends: Coordination across faculties and programmes to ensure that, from the beginning of the year, there are as few issues as possible. As suggested last year, flexibility for students to change seminar groups to ensure they are convenient for students is recommended, although initially arranging timetables carefully may limit disruption for both students and teaching staff of mid-term changes.

Placement issues



The issue: Students who have a placement as part of their course are reporting issues with finding placements or being supported whilst on them.

Students said: Placements were hard to find for those who have to find them independently. FEHHS students say that there are some difficulties with placement organisation, including only receiving placements a week before starting. We have also heard stories from students who have struggled on placements and not felt supported by the university, particularly on education courses.

The Retention Project recommends: Ensure that students know who to contact for support with finding placements (if needed) and are given enough support to find them. Strengthen the processes for students reporting difficulties on placements so that they can be supported through any issues. Look into organisation of placements and how this can be improved.

Pressure of caring responsibilities



The issue: FEHHS students were more likely to report difficulties with balancing their studies with their caring responsibilities than in other faculties.

Students said: Balancing childcare with their studies was difficult.

The Retention Project recommends: The faculty considers how these students can be better supported and whether investment into on campus childcare is plausible and in demand.

Term 3

In Term 3, we will be calling in a new priority order:

1. April starters
2. Students not in attendance
3. PGT students at dissertation stage
4. Interrupting students: w/c 3rd June
5. Students resitting over summer: 8th-26th July

These calls will take place from the 7th May to 26th July.

As before, we will be reactive to any local or global events that may make students vulnerable to disengagement from their studies and will prioritise checking in with them where needed.

Want to make a referral?

We will also check in with any students that staff have concerns for. Staff can refer a student for a check in call via email at gsu-retention@greenwich.ac.uk.

Full reports will be available soon on the GSU website:
<https://www.greenwichsu.co.uk/gsuhub/wrproject/>

Any questions or specific data requests please contact Steph Scott, Retention and Insights manager on s.e.scott@greenwich.ac.uk