

Pre-arrival Academic Questionnaire (PAQ) Key findings and advice for new undergraduate students in the Department of Media Production

WHAT YOU SAID

Thank you to everyone who completed the Pre-arrival Academic Questionnaire last month. The aim of the questionnaire was twofold. Firstly, it was designed for you to explore your previous learning and teaching experiences and your expectations of studying at undergraduate Level. Secondly, your responses have helped identify what academic and non-academic support could be helpful to you and your cohort and will be used to enhance your overall student experience. The key basic findings are listed below. Where you have expressed a concern, there is an advice box pointing you to where you can get further support and advice. Your comments reflect the findings in previous surveys illustrating that students share similar worries, concerns and past experiences so do not think that you are alone!

Reasons for undertaking your degree

The top four reasons you cited for undertaking your undergraduate studies are *'interested in the subject'* followed by *'wanted to start/continue studying'* then to *'improve employment prospects'*.

ADVICE Improving your career prospects is very important to you! You can get dedicated advice and support on careers and employability from The Edge Student Development Centre which is next to the Library on the Talbot Campus. You can:

- Book an appointment via <http://mycareerhub.bournemouth.ac.uk>
- Visit <http://studentportal.bournemouth.ac.uk/career/>
- Email us at careers@bournemouth.ac.uk
- Telephone the Edge 01202 961663

Funding

Many of you are funding your studies in a variety of ways. A *'student loan'* is a main source of funding for 93% of you, 22% are also using a *'salary'* and 35% are receiving additional support from *'parents, guardians, spouses, partners'*.

ADVICE If you are concerned about funding issues you can get advice and support on your fees from ASKBU at The Base in The Library in Bournemouth House at Lansdowne or Poole House at Talbot Campus. The opening times are Monday - Thursday 8.30am - 6pm, *Bournemouth House closes at 5pm and Fridays 8.30am - 4.30pm. Please note that Wednesday is closed for staff training between 2pm - 3.30pm. As well as visiting them, you can call them on +44 (0)1202 969696 and email them on askbu@bournemouth.ac.uk. There are also useful online FAQs for students.

You can also get money management advice available from the Students Union. They have a drop-in service 2.00pm to 4.00pm each week day in SC202 or you can book an appointment to talk an Advice Worker by calling +22 (0)1202 965779. You can also email them at: subuadvice@bournemouth.ac.uk. SUBU offer face-to-face appointments as well as phone appointments.

Expectations

Of those of you who responded, 96% are looking forward to *'learning new things'*, 83% *'meeting new people'*, 82% *'developing employability skills'* and 80% *'are doing a degree to better yourself'*.

ADVICE As part of your course, your programme leader will explain to you what to expect on your degree and importantly how to study effectively to get the most out of your programme. If you are unhappy about any part of your experience, talk to your programme leader in the first instance. If you have an academic issue regarding a unit, talk to the unit leader. Most issues can be resolved at this level. You can also ask your Student Representative (the student who represents the views of the programme) to raise any issues at the relevant Faculty Meetings to register your concerns if they are not resolved by your programme or unit leader.

Your main concerns

Starting anything new such as embarking on a programme of study can cause anxiety. Your three main concerns in starting your studies are a *'lack of confidence about ability to study'* with 83% of you feeling 'very anxious or anxious', *'concerns about sufficient funding'* with 82% of you being 'very anxious or anxious' and *'committing enough time for study'* with 81% feeling 'very anxious or anxious'.

ADVICE Feeling anxious is very normal. Students have busy and complex lives so balancing study and life outside of university can be challenging. It is important that you speak to SOMEONE if you are worried so that you can be effectively supported. This can include your unit or programme leader and the Student Support Team within the Faculty. You can also get support from the Student' Union and other University central support services. Most issues can be effectively addressed if done promptly. A range of university support services are listed at the end of this leaflet where you can obtain advice and support.

Understanding what is meant by the term 'Feedback'

Most of you understand what is meant by the term feedback in relation to your academic work and its use in your improvement and progression.

ADVICE 'Feedback' is not just about giving you feedback on your work but you providing us with feedback about your experience. One of the ways we do this at BU for your programme is via the Mid Unit Student Experience Surveys (MUSE). We ask you to give feedback once a semester on each unit. It is essential that we provide you with a satisfactory response to your comments. This approach is embedded in the University's learning strategy. If you do not feel that you have had adequate academic feedback, please raise the issue with the unit or programme leader.

Study and feedback preferences

The most common feedback you received in your previous studies was *'face to face with your tutor'* and *'written (hard copy)'*. For over 80% of you, your study preference is a *'mix of independent and group study'*. The most popular preferences for receiving feedback on your work are *'individual face to face with tutor'* then *'written (hard copy)'*.

ADVICE As an undergraduate student, you will be exposed to different learning styles and expected to study in a more independent way. However, group working is a critical activity as it helps students develop and enhance a range of skills such team working to generate ideas, initiatives and solutions and critical thinking. If there is something you do not understand or agree with, it is important that you ask your unit or programme leader. Do use the feedback, advice and guidance to help you with future assignments.

Your perceived academic strengths and weaknesses

Many of you state that you feel you have 'very strong', 'strong' or 'adequate' academic skills. However, quite a few of you are concerned about some of your study skills with 20% of you feeling that you have 'very weak or weak' *'numeracy skills'* and 12% have 'very weak or weak' *'organisational study skills'*.

ADVICE Your academic skill base will be shaped by where you have previously studied and your previous learning experience. Every student is different and you will have your own preference to how you study. However, it is important to engage with the different learning approaches on your course. If you are concerned about any of your academic skills, there is help available so DON'T PANIC! If you feel you need extra support the **Library and Learning Support** team offer a range of face-to-face Study Skills Workshops and online activities for you to work through at your own pace that you can access via the Study Skills area in Brightspace. Topics include: Literature searching, Reading and notetaking, Essay planning, Critical Thinking, Reflective writing, BU Harvard referencing, Using EndNote, Presentation skills, Time management, Academic writing style, Revision and exam techniques. If you have any questions please email studyskills@bournemouth.ac.uk

You can also visit FMC's widely recognised **Learning Development Team** based in Weymouth House. Here, you will find a welcoming, subject knowledgeable academic community where one-to-one, 50-minute student-centred tutorial support is offered. Informal confidential discussions and guidance on academic conventions such as assignment brief checking, BU Harvard Referencing, essay and report structures, communication skills, positive learning strategies and plagiarism avoidance are some of the specialisms. The LD team can advise you on how to use your academic skills to improve and enhance your work. Students at all levels are welcome. You can request an appointment by either visiting WG08 or email them at FMClearningdevelopment@bournemouth.ac.uk

ADVICE Create your own study Group As a undergraduate student, studying alone outside of class can be challenging especially if you do not understand something. It can be helpful to create a 'Study Group' of fellow students who are on your course who you can contact outside of the classroom. A study group can be a very supportive learning tool especially if it contains fellow students who have different academic skills

Skill development and expected impact of your undergraduate qualification

All of you felt that an undergraduate degree will help *'develop the skills employers need', 'better prepare you for employment', 'help you present yourself with more confidence', 'improve your communication skills', 'provide opportunities to meet employers'* and *'improve your chances of getting a job'*.

ADVICE To achieve your expectations, it is important that you harness all your skills when applying for a job after your undergraduate degree. The Careers and Employability Team based at The Edge by the Library can help you produce a CV and applications that will be of interest to employers so do get in touch with them on the details above.

Use of support services whilst at university

The top four services those who completed the questionnaire said they are likely to use are *'careers and employment'* (52%) followed by *'sports facilities'* (42%) then *'health and wellbeing'* (42%) and *'academic support services'* (40%).

ADVICE As you progress in your studies, you may find that your circumstances change requiring you to access a range of services that you initially didn't expect to use. Other helpful numbers are listed at the bottom of this page.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS COMPLETING THE PAQ

Route into study and domiciled status

The entry into study route for those who completed the PAQ is diverse with 72% of you coming *'straight from study and training'*, 3% coming from *'studying and working'*, 9% from *'full-time/self-employed paid work'*, 11% from *'part-time paid work'*, 4% from *'unemployment'* and 1% from undertaking *'voluntary work'*. For 93% of you, your permanent home is the UK, 6% the EU and 1% Overseas.

Age

98% of you are 21 years old or below, 2% between 22-25 years of age.

ADVICE As a mature student, studying alone outside of class can be challenging especially if you do not understand something. As advised above, it can be helpful to create a 'Study Group' of fellow students who are on your course who you can contact outside of the classroom.

First language

99% of you said that English is your first language. All of you state that you are fluent in English. Thirteen different languages were cited as a first language demonstrating the diverse environment in which you are studying.

ADVICE If English is not your first language and you feel that you need extra help, you can get support from Language Support. You can contact them by calling +44 (0)1202 965300 or emailing pbarnes@bournemouth.ac.uk

Other university support services available to support you

Additional Learning Support

T: +44 (0)1202 965663

E: als@bournemouth.ac.uk

www.bournemouth.ac.uk/als

Faith and Reflection

T: +44 (0)1202 965383

E: faithandreflection@bournemouth.ac.uk

www.bournemouth.ac.uk/chaplaincy

Equality & Diversity Adviser

T: +44 (0)1202 965327

E: jmpkay@bournemouth.ac.uk

www.bournemouth.ac.uk/diversity

Student Wellbeing

T: +44 (0)1202 965020

E: studentwellbeing@bournemouth.ac.uk

www.bournemouth.ac.uk/student/wellbeing

SUBU Advice

T: +44 (0)1202 965779

E: subuadvice@bournemouth.ac.uk

www.subu.org.uk/advice