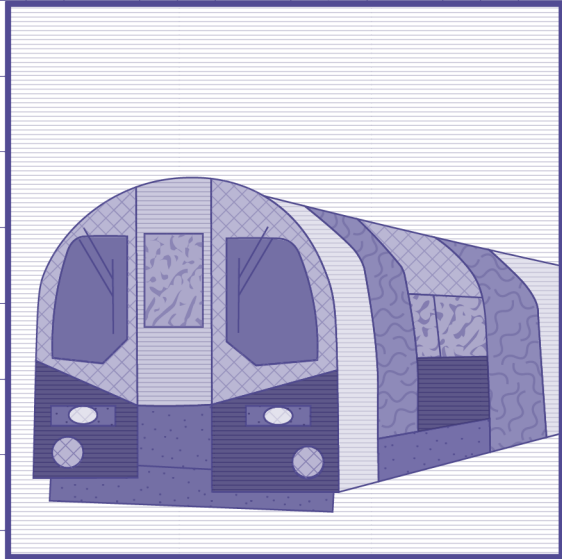
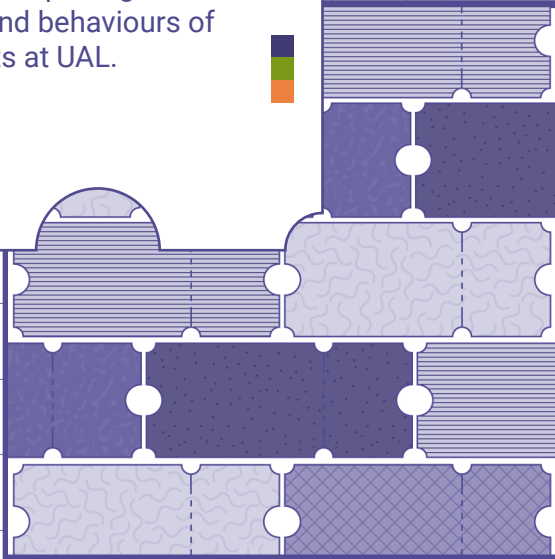


2023/24

# COMMUTING REPORT

A report exploring the travel costs and behaviours of students at UAL.



# METHODOLOGY

The research for this report was conducted via an electronic survey, accessible to all current UAL students. The survey was composed as a series of Likert scale questions, multiple choice questions, and open text comments. It asked students about their experiences of commuting in London as students at UAL. It also collected demographic data to analyse trends.







The survey was open from 6th November 2023 until 11th December 2023.

It was promoted through the Students' Union communication channels, such as social media, weekly email newsletters and the course rep system. It was also promoted collaboratively with the UAL Comms Team, and through course teams.

The survey received 1181 responses and collected an accurate sample across all UAL colleges. The high response rate speaks to the salience of the issues concerned in the research.

The results of this survey are accurate at a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of 3%, in line with standard social research practice.

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2023/24

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COMMUTING  
REPORT

## FOREWORD

For students, commuting offers a budget-friendly alternative to saving money on accommodation. Limited availability of affordable housing in London are causing students to relocate farther away. However, as the cost of living continues to rise, while wages remain low, students are finding it increasingly challenging to afford the expenses associated with commuting to campus.

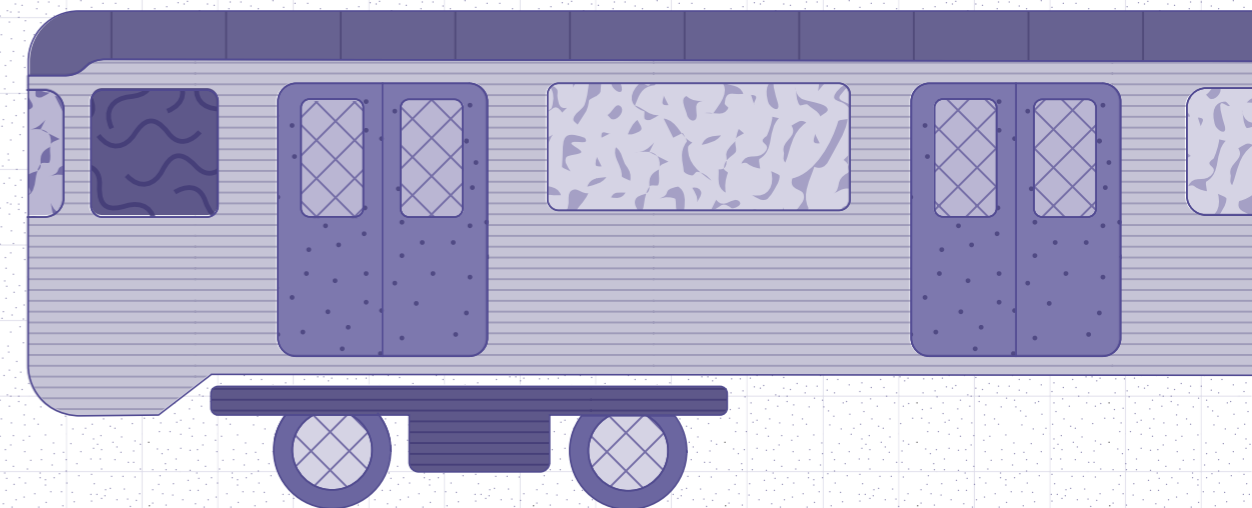
Commuters would rather pay for more affordable off-peak tickets or attend lectures less regularly. As a result, they miss out on learning and important resources. They become progressively isolated due to their inability to attend social events, clubs and societies, academic and professional opportunities, as well as workshops and studios. These are the students you notice at graduation but not in lectures.

And when students do make it, commuting can still get in the way. Balancing workload with the stress of travelling can become overbearing. For courses that require practical work, the additional expenses of transporting sizeable work from home to campus are not factored into the cost of study. There might be considerable back-and-forth traveling if the workload is substantial. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds feel this even more, which keeps them from reaching their full potential and academic performance.

As a commuter and recent graduate, my campaign at the Arts Student's Union on the 'Cost of Travel' was driven by a comprehension of how commuting costs impact the overall student experience, the ability to access education and fully engage with your course, college, and peers.

I am convinced these results will resonate with fellow commuters who are often overlooked, and unseen—quite literally. We hope this research helps the university acknowledge any oversight in their efforts to making education accessible, and therefore, actively widen participation in university life. We hope UAL will utilise these findings and our recommendations, and meaningfully engage in a conversation to improve the student experience for all students who commute.

Daniela Commey  
*(Union Affairs Officer 2023/24)*



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## DEFINITION:

**Commuter students** are defined as students whose residence within term time is outside of London's Oyster zones, who commute to their place of study.

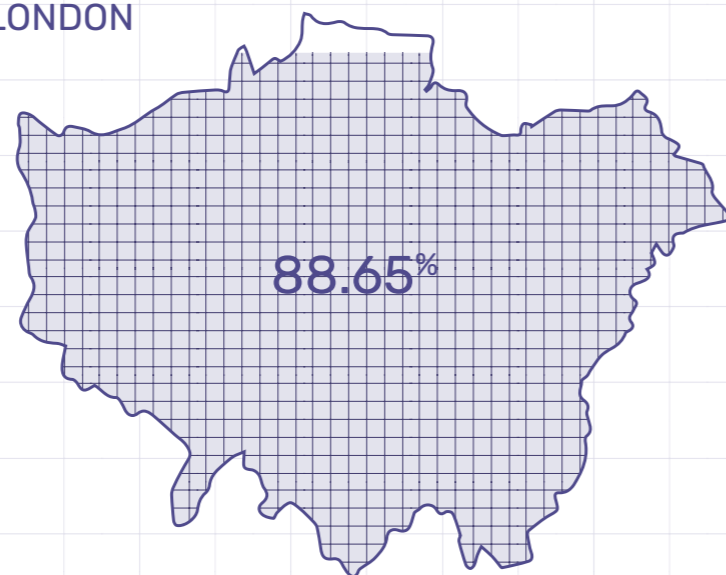
## METHODOLOGY:

**1181** RESPONSES

The survey received 1181 responses and collected an accurate sample across all UAL colleges. The high response rate speaks to the salience of the issues concerned in the research.

## RESIDENCE DURING TERM TIME

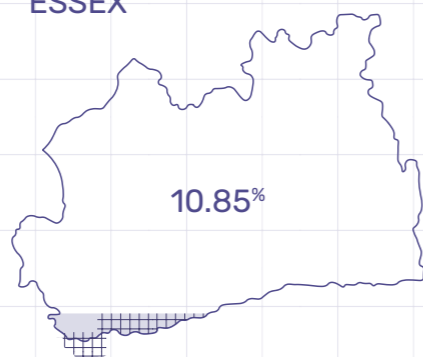
### LONDON



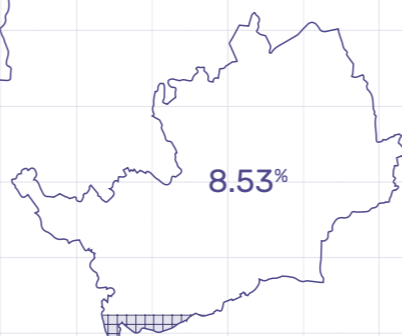
88.65% of respondents reside within London during term time, while 11.35% of respondents are resident outside London.

### MOST FREQUENTLY CITED LOCATIONS OUTSIDE OF LONDON WHERE STUDENTS RESIDE DURING TERM TIME:

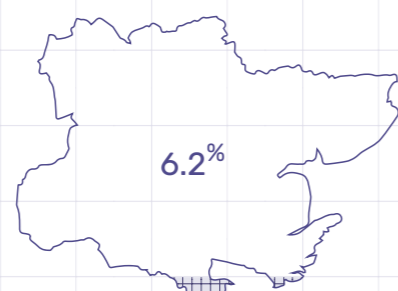
#### ESSEX



#### HERTFORDSHIRE

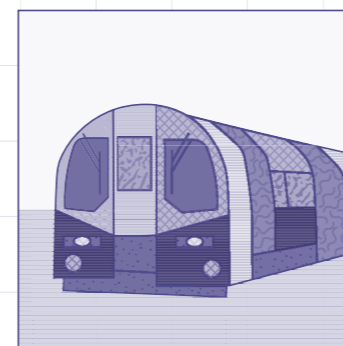


#### SURREY



## METHODS OF TRANSPORT AND MOTIVATIONS

### LONDON UNDERGROUND



41.22%

Of students make the majority of their journey to their place of study using the London Underground.

### BUS



19.88%

Almost a fifth (19.88%) travel via bus

### WALK



7.28%

Of respondents walk to their place of study for the majority of their journey.

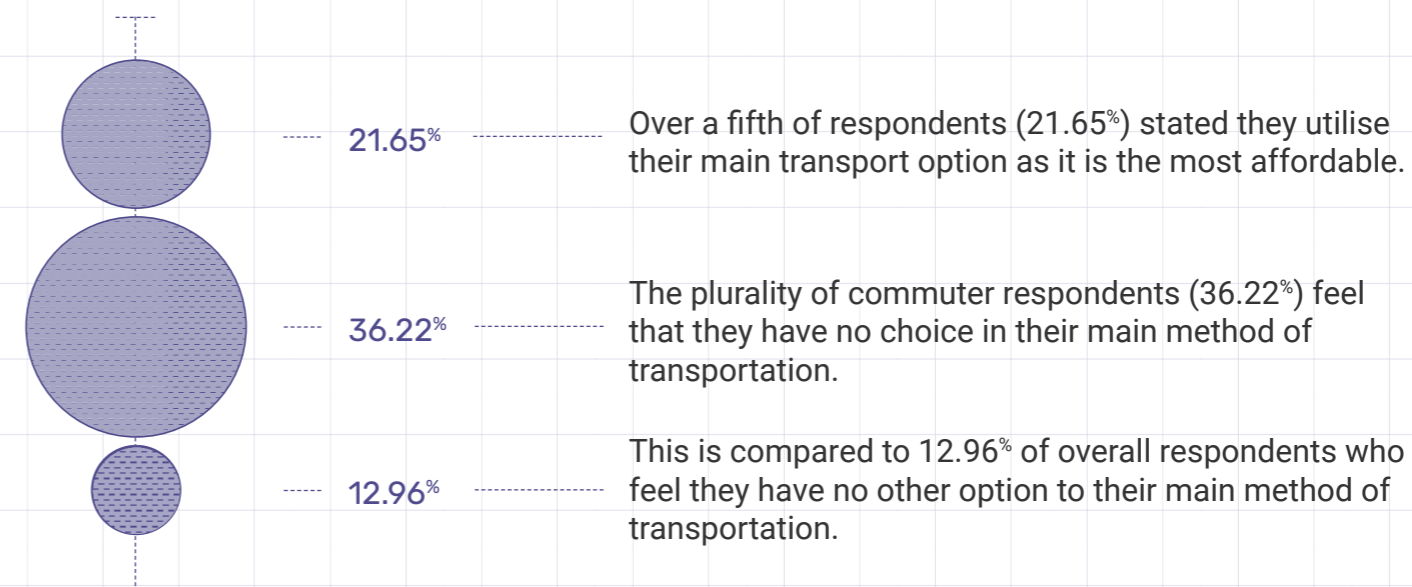
### TRAINS (OUTSIDE OF LONDON)



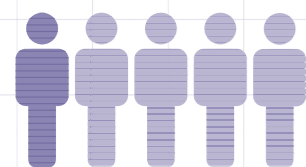
79.69%

Of commuter respondents cited trains (from outside London) as the method of transport that comprises the majority of their journey to their place of study.

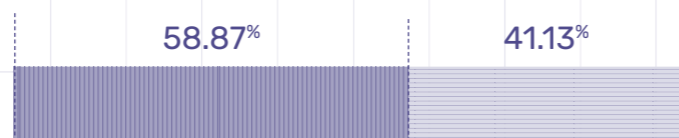
### THE MAIN REASONS WHY RESPONDENTS CHOOSE THEIR MAIN METHOD OF TRANSPORT TO THEIR PLACE OF STUDY:



## TRANSPORTING ARTWORK



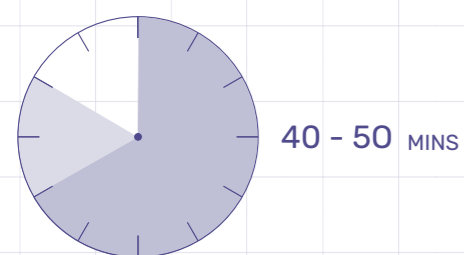
One in five respondents (20.12%) reported needing to pay for private transportation to transport artwork at some point during their studies.



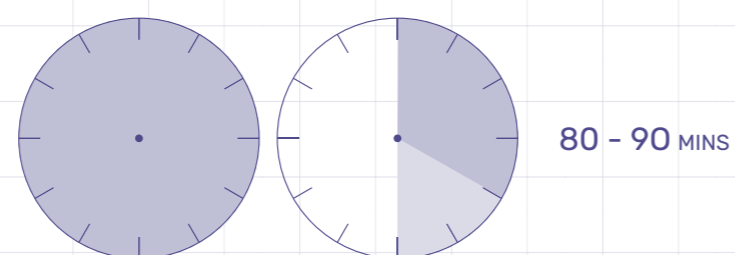
Over half (58.87%) of respondents had needed to use public transportation to transport artwork, while 41.13% had not.

## LENGTH OF COMMUTE

### AVERAGE TIME FOR ALL STUDENTS



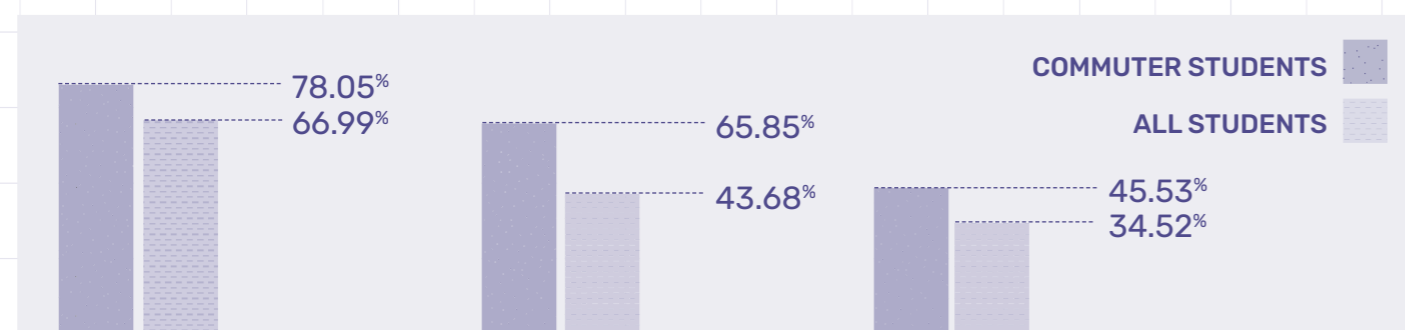
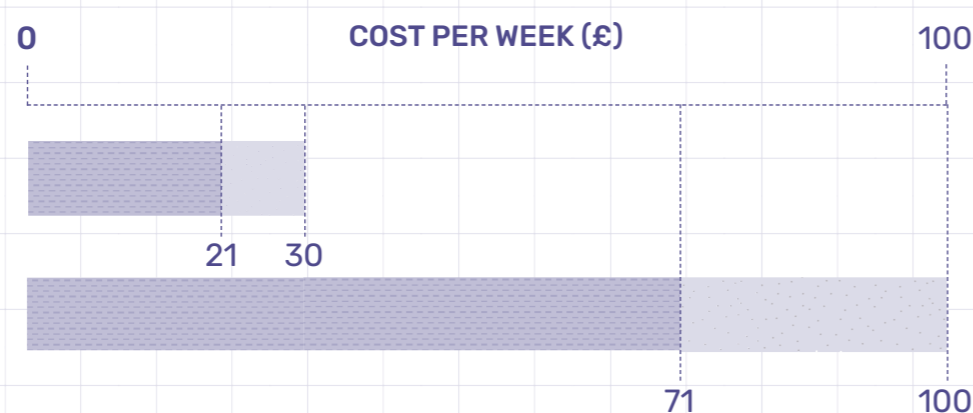
### AVERAGE TIME FOR COMMUTER STUDENTS



## COST PER WEEK OF COMMUTE

AVERAGE COST FOR ALL RESPONDENTS BETWEEN £21 AND £30

AVERAGE COST FOR COMMUTER STUDENTS BETWEEN £71 AND £100

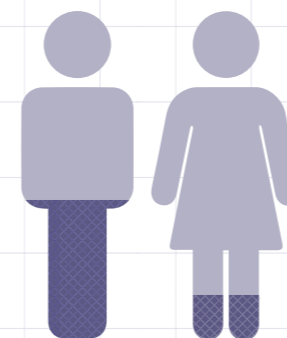


MISSING OUT ON SOCIALISING WITH FRIENDS DUE TO THE COST OF TRAVEL

MISSING OUT ON TAKING PART IN SPORTS CLUBS & SOCIETIES

MISSING OUT ON ATTENDING CLASS

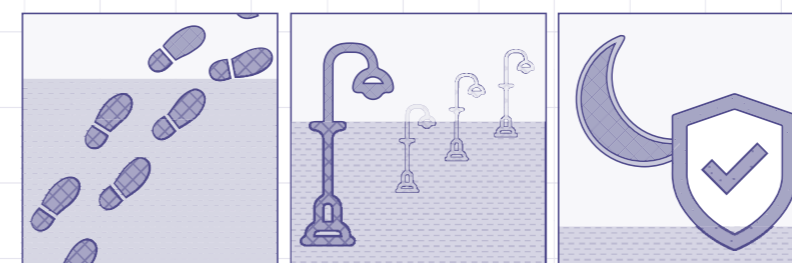
## TRAVELLING AT NIGHT



42.75% 13.74%

Men are significantly more likely to say feeling unsafe travelling alone does not act as a deterrent on doing (42.75%), while only 13.74% of women respondents feel the same.

### WHY RESPONDENTS MAY FEEL UNSAFE TRAVELLING ALONE AT NIGHT



74.40%

Feel unsafe walking alone was listed as the largest factor

57.65%

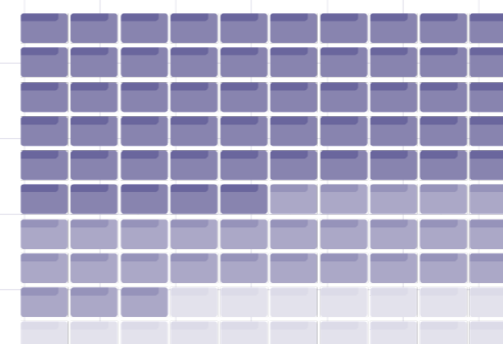
Felt that a lack of street lighting contributed to them feeling unsafe.

16.62%

Only 16.62% of respondents feel safe travelling alone at night.

## DISCOUNTED TRAVEL

83.46% of commuter students have bought either a 16-25 railcard or 26-30 railcard, as well as over half (57.63%) of London resident students.



57.63% ARE LONDON RESIDENT STUDENTS

83.46% ARE COMMUTER STUDENTS

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

Trial funding the purchase of 1-year 16 to 25 railcards for eligible incoming undergraduate students residing outside the Oyster card zone for a 3-year period.

Upon successful completion of the trial, explore extending the intervention to 1-year 16 to 25 railcards for all students and/or funding annual 26 to 30 railcards to all eligible students outside the Oyster card zone.

Work with students and Arts Students' Union to address safety concerns around travelling at night in London.

# RESIDENCE DURING TERM TIME

For the purposes of this report, commuter students are defined as students whose residence within term time is outside of London, who commute to their place of study.

Respondents were asked where they reside during term time, to understand the proportion of students who are commuting into London.

Question:  
During term time, do you live in a borough of London?

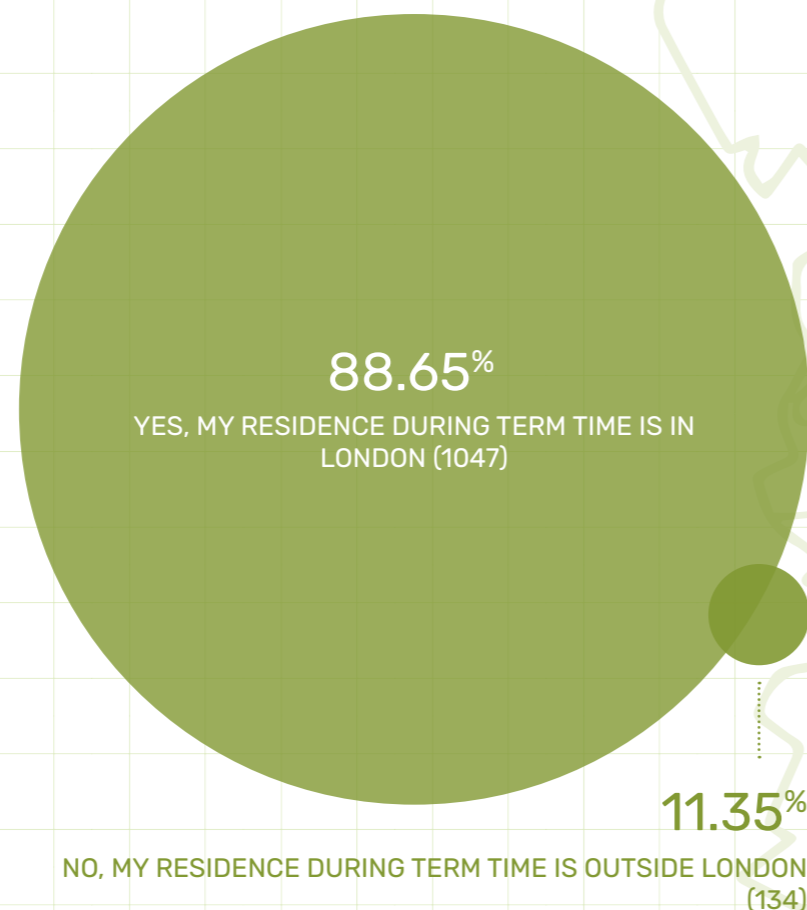


Diagram 1: During term time, do you live in a borough of London?

88.65% of respondents reside within London during term time, while 11.35% of respondents are resident outside London.

RESIDENCE OUTSIDE LONDON	RESPONSES (%)
ESSEX	10.85
HERTFORDSHIRE	8.53
SURREY	6.2
KENT	5.43
CAMBRIDGE	3.88
BRISTOL	2.33
LUTON	2.33
MILTON KEYNES	2.33

Table 1: During term time, do you live in a borough of London?

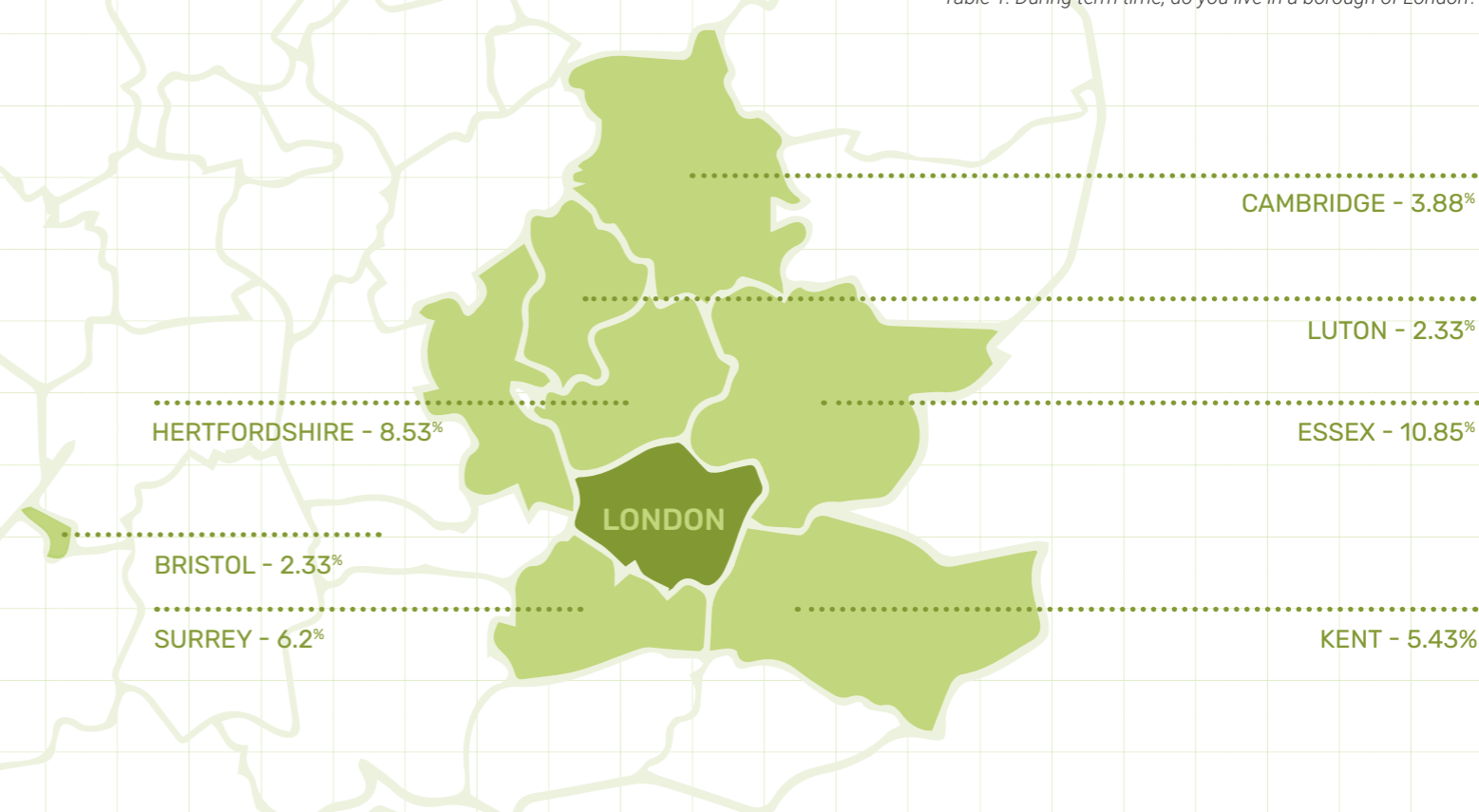


Diagram 2: During term time, do you live in a borough of London?

## METHODS OF TRANSPORT & MOTIVATIONS

Respondents were asked what methods of transport they use when commuting to their place of study. This could include college campuses, as well as work placements.

There was no restriction placed in this response on how many methods of transport respondents could select, as many commuters rely on multiple methods of transport to reach their destination.

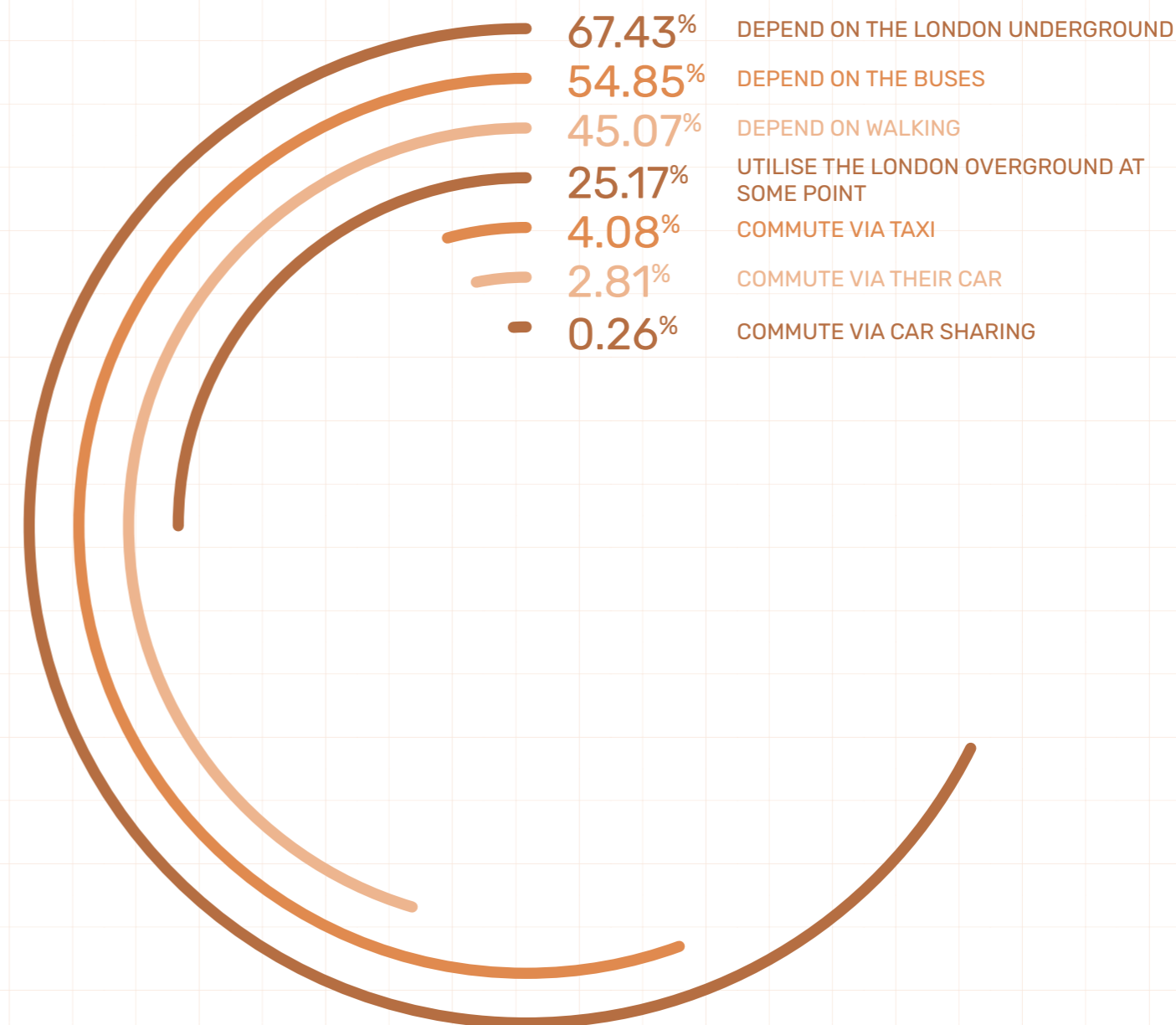
Question:

**What methods of transport do you most regularly use when commuting to your place of study?**

*Select all that are applicable.*

RESIDENCE OUTSIDE LONDON	RESPONSES (%)
UNDERGROUND	67.43
BUS	54.85
WALKING	45.07
OVERGROUND	25.17
TRAIN (INSIDE LONDON)	19.81
TRAIN (OUTSIDE LONDON)	11.14
CYCLING	6.12
TAXI (INC. UBER)	4.08
CAR (MY OWN)	2.81
TRAM	0.94
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	0.77
COACH (FROM OUTSIDE LONDON)	0.60
CAR SHARING	0.26
BOAT (E.G. TFL RIVER BUS)	0.09

Table 2: What methods of transport do you most regularly use when commuting to your place of study?



The vast majority of students (67.43%) depend on the the London Underground for at least some part of their journey to arrive at their place of study, while over half (54.85%) use buses. Almost half (45.07%) opt for the economical and environmentally friendly option of walking, and around a quarter (25.17%) utilise the London Overground at some point of their commute.

Only a small minority of respondents travel for at least some of their commute using a car, either via taxi (4.08%), their own car (2.81%) or by car sharing (0.26%), **suggesting that public transport is the primary method of transportation for almost all respondents.**

Diagram 3: What methods of transport do you most regularly use when commuting to your place of study? Select all that are applicable.

To better understand the most important means of transport to respondents, they were asked to select one transport method that comprises most of their journey.

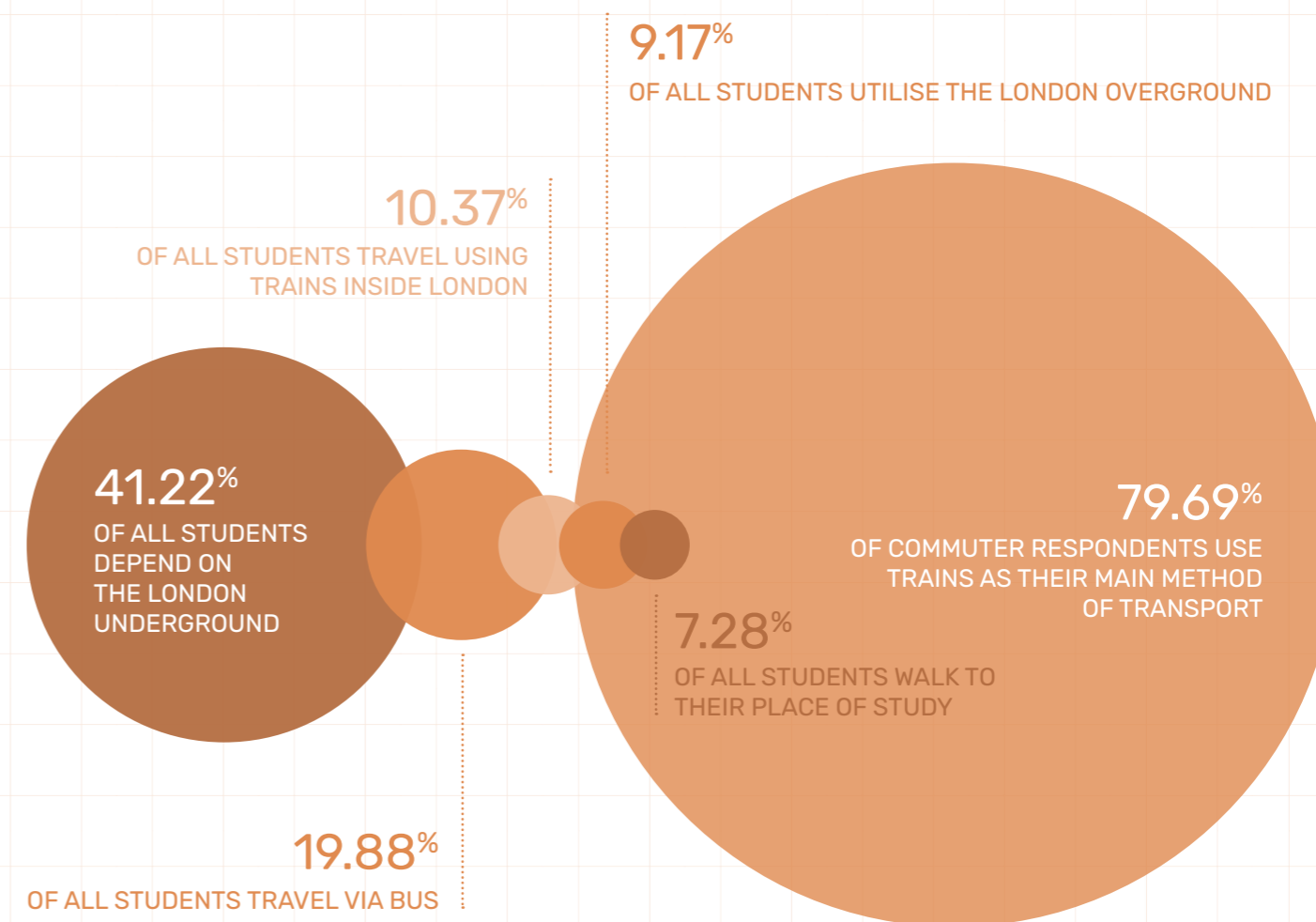
Question:

**Which one method of transport do you use most frequently when commuting to your place of study?**

*This method of transport will be the one you use for the majority of your journey.*

RESIDENCE OUTSIDE LONDON	RESPONSES (%)
UNDERGROUND	41.22
BUS	19.88
TRAIN (INSIDE LONDON)	10.37
OVERGROUND	9.17
TRAIN (FROM OUTSIDE LONDON)	9.08
WALKING	7.28
CYCLING	1.97
CAR (MY OWN)	0.43
TRAM	0.26
TAXI (INC. UBER)	0.17
COACH (FROM OUTSIDE LONDON)	0.17

Table 3: Which one method of transport do you use most frequently when commuting to your place of study? This method of transport will be the one you use for the majority of your journey.



Almost half of students (41.22%) make the majority of their journey to their place of study using the London Underground, while almost a fifth (19.88%) travel via bus. 10.37% travel using trains inside London, and 9.17% utilise the London Overground. 7.28% walk to their place of study for the majority of their journey.

For commuter students (defining commuter students as those whose residence during term is outside London) however, trains from outside London are the most important transport method for most respondents.

79.69% of commuter respondents cited trains from outside London as the method of transport that comprises the majority of their journey to their place of study.

The full results can be seen on the following page (Table 4).

Diagram 4: Which one method of transport do you use most frequently when commuting to your place of study? This method of transport will be the one you use for the majority of your journey.

Question:

**Which one method of transport do you use most frequently when commuting to your place of study?**

*This method of transport will be the one you use for the majority of your journey. (Commuter students only)*

ANSWER CHOICES	COMMUTER RESPONDENTS (%)
TRAIN (FROM OUTSIDE LONDON)	79.69
UNDERGROUND	6.25
TRAIN (INSIDE LONDON)	4.69
OVERGROUND	3.91
CAR	3.13
COACH (FROM OUTSIDE LONDON)	1.56
OTHER	0.77

Table 4: Which one method of transport do you use most frequently when commuting to your place of study? This method of transport will be the one you use for the majority of your journey. (Commuter students only)

**Respondents were asked to explain the main reason they choose their main method of transport to their place of study.**

They were provided with a range of options, including affordability, comfort, access requirements, environmental ethics, or a lack of any other option.

For a plurality of respondents (37.57%), their main method of transport allows them to arrive at their place of study the quickest, while almost a quarter (23.65%) stated that it provides them with the most direct route or has the fewest changes.

Over a fifth of respondents (21.65%) stated they utilise their main transport option as it is the most affordable. This indicates that for a large number of students, the cost of transport determines which method they use, perhaps sacrificing comfort or convenience to keep costs down.

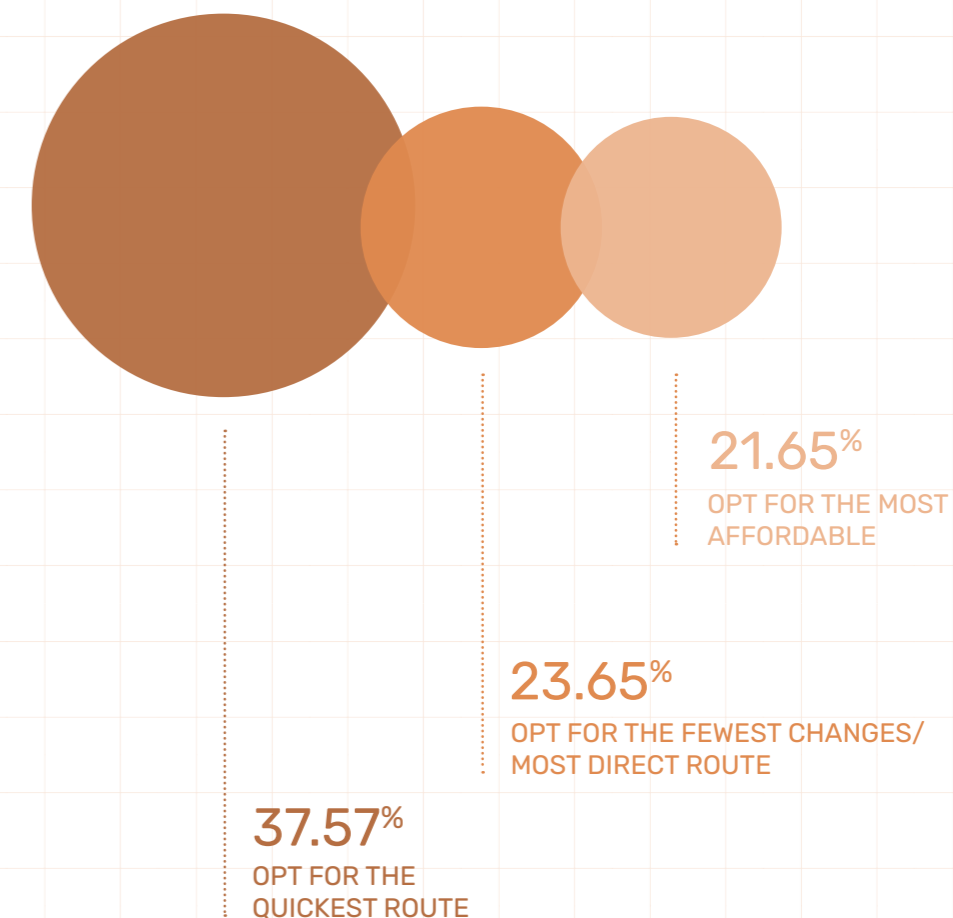


Diagram 5: Which one method of transport do you use most frequently when commuting to your place of study? This method of transport will be the one you use for the majority of your journey. (Commuter students only)

Of those respondents who cited cost as the most important factor in determining their main method of transport, over half of those (50.6%) use the bus as their main method of transportation, while over a fifth (21.29%) walk to their place of study. This demonstrates the continuing impact of the cost-of-living crisis, and how students will forego more expensive methods of transport (even when travelling from further within London) to keep costs down.

The full results can be seen on Table 5 (following page).

Question:

Referring to your answer to the previous question, what is the main reason you opt to use this form of transport most frequently above other options?

Select the most appropriate option below.

ANSWER CHOICES	ALL RESPONDENTS (%)
IT GETS ME TO MY DESTINATION QUICKEST	37.57
IT PROVIDES THE MOST DIRECT ROUTE / HAS FEWEST CHANGES	23.65
IT IS THE MOST AFFORDABLE OPTION	21.65
I HAVE NO OTHER OPTION	12.96
IT IS THE MOST COMFORTABLE FORM OF TRANSPORT	2.35
I NEED TO USE THIS OPTION DUE TO MY ACCESS REQUIREMENTS	1.22
IT IS THE MOST ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY METHOD OF TRANSPORT	0.61

Table 5: Referring to your answer to the previous question, what is the main reason you opt to use this form of transport most frequently above other options? Select the most appropriate option below.

When observing the motivations solely of commuter students, the plurality of respondents (36.22%) feel that they have no choice in their main method of transportation. This is compared to 12.96% of overall respondents who feel they have no other option to their main method of transportation.

With the knowledge that 79.69% of commuter respondents citing trains from outside London as the method of transport, **this demonstrates the lack of other affordable options available to them, and the vital importance of making rail fares as affordable as possible for those students.**

Question:

Referring to your answer to the previous question, what is the main reason you opt to use this form of transport most frequently above other options?

Select the most appropriate option below.  
(Commuter students only)

ANSWER CHOICES	COMMUTER RESPONDENTS (%)
I HAVE NO OTHER OPTION	36.22
IT GETS ME TO MY DESTINATION QUICKEST	29.13
IT PROVIDES THE MOST DIRECT ROUTE / HAS FEWEST CHANGES	19.69
IT IS THE MOST AFFORDABLE OPTION	11.02
IT IS THE MOST ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY METHOD OF TRANSPORT	2.36
I NEED TO USE THIS OPTION DUE TO MY ACCESS REQUIREMENTS	0.79
IT IS THE MOST COMFORTABLE FORM OF TRANSPORT	0.79

Table 6: Referring to your answer to the previous question, what is the main reason you opt to use this form of transport most frequently above other options? Select the most appropriate option below. (Commuter students only)

Respondents were asked to explain the context of their response to the previous question in open text comments. To the right are some examples that contextualise the responses of commuter students:

“There is no coach directly from my area for the times required for uni. The train offers the most flexible arrival and departure times.”

- CSM student, travels primarily by train from outside London, resides in Wolverhampton during term time

“There are only two trains per hour into London and despite being the most expensive option, it is the most realistic and “quick”, especially if I have a morning lecture!”

- CSM student, travels primarily by train from outside London, resides in Surrey during term time

“Due to where I am commuting from I can’t get any other form of transport to London other than driving which would be both impractical and expensive.”

- LCC student, travels primarily by train from outside London, resides in Broadstairs during term time

“My commute takes 2 hours. I usually walk to Brentwood station which takes 20 minutes, then get the train to Liverpool Street, then another train to South Wimbledon, then walk to university. Sometimes I get a taxi to Shenfield station in Essex if I am running late as there is a fast train to Liverpool Street. It is a really long commute and when in rush hour can take me almost 3 hours to get home.”

- LCC student, travels primarily by train from outside London, resides in Broadstairs during term time

“I have to drive to my local train station (10mins) the train then takes me into London (1hr), I then need to get another train from central London to Stratford (10 mins plus 5-20 mins waiting time) where I then have a 10 min walk from Stratford international. It is the cheapest option (costs around £6000 per academic year to do this as opposed to min £10,000 to live in London plus travel costs). Depending on lecture times and train times this can take anywhere from 1hr 45mins to 2hrs 30mins.”

- LCF student, travels primarily by train from outside London, resides in Northamptonshire during term time

## LENGTH OF COMMUTE

Respondents were asked how long, on average, it takes them to commute from their place of residence to their place of study.

The results are for one way of the journey (not the full round trip).

The results for all respondents can be seen in Diagram 5.

Question:  
Roughly how long, on average, does it take you to commute to your place of study?  
*This is for one way of your journey.*

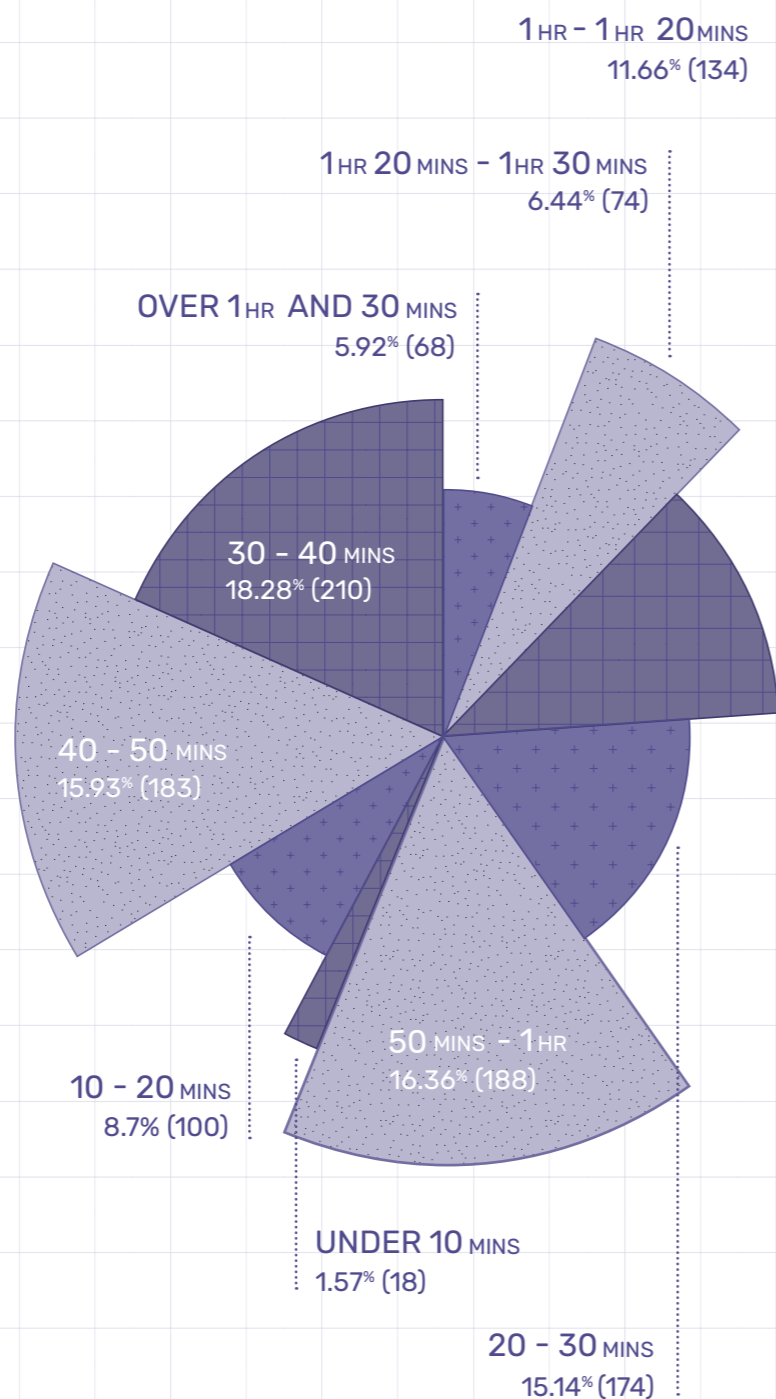


Diagram 6: Roughly how long, on average, does it take you to commute to your place of study? This is for one way of your journey.

The average journey time for all students is between 40 to 50 minutes (when using the median as the measure of central tendency).

Question:  
Roughly how long, on average, does it take you to commute to your place of study?  
*This is for one way of your journey.*

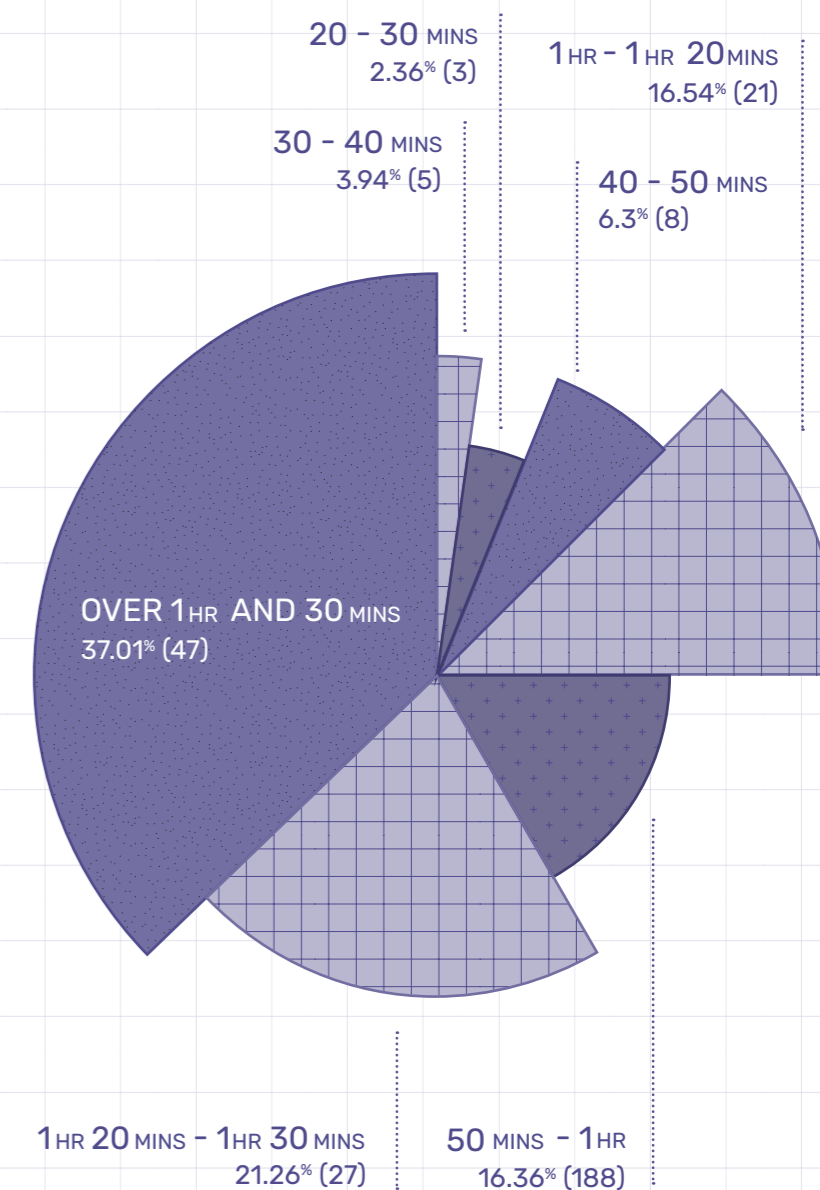


Diagram 7: Roughly how long, on average, does it take you to commute to your place of study? This is for one way of your journey. (Commuter students)

The average journey time for commuter students is 1 hour 20 minutes to 1 hour 30 minutes (when using the median as the measure of central tendency). A plurality of commuter students (37.01%) are travelling over an hour and a half to their place of study.

## COST PER WEEK OF COMMUTE

Respondents were asked how much, on average, they spend on commuting from their place of residence to their place of study per week.

The responses for all respondents can be observed in the Table 8 (right). The average response has been highlighted.

The responses for commuter students can be observed in the Table 9 (following page). The average response has been highlighted.

Question:

**Approximately how much do you spend per week commuting to your place of study?**

ANSWER CHOICES	ALL RESPONSES (%)
IT DOESN'T COST ME ANYTHING	4.57
LESS THAN £10	6.86
£11 - £20	21.46
<b>£21 - £30</b>	<b>24.71</b>
£31 - £40	17.06
£41 - £70	17.59
£71 - £100	4.05
OVER £100 PER WEEK	3.69

Table 8: Approximately how much do you spend per week commuting to your place of study? (All Responses)

Question:

**Approximately how much do you spend per week commuting to your place of study?**

*(Commuter students only)*

ANSWER CHOICES	COMMUTER RESPONDENTS (%)
IT DOESN'T COST ME ANYTHING	0.00
LESS THAN £10	1.56
£11 - £20	2.34
£21 - £30	4.69
£31 - £40	7.81
£41 - £70	32.81
<b>£71 - £100</b>	<b>24.23</b>
OVER £100 PER WEEK	25.56

Table 9: Approximately how much do you spend per week commuting to your place of study? (Commuter Respondents)

As can be seen in Table 8 and 9, the average cost of commuting per week for all respondents is between £21 and £30. However, for commuter students the average cost is between £71 and £100 per week.

Respondents were also asked if they had ever missed out on or foregone any of the following activities due to the cost of travel while studying at UAL.

**An overwhelming majority of respondents (66.99%) had missed out on socialising with friends**, and almost half (43.65%) had missed out on taking part in sports clubs and societies.

Over a third (35.05%) had missed out on eating a meal due to the cost of travel, indicating that the cost-of-living crisis often prompts students into difficult decisions between commuting and eating. A similar amount of respondents (34.52%) indicated they had not attended a class at university due to the cost of travelling to it.

Over a quarter of respondents (25.89%) had missed out on visiting family due to the cost of travel, while 12.63% chose to not heat their homes. 11.03% had missed out on a work placement or internship due to the transport costs, while 10.94% had missed out on work.

Only 15.57% of respondents indicated they had not been affected by any of these issues.

The full results can be observed in Diagram 7.

**OF RESPONDENTS MISSED OUT ON...**

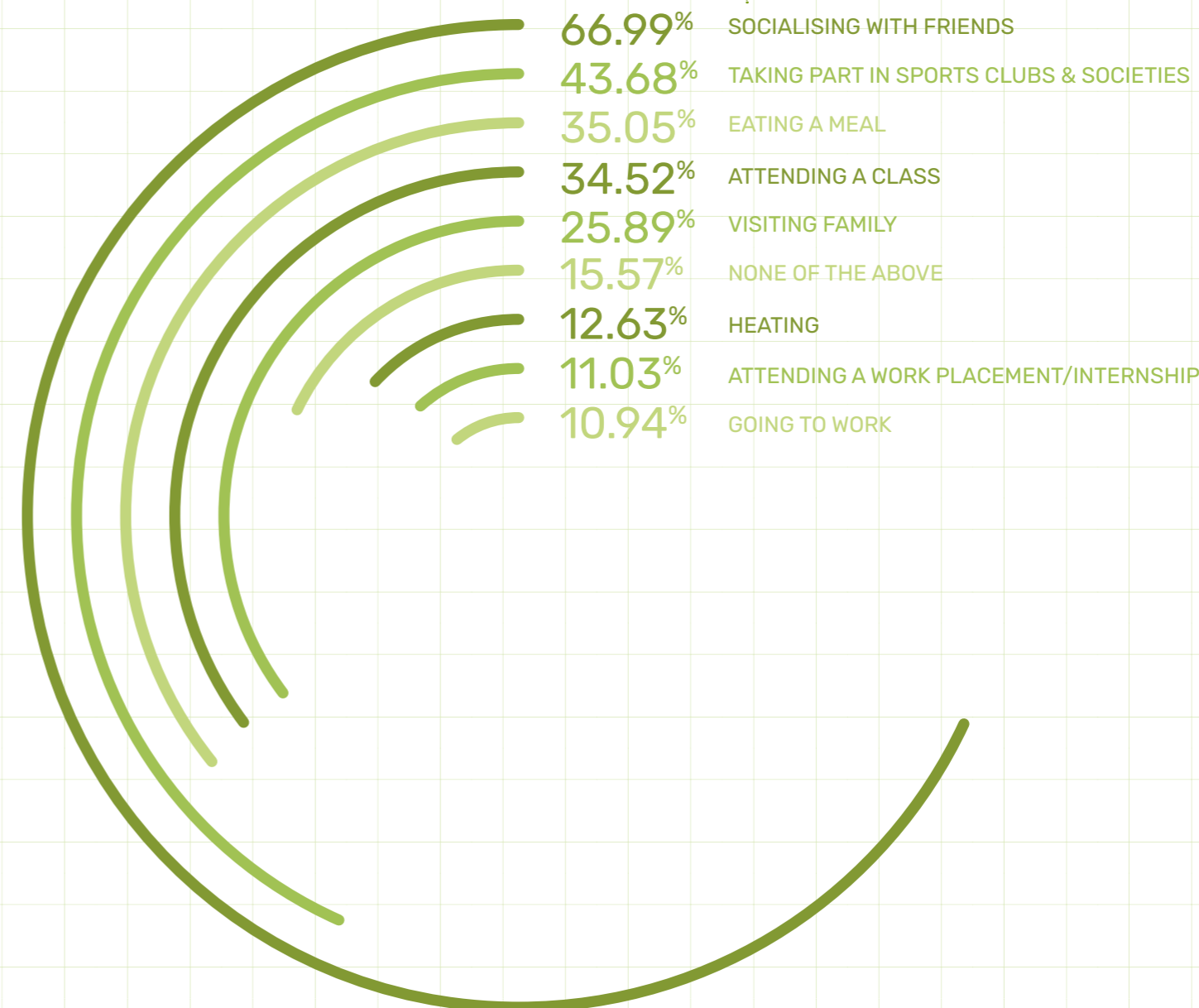


Diagram 8: Have you ever missed out on any of the following as a result of the cost of travel? Choose all that apply.

These figures rise significantly for commuter students in some areas, with 78.05% of commuter respondents reported missing out on socialising with friends (+11.06% compared to average), with 65.85% missing out on taking part in sports clubs and societies (+22.17%), and 45.53% missing out on attending class due to the cost of travel (+11.01%).

## DISCOUNTED TRAVEL

Respondents were asked what student travel discounts they currently utilise. Respondents' affirmative answers are provided in Table 10. (broken down by all respondents, London residents, and commuter students).

There are several travel discounts available to UAL students, including:

Age-based railcards (16-25 and 26-30) are the primary means available to the majority of students to receive discounts on rail travel. Holders of these railcards receive a third off the price of train tickets. As of February 2024, both railcards cost £30 for an annual pass, while 3-year 16-25 railcards can be purchased for £70. 26-30 railcards can only be purchased annually.

18+ Student Oyster photocards provide 30% discount on adult rate Transport for London (TfL) travelcards, and bus and tram pass season tickets. There is a £20 administration fee. It is available to all students who are 18 or over, live in a London borough during term time, and are enrolled at a school, college or university registered on the TfL scheme or on a mandatory work placement in London. Commuter students (who reside outside London during term time) are not eligible for this discount.

When 16-25 or 26-30 railcards are added to an 18+ Student Oyster photocards, students can save 34% on pay as you go off-peak fares and daily caps on the Tube, London Overground, Elizabeth line and most National Rail services in London.

DISCOUNT METHOD	YES % (ALL RESPONDENTS)	YES % (LONDON RESPONDENTS)	YES % (COMMUTER STUDENTS)	
HAVE YOU BOUGHT A 16-25 RAILCARD OR 26-30 RAILCARD DURING YOUR STUDIES?	60.53	57.638	3.46	
HAVE YOU USED AN 18+ STUDENT OYSTER PHOTOCARD DURING YOUR STUDIES?	54.775	8.05	28.57	
HAVE YOU BOUGHT A TRAVELCARD DURING YOUR STUDIES?	DAY TRAVELCARDS	5.76	2.40	32.28
	WEEKLY TRAVELCARDS	4.79	5.00	3.15
	MONTHLY TRAVELCARDS	14.631	5.983	.94
	ANNUAL TRAVELCARDS	2.932	.903	.15

Table 10: What student travel discounts they currently utilise

83.46% of commuter students have bought either a 16–25 railcard or 26–30 railcard, as well as over half (57.63%) of London resident students.

This demonstrates the crucial nature of 16–25 railcard or 26–30 railcards to access to education for commuter students, especially considering 79.69% of commuter being dependent on trains from outside London as their main method of transport to their place of study.

# TRANSPORTING ARTWORK

Respondents were asked about how they have transported artwork during their studies.

Whether this is between their residence and their place of study, for their degree show, or for an extracurricular activity, students are required to transport often-cumbersome artworks on a regular basis.

This can lead to additional costs that students incur, particularly if opting for private methods of transportation (such as taxis) to avoid the risk of damage to the artworks, or due to the physical difficulties of transportation.

Respondents were first asked whether they have ever needed to use public transportation to transport artwork during their studies.

Over half (58.87%) had needed to use public transportation to transport artwork, while 41.13% had not.

Question:

**Have you ever needed to use public transport (such as a bus or underground) to transport artwork during your time at UAL?**

*This could be for your course, your degree show or extracurricular activity.*

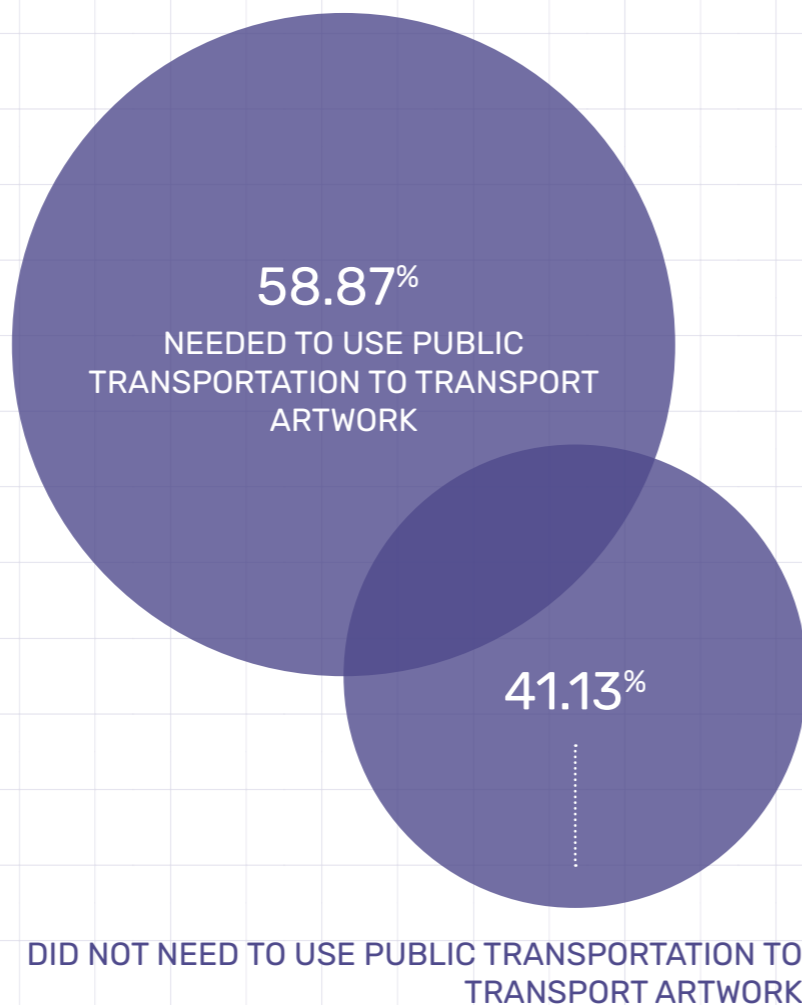


Diagram 9: Have you ever needed to use public transport (such as a bus or underground) to transport artwork during your time at UAL? This could be for your course, your degree show or extracurricular activity.

Respondents were asked to describe any difficulties they have experienced while transporting artwork on public transportation.

To the right are examples of the difficulties respondents have faced:

“It can get really hard because I am a product design student and my projects can be quite big, having to travel with my artwork doesn’t encourage me to make big things or to take them home because the times I travel are really busy and cramped up on the trains.”

*- Chelsea student, resides in London during term time*

“Absolutely. [Artwork] has been damaged and stolen. I have faced abuse (physical and verbal) from members of the public, and been refused permission to board a bus and/or train. Most commonly, however, I have incurred physical injury to myself as a result of carrying heavy artworks to/from my place of study. All of these things have happened multiple times and on a regular basis.”

*- LCC student, resides in Cambridge during term time*

“As artwork can often be unwieldy and oversized or strangely shaped objects, it makes it very difficult to transport everything especially if there are lots of different changes and connections being made on my journey. I often don’t offer to take projects back from uni in order to work on them at home because there’s no feasible way for me to make it there and back without it being damaged.”

*- Wimbledon student, resides in London during term time*

"It's more dependent on the weather. If it's raining, I might have to leave larger things at home/ or at uni and plan to transport them at a different time. This is also the same for peak train times/ busy trains and tubes."

- LCC student, resides in Hampshire during term time

"The display assignments can get very overloaded, so I had to carry 4-5 bags of work with me in a bus while commuting to and from. One of the bags fell and broke some of my work inside due to the inconvenience, costing me around £15 pounds of loss."

- Chelsea student, resides in London during term time

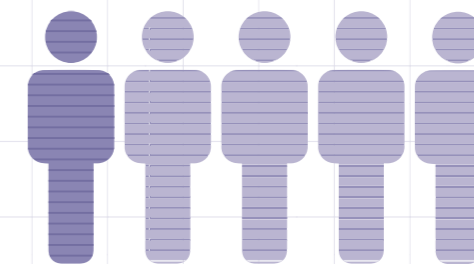
"In first year, I almost shattered a divider on the tube as the wood I was carrying was way too heavy. I also don't ever make designs or models that are too big to fit in a shopping bag, the tube gets too busy to consider bigger projects." - CSM student, resides in London during term time

- CSM student, resides in London during term time

"Yes massively, but mines more about photography equipment and styling materials. So in most cases I'm using public transport to transport £1000s worth of gear which is dangerous as I'm an easy target to rob."

- LCF student, resides in London during term time

Respondents were also asked whether they have ever needed to pay for private transportation (such as a taxi or hired transit van) to transport artwork during their studies.



One in five respondents (20.12%) reported needing to use private transportation to transport artwork at some point during their studies.

This figure rises to almost a third (31.19%) for final year students (+11.07%), indicating that final year projects may incur additional costs to ensure the safety of the artwork transported.

Respondents provided examples of when they had paid to use private transportation to transport artwork, including the costs incurred:

“Once for the degree show at Bargehouse which cost me 28 pounds from my accommodation in Kings cross to South Bank via Bolt taxi. Second time to take a canvas to Camberwell College which cost me 35 pounds via Black Cab.”

- Camberwell student, resides in London during term time

“I paid for an Uber this one time and it cost around £40, never again, but I had no choice, it was the only way I could get my work to uni safe and with little chances of it getting crushed or stomped on.”

- CSM student, resides in London during term time

“I spent £100 transporting my work from outside London to campus, this was not factored into the cost of study. Without paying that much I wouldn't have been able to show my work in the degree show. I was then not able to attend the PV [private view] because I had no more budget left to travel.”

- Chelsea student, resides in Essex during term time

“When I have made large installation pieces it is often dangerous to transport it on public transport, or not allowed (I've been turned away from buses with certain tables etc.) and then I have to spend a fortune on an Uber or walk there.”

- LCC student, resides in London during term time

“I have had to take an Uber home when I had too much equipment for a shoot because I couldn't carry it home and it cost me £30 to take the Uber.”

- LCF student, resides in London during term time

## TRAVELLING AT NIGHT

Respondents were asked about their perceptions of safety when travelling alone at night.

Safety concerns around transport options can lead to increased isolation for students, as well as indirectly contributing to rising transport costs, if certain modes of transportation are ruled out due to safety concerns.

Respondents were first asked what their primary reasons for travelling alone at night are. Night was defined as the survey as any time between 9pm and 6am.

The vast majority of respondents travel alone at night for socialising (74.46%), while over half (51.63%) travel alone at night to study, such as visiting the library, private studio space or friend's house. 37.5% of respondents travel alone at night to attend work, while under a fifth (18.39%) shop at night alone. Only 10.96% of respondents state that they never travel alone at night.

The full responses can be seen in Diagram 9.

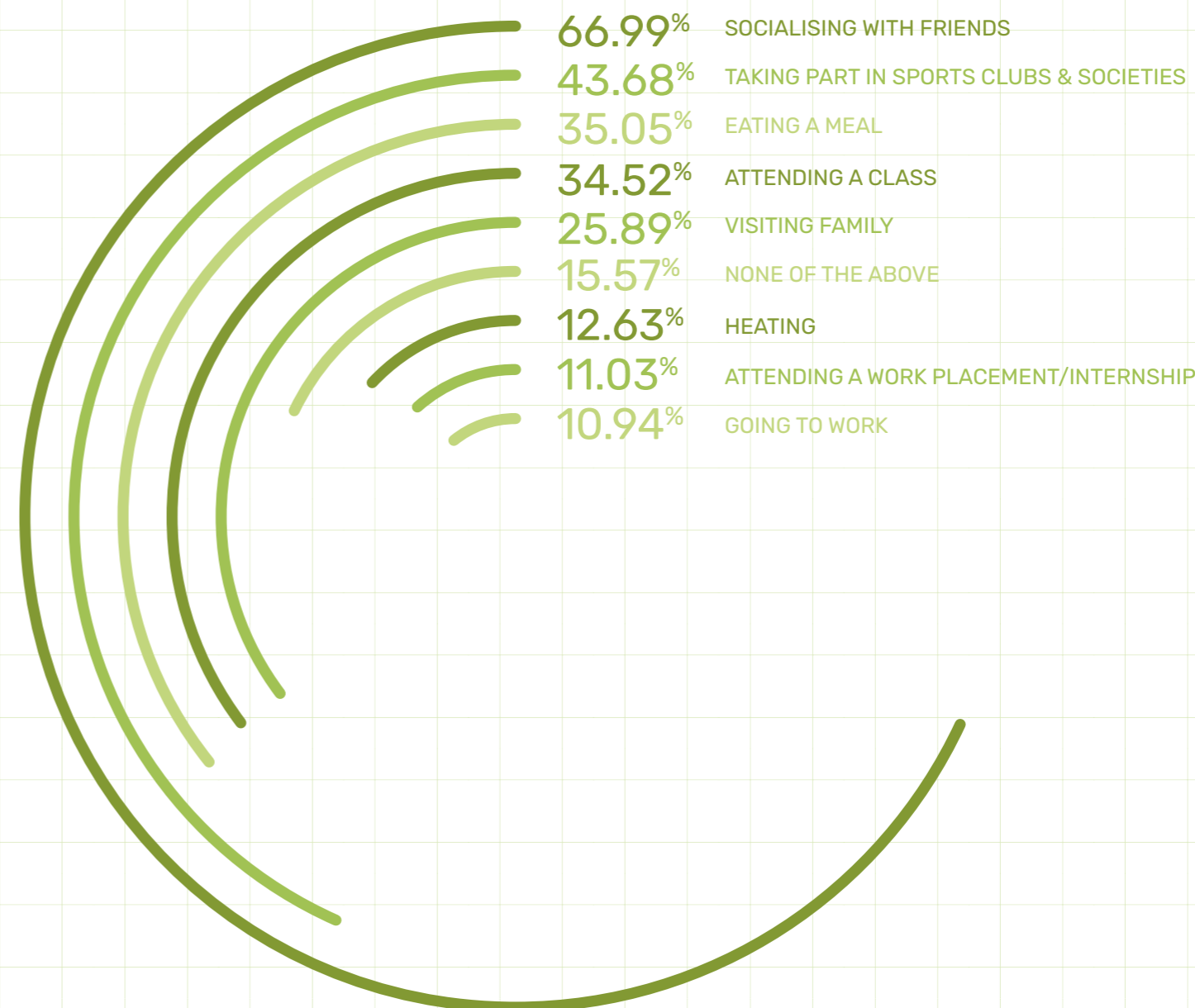


Diagram 10: Have you ever missed out on any of the following as a result of the cost of travel? Choose all that apply.

Respondents were then asked if feeling unsafe travelling alone at night deters them from doing so.

Overall, 37.41% responded 'yes', feeling unsafe does deter them from travelling alone at night. 44.34% of respondents answered 'sometimes', while fewer than a fifth of respondents (18.25%) responded 'no'.

There are distinct differences in response based on gender, as can be observed in the table below.

IF YOU FEEL UNSAFE TRAVELLING AT NIGHT, DOES THIS DETER YOU FROM DOING SO?	MEN (INCLUDING TRANSGENDER MEN) %	WOMEN (INCLUDING TRANSGENDER WOMEN) %
YES	12.98	42.29
SOMETIMES	44.27	43.77
NO	42.75	13.74

Table 11: If feeling unsafe travelling alone at night deters them (based on gender)

Men are significantly more likely to say feeling unsafe travelling alone does not act as a deterrent on doing (42.75%), while only 13.74% of women respondents feel the same.

**This gendered perception around safety at travelling at night demonstrates the importance in addressing the concerns women students have while travelling in London.**

Feeling unsafe walking alone was listed as the largest factor (74.4%), while over half of respondents (57.65%) felt that a lack of street lighting contributed to them feeling unsafe. Just under half of respondents (46.76%) felt unsafe on public transport, while around a fifth (20.19%) feel unsafe in taxis. Only 16.62% of respondents feel safe travelling alone at night.

The full responses can be observed in Table 12 (following page).

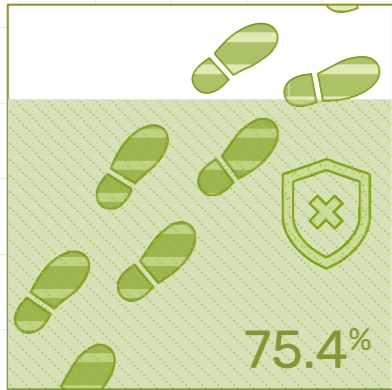
Question:

**If you do feel unsafe travelling alone at night, choose all of the statements that apply to you.**

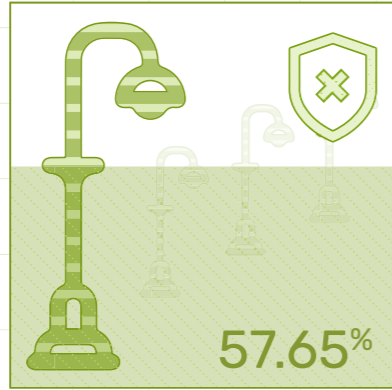
ANSWER CHOICES	ALL RESPONDENTS (%)
I FEEL UNSAFE WALKING ALONE	75.40
LACK OF STREET LIGHTING MAKES ME FEEL UNSAFE	57.65
I FEEL UNSAFE ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT	46.76
I FEEL UNSAFE ON THE TRAIN	26.85
LACK OF BUS SHELTERS MAKES ME FEEL UNSAFE	23.38
I FEEL UNSAFE IN TAXIS	20.19
I DO FEEL SAFE TRAVELLING ALONE AT NIGHT	16.62
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	3.76

Table 12: If you do feel unsafe travelling alone at night, choose all of the statements that apply to you.

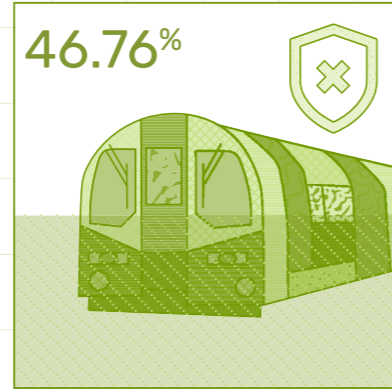
I FEEL UNSAFE WALKING ALONE



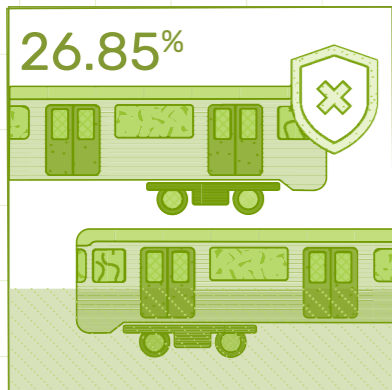
LACK OF STREET LIGHTING



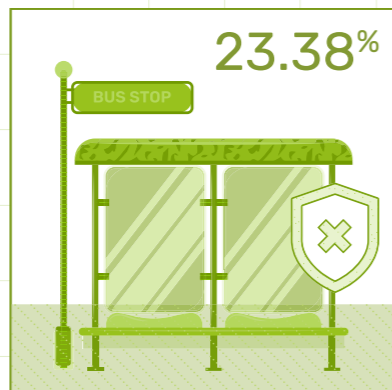
I FEEL UNSAFE ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT



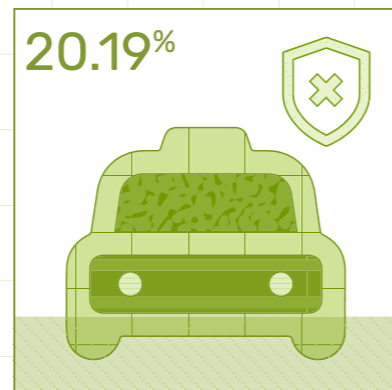
I FEEL UNSAFE ON THE TRAIN



LACK OF BUS SHELTERS



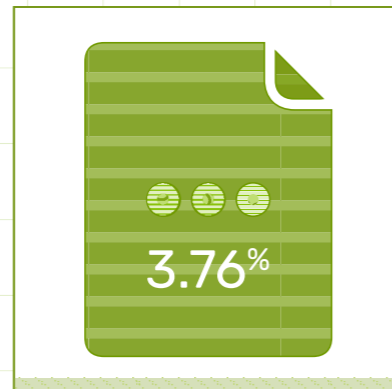
I FEEL UNSAFE IN TAXIS



I FEEL SAFE TRAVELLING ALONE AT NIGHT



OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)



Finally, respondents were asked what UAL and Arts Students' Union could do to make them feel safer travelling at night.

Respondents provided a range of examples, provided below:

“Running free night buses to halls of residence. Furzedown halls already has a shuttle bus but it only runs for around 2 hours in the morning and 2 hours in the afternoon. Perhaps a shuttle for the evening (even if it’s just on Friday/Saturday). As I feel the long walk from the tube to the halls is for me the most uncomfortable part of the journey to and from uni.”

- Chelsea student, resides in London during term time

“Set up groups across UAL for those that live in a similar location and create a shuttle bus to and from the area. Furzedown and cedars shuttle bus was a life saver. Or a way of sharing your location to a UAL street aware team or friend. UAL can come up with recordings in different languages demonstrating a way of getting out a situation from the UAL app. UAL deal out keychain alarms.”

- Chelsea student, resides in London during term time

“If they could provide whistles as an alarm system, I think that would be really useful! They had offered some alarm keychain last year, but they were triggered to easily since it easily caught onto stuff and got tugged. However, a whistle that can be blown manually would be easier to use for some, and more likely to be carried around.”

- Wimbledon student, resides in London during term time

Diagram 11: If you do feel unsafe travelling alone at night, choose all of the statements that apply to you.

"It would be great to have a number you can call, even if it's the middle of the night, for when you feel unsafe walking because often if it's late friends & family are asleep so don't pick up which makes it even scarier. Also, there could be somewhere to get free self-defence things from, like a keychain alarm."

- CSM student, resides in London during term time

"Honestly, financial aid is probably the best route if you'd like to make any student feel safer. With financial support, they can be more assured that they will get to their home or to university and not worry about not having enough to do so or feeling unsafe while travelling at night. I have missed many lectures due to financial struggles, and unless UAL can magically provide us all with bodyguards, I don't see many other options."

- LCC student, resides in London during term time

"If they could provide whistles as an alarm system, I think that would be really useful! They had offered some alarm keychain last year, but they were triggered to easily since it easily caught onto stuff and got tugged. However, a whistle that can be blown manually would be easier to use for some, and more likely to be carried around."

- Wimbledon student, resides in London during term time

"Travel Buddy system for people who work late in the library, just to escort each other to the train station or bus stop."

- CSM student, resides in London during term time

"Uni subsidised buses that drop off all student hubs such as accommodations so you can take a bus only for students late at night like a shuttle bus."

- LCF student, resides in London during term time

"Provide more street lights, provide more public transportation that is cheaper and available at night so we can take quicker routes home in case we have to travel at night."

- Chelsea student, resides in London during term time

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Trial funding the purchase of 1-year 16 to 25 railcards for eligible incoming undergraduate students residing outside the Oyster card zone for a 3-year period.

Upon successful completion of the trial, explore extending the intervention to 1-year 16 to 25 railcards for all students and/or funding annual 26 to 30 railcards to all eligible students outside the Oyster card zone.

Work with students and Arts Students' Union to address safety concerns around travelling at night in London.

### Trial funding the purchase of 1-year 16 to 25 railcards for eligible incoming undergraduate students residing outside the Oyster card zone for a 3-year period

Our research has found that commuter students (those residing outside London during term time) are spending on average between £71 and £100 per week on travel costs to attend their place of study.

80% of commuter students are dependent on trains from outside London to attend their place of study, while 37% of commuter feel they have no other option available to arrive at their destination.

83% of commuter students have bought either a 16–25 railcard or 26–30 railcard during their studies, spending between £30 (for an annual pass) or £70 (for a 3-year pass).

Holders of a 16–25 railcard or 26–30 railcard can save up to a third on the cost of train fares (equivalent to £33 per week for those spending £100 per week on train fares).

Commuter students are facing acute challenges posed by the cost-of-living crisis, and trialling funding 16 to 25 railcards for all eligible undergraduate students would go some way to lifting the financial burden these students face.

Eligible students would have their railcard renewed annually for a 3-year trial period (the length of most undergraduate degrees), as long as they are enrolled at UAL.

While it would be ideal to fund this intervention for all students, it is felt that a trial period studying the effects of this initiative would be beneficial. This trial would monitor the impact of this intervention on metrics such as attendance, retention, and student satisfaction amongst commuter students.

### Similar schemes are provided by other universities:

- Aberystwyth University provide all full time undergraduate first year students with a free 1-year 16-25 Railcard.
- Queen Mary, University of London also provide a similar scheme to their students, as long as applicants are fully enrolled and do not have an outstanding debt with Queen Mary.

### Upon successful completion of the trial, explore extending the intervention to 1-year 16 to 25 railcards for all students and/or funding annual 26 to 30 railcards to all eligible students outside the Oyster card zone

Upon successful completion of the trial period of 1-year funded 16 to 25 railcards for eligible incoming undergraduate students, we recommend exploring expanding this scheme. If the initiative has been shown to be beneficial to students in key metrics (as listed above) then the scheme would be beneficial to all eligible students.

### This expansion could several forms, for example:

- Expanding the 1-year funded 16 to 25 railcards to all eligible students, including those residing inside London. As has been stated in our research, when a railcard is added to 18+ Student Oyster photocard, students can save 34% on pay as you go off-peak fares and daily caps on the Tube, London Overground, Elizabeth line and most National Rail services in London. Making railcards available to all eligible students would contribute to bringing down the cost of transport for all students, including on pay as you go travel in London.
- Expanding the intervention by funding annual 26 to 30 railcards to all eligible students outside the Oyster card zone. This would be applicable to a smaller pool of students, due to the smaller proportion of mature students at UAL.

**Work with students and Arts Students' Union to address safety concerns around travelling at night in London**

Only 17% of respondents report feel safe travelling alone at night, highlighting more must be done by all parties to ensure students at UAL are able to live their lives in London free from fear.

**While there is an acknowledgement amongst students that safety concerns and fears of harassment are issues far larger than can be resolved by UAL and Arts SU alone, they have several proposed initiatives they believe could improve their experience:**

- Explore the capacity of extending shuttle buses run by the university between key student hubs, such as halls of residences and campus, at night. There are already several shuttle buses that run at various times throughout the day, however these are seen by students as limited.
- Introduce a late night phonenumber to provide company for students travelling alone at night.
- Investigate the feasibility of a travel buddy system, based at campuses, for students to travel to a bus stop or underground station together.
- Review the current UAL estate, including functionality of streetlights, and internal lighting policies when working on campus at night to improve the perception of safety amongst students.

**While these solutions range in resource commitment, we encourage UAL to begin a conversation around student safety and travel, and work in partnership with Arts SU to improve the student experience in this area.**

**Calum Sherwood**

Calum Sherwood is the Senior Policy and Research Officer at Arts SU. He has worked in education policy and social research since 2012.

Calum studied Politics and Sociology at the University of Bristol and holds an MSc in Social Research from Birkbeck, University of London.

If you have any questions about the report, contact Calum at [c.sherwood@su.arts.ac.uk](mailto:c.sherwood@su.arts.ac.uk)

2023/24

# COMMUTING REPORT

A report exploring the travel  
costs and behaviours of  
students at UAL.