From Room Booking to Responsive Scheduling – Using Dialogue and Insights to Inform the Timetable

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A “Perfect” Storm? 2022/23

Gig economy – lucrative for students – 55% students now in paid employment compared to 45% in 2021

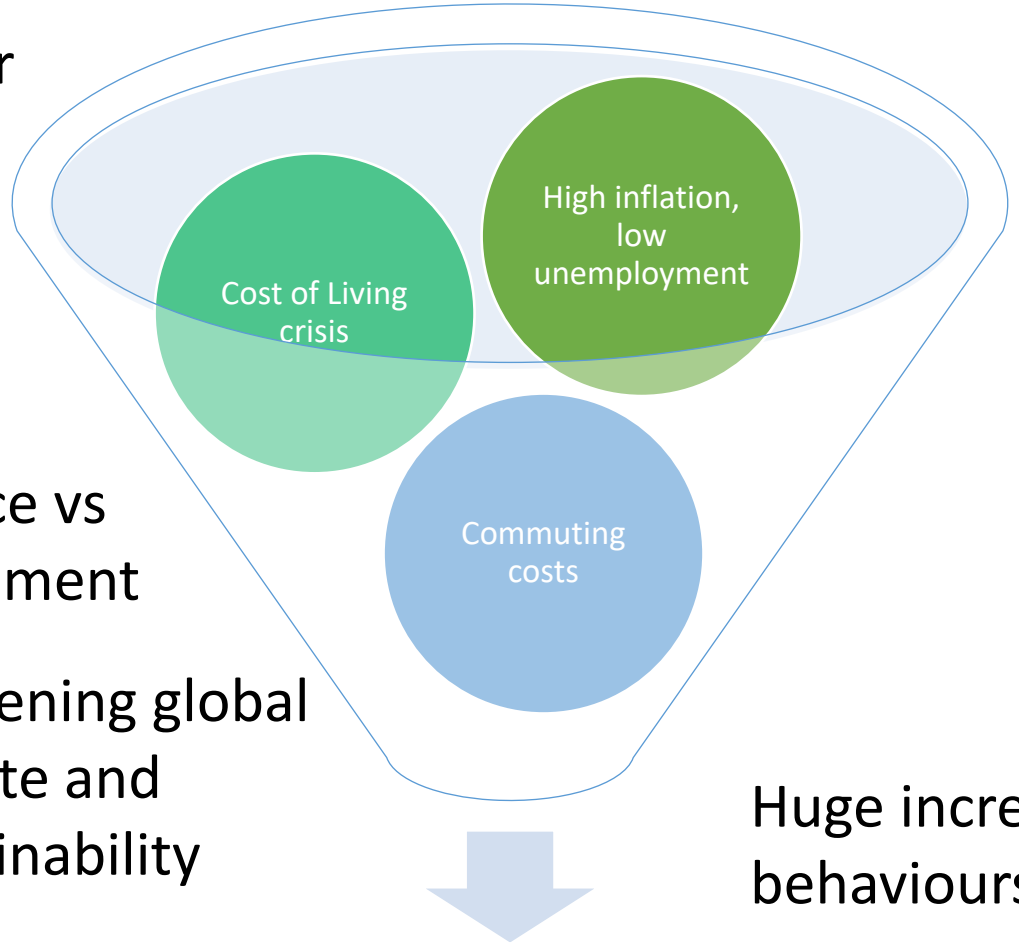
Freedom of speech and culture wars on campus

Quality assurance vs enhancement

Worsening global climate and sustainability crisis

Emergence of huge learning gaps post-Covid

Generative AI – Chat GPT



Chaotic Government policymaking in educational settings

International students and visa considerations

Fees and funding crisis

Huge increase in perfectionistic behaviours – Curran & Hill 2022/3

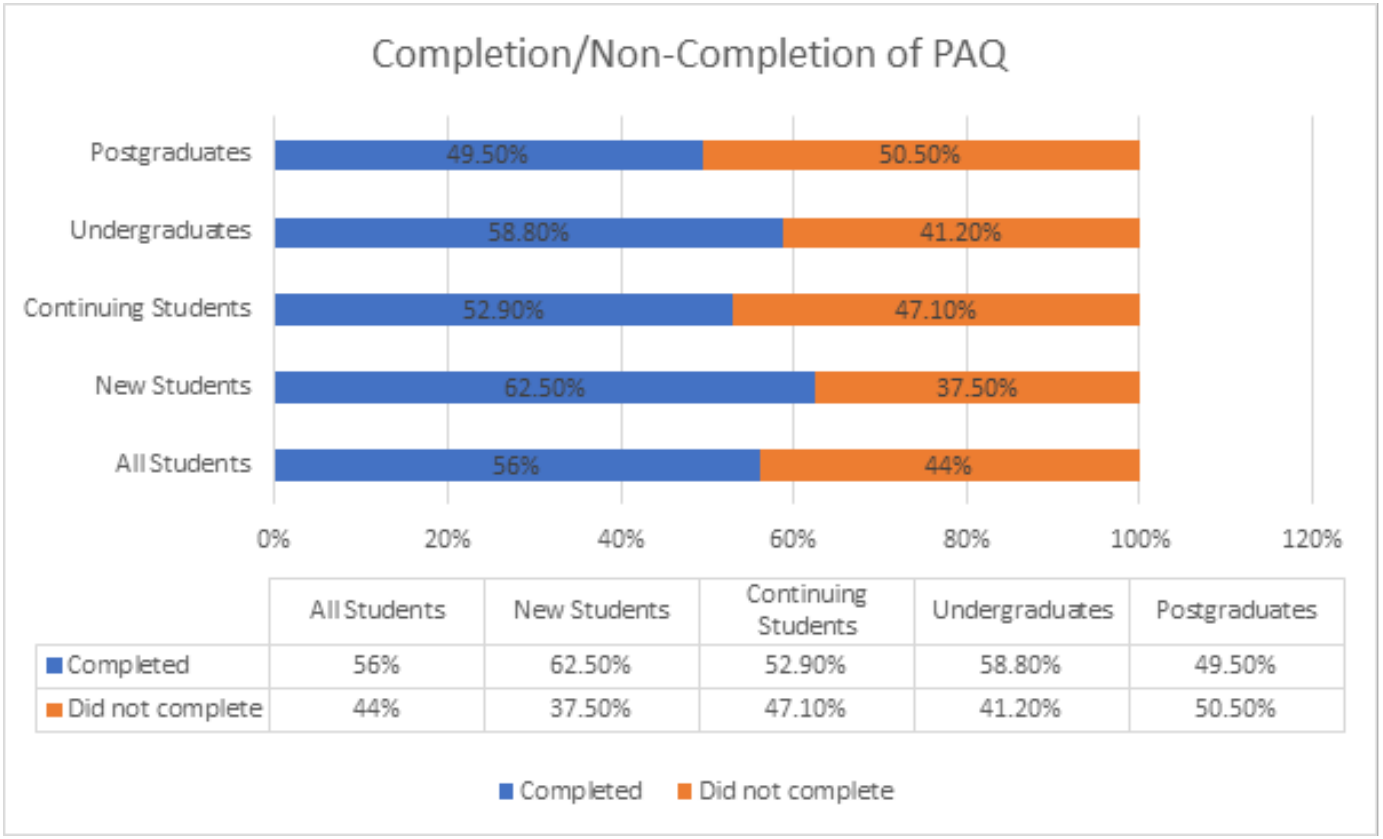
Huge sector-wide impact

Mental health and wellbeing concerns – post-pandemic trauma

Middlesex University London
UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST of SCOTLAND
UWS

Knowing Me, Knowing You – The UWS Pre-Arrival Questionnaire (PAQ)

- Are you the first person in your immediate family to go to university?
- Have you organised your term time accommodation and know where it is in relation to your campus?
- How will you travel to and from campus?
- If you are in employment how many hours per week do you plan to work whilst studying?



	All Students	New Students	Continuing Students	Undergraduates	Postgraduates
Completed	56%	62.50%	52.90%	58.80%	49.50%
Did not complete	44%	37.50%	47.10%	41.20%	50.50%

- Typical sector-wide engagement with PAQ = c. 40-50% of sample size (source: Morgan, 2023)
- Of the 13810 students enrolled at UWS on 28th September 7729 (56%) have completed the PAQ.
- 62.5% of new UWS students completed the PAQ in September 2023

A typical BCI student….

Travel to Uni

Will use public transport

Parental Experience of Uni

1

Will be the first in their family to go to Uni

Work

Will work between 11 and 20 hours per week

Accommodation

Knows where they will live and how to get to Uni

Talk Your Timetable (TYT) – New Initiative @ UWS

- Introduced April 2023 for September 2023 Term One implementation
- These meetings are held informally - Timetabling Division contacts meet with Academic colleagues either face to face or on MSTeams. This flexibility allows for colleagues to schedule in a meeting when the time is convenient to them.
- Prior to TYT meetings, Timetabling Assistants (TA) can share rolled data for Academic colleagues to review as some programmes are delivered year on year in the same format. This often reduces the time spent cleansing the database of old data.
- During the meeting, the following is discussed:
    - What modules and programmes are running
    - What information we can delete from timetables
    - What are the major changes to the rolled data

Talk Your Timetable (TYT) – Engagement Figures

Talk Your Timetable – Completed 2324 - T1				
School	BCI	CEPS	ESS	HLS
TYT Sessions	7	6	10	9

Total T1 = 32

Talk Your Timetable – Completed 2324 – T2				
School	BCI	CEPS	ESS	HLS
TYT Sessions	15	15	17	9

Total T2 = 56

Engagement increased by 75%

Since the introduction of TYT there has been an increase in engagement between Academic colleagues and Timetabling and strong relationships have been formed. The TA's knowledge of their Divisions and their programmes has also increased which allowed a smoother transition for each term.

Talk Your Timetable (TYT) – Initial Impact Case Studies

ESS - UGED09011 follows a rotational pattern for students where no two weeks are the same. The School utilises specialist spaces such as Art Studio, Science Lab etc. and varying staff are attached to the created events. 2324 – T1 submissions were made via a form which took the Timetabling Assistant a working day to process.

T2 timetabling was made via Teams during a TYT session. The Academic colleague knew the format of the programme and came prepared to the meeting. The time saved from not having to complete submission forms was advantageous to the Academic colleague and as the session was carried out online, the TA was able to share their screen to confirm that the timetable was correct. Again, saving time as corrections were made during the meeting and not after a review period.

HLS

Submission forms were previously used by Midwifery which noted relevant programme details. These were more time consuming for Academics to complete and the TA processing the forms would often have to go back and forth checking for accuracy due to the intricate nature of programme delivery.

TYT sessions were delivered for Midwifery in 2324. This method was more time effective and produced quicker and accurate results. From discussions around delivery dates/times this allowed a better understanding of programme delivery for the TA, building confidence. trust and enhancing relationships between both parties.

Future Implications for Practice

- Shift to responsive scheduling from room booking – how to combine with “block and blend” approaches?
- Using insights from PAQ to inform understanding of students’ context (including working, commuting etc) and how this might be applied to dialogue with programme teams to inform timetabling approaches (*note that this is insight data only)
- Better quality relationships between programme teams and timetabling goes beyond “form filling” and develops a genuine rapport whereby opportunities can be surfaced and challenges tackled in dialogue
- Achieves a balance between timetabling being both an “art and a science” – e.g. immersive learning vs cost of commuting and working