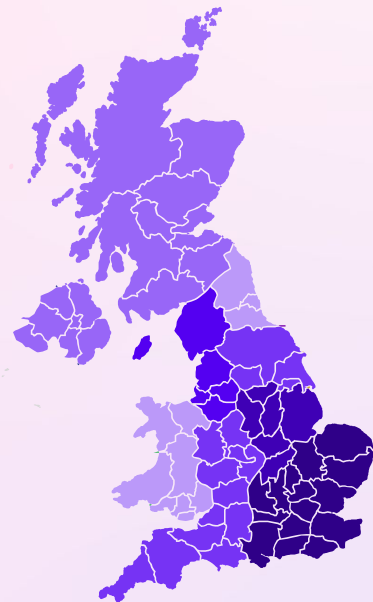NET NATIVES

Student Pulse Trends Report
February

Methodology

The Student Pulse Trends Report is running from January to December 2022. This is installment **2 of 12.** This research was run **3rd - 16th February**. We shared a survey with our audience on the Student Hut Panel. Equal weighting was given to each participant's response.
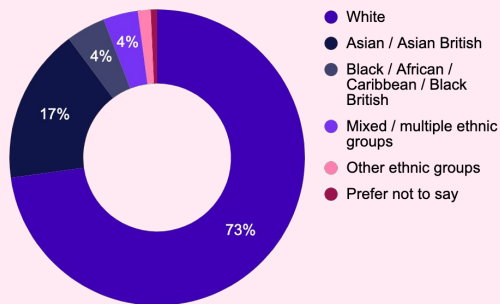
668 responses

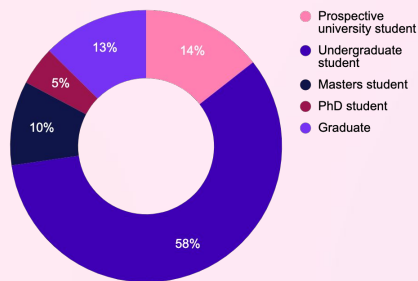## Average age → 22

Location:

Ethnicity:

- White
- Asian / Asian British
- Black / African / Caribbean / Black British
- Mixed / multiple ethnic groups
- Other ethnic groups
- Prefer not to say

73%
17%
4%
4%

Level of study:

- Prospective university student
- Undergraduate student
- Masters student
- PhD student
- Graduate

14%
13%
5%
10%
58%

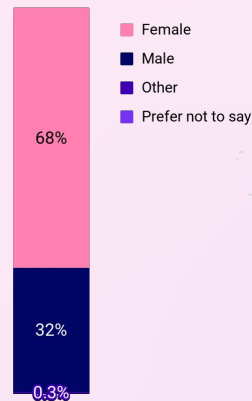## Gender:

- Female
- Male
- Other
- Prefer not to say

68%
32%
0.3%

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Key Findings

01

The majority of students have heard of Meta's plans to create a metaverse but only 1 in 10 students think the metaverse is trustworthy.

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02

When it comes to virtual reality, prospective students are most open to exploring campus tours and taster lectures.

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7 in 10 students think social media platforms should add a warning to un-checked facts to counter misinformation online.

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04

Almost 60% of students say they disagree with non-disclosure agreements being used at universities.

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The majority of students have heard of Meta's plans to create a metaverse but only 1 in 10 students think the metaverse is trustworthy.

➔ In 2021 Facebook's parent company was renamed Meta and they declared a company commitment to developing a metaverse. Meta invested heavily in **virtual reality**, building VR apps for social hangouts and for the workplace, including ones that interact with the real world.

➔ 76% of students had heard of the metaverse, but only **15%** felt it was a **good idea**, and **just 11%** told us that they **trust** the metaverse.

"[There are] definitely positives but also feels like we'll be less and less a part of the "real world" in the sense that we will be surrounded by virtual nature and lives rather than what truly exists"

"Meta has not addressed the issues regarding data protection and collection. Meta is a monopoly and has been violating antitrust laws and sharing user data. The metaverse is a diversion to the real problems that have yet to be faced."

"I'm not very clear as to what their final goal is. It sounds like an interesting idea but unsure about it's practicality or whether it could cause other problems like addiction or people isolating from reality."

➔

When it comes to virtual reality, prospective students are most open to exploring campus tours and taster lectures.

➜ In the metaverse students would use a **headset** to enter a virtual world connecting to a variety of digital environments.

➜ Unlike standard VR which is mostly used for gaming, this VR could be used for practically anything - work, play, concerts, cinema trips, and even education. We asked prospective students to rate the **likelihood of them attending** the following **university events** in a metaverse-like VR environment.

➜ Students said they were most likely to attend a...

  ◆ Campus / accommodation tour
  ◆ Taster lecture or seminar
  ◆ Course taster session
  ◆ Student Q&A
  ◆ Open Day

➜ But they are least likely to attend a...

  ◆ Freshers social meetup
  ◆ Musical performance
  ◆ Society or club taster session

➜
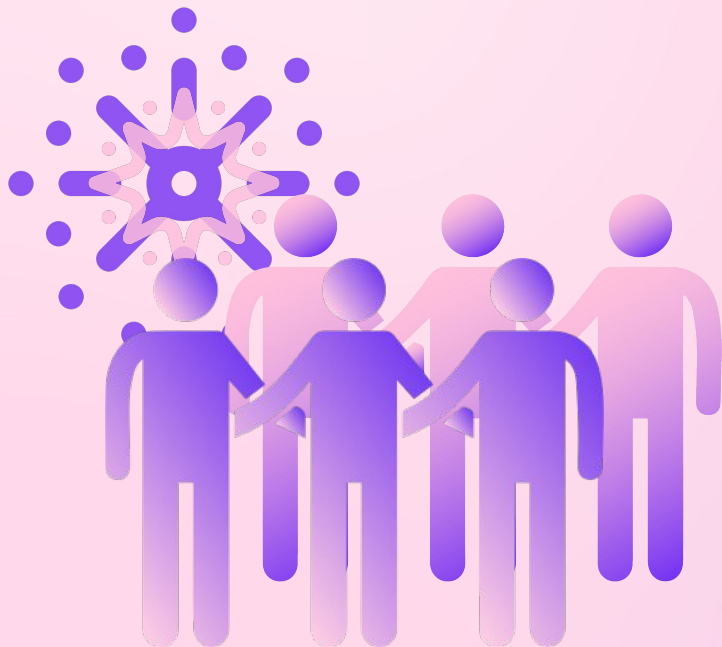
4 in 10 students are aware of the history of Lunar New Year.

➔ The 1st of February marked the start of Lunar New Year, also known as Chinese New Year, is the festival that celebrates the beginning of a new year on the traditional lunisolar and solar Chinese calendar. Many people travel to celebrate with their families, hosting banquets and outdoor spectacles featuring firecrackers, fireworks and often dancing dragons.

➔ Approximately **1 in 10 students** surveyed told us that they or their families **celebrate Lunar New Year**.

➔ Of all students surveyed, 41% said they were aware of the history of Lunar New Year. And 12% said their universities held events to celebrate.

Students said they celebrate by...

"Chinese customs (cleaning the house before the new year, wearing all red and new clothes on the new year, big family dinner on new year's eve, red pockets)"

"Big meal and giving money to the young members of the family. Although, being at uni this year meant I didn't get to celebrate it properly"

"We clean for a good start to the new year, we make traditional food - spring rolls and dumplings for good luck. we also throw beans to drive out the demons for a better, luckier new year"

7 in 10 students think social media platforms should add a warning to un-checked facts to counter misinformation online.

➔ In recent months, scientists and researchers have been discussing the problem of misinformation online and what to do about it. False information has been spreading about topics like the Covid-19 vaccine and 5G.

➔ 6 in 10 students say if they saw misinformation on social media, they'd ignore the information, 3 in 10 say they'd report it to the social media platform and a quarter say they'd show their dislike using an inbuilt platform feature (eg. down voting).

➔ **7 in 10** students think **social media platforms should add a warning to un-checked facts**, and 6 in 10 think they should de-platform individuals who purposely spread misinformation.

Students said that they consider the following to be trustworthy sources:

"I think if a source is produced by the government. If a source is impartial and is in no way linked to the company or organisation it is reporting on"

"Reputable websites like World Health Organisation, Gov.co.uk, science articles and journals"

"WHO, NHS, The Guardian, BBC"

"Official government agencies or companies with a good reputation. I think it's about using your common sense, so obviously The Sun and Daily Mail [are] well known but can't be trusted"
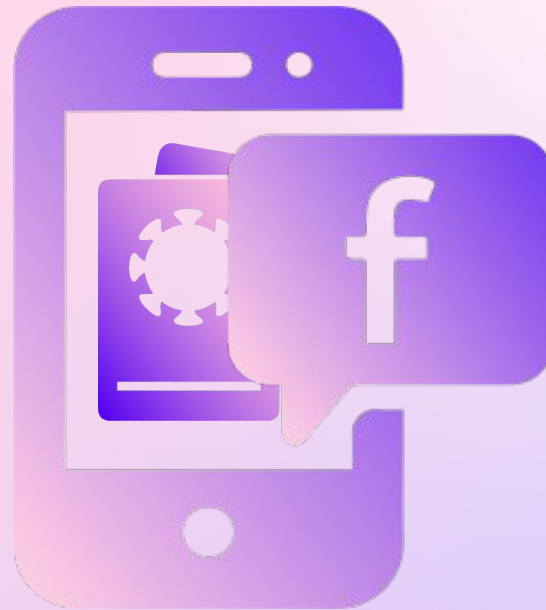
6 in 10 students say they disagree with non-disclosure agreements being used at universities.

➔ Victims of sexual harassment at some UK universities will no longer be approached with non-disclosure agreements (NDAs), as part of a pledge backed by the UK government.

➔ In 2020, an investigation conducted by BBC news found nearly a third of universities had used non-disclosure agreements to silence student complaints, resulting in the government asking universities in the UK not to use NDAs. Six have already having signed the pledge.

➔ A third of students have heard of NDAs being used at universities, but only 10% have heard of them being used at their *own* university.

➔ **6 in 10 say they disagree with use of NDAs** and a third say they are unsure whether they agree or disagree with their use.

The use of non-disclosure agreements tell students that a university is...

"Silencing the victim and allows the perpetrators to walk away without much repercussions"
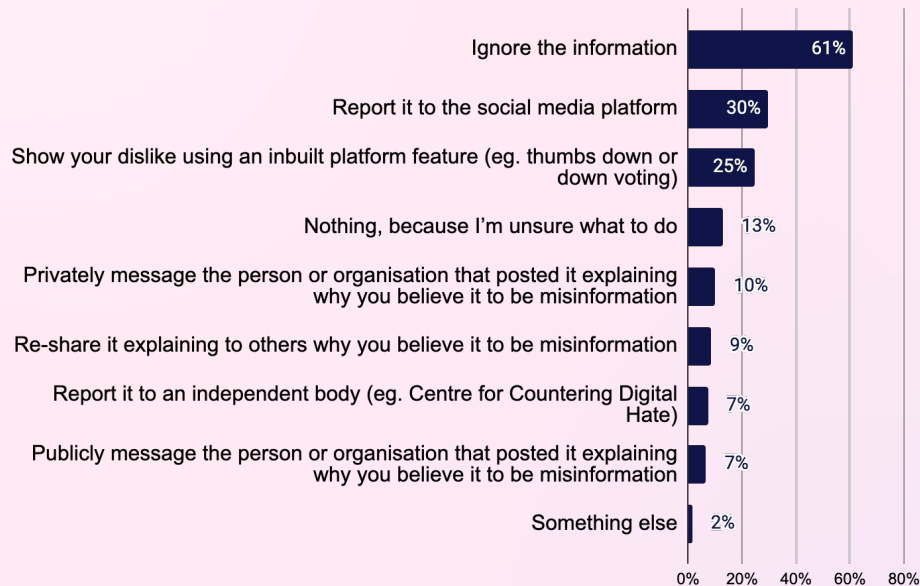
"Protecting the offender"

"Unfair on victims who are going through a traumatic experience. It is an abuse of power by universities to think that's an acceptable thing to ask. Also it protects the perpetrator, why would they want to do that?"

➔

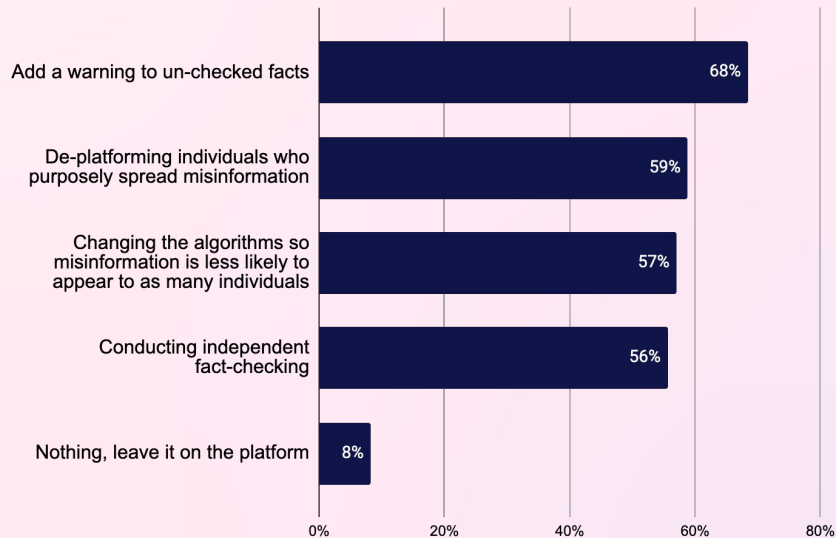# Student marketing with **transformative** potential

Appendix

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Ignore the information — 61%

Report it to the social media platform — 30%

Show your dislike using an inbuilt platform feature (eg. thumbs down or down voting) — 25%

Nothing, because I'm unsure what to do — 13%

Privately message the person or organisation that posted it explaining why you believe it to be misinformation — 10%

Re-share it explaining to others why you believe it to be misinformation — 9%

Report it to an independent body (eg. Centre for Countering Digital Hate) — 7%

Publicly message the person or organisation that posted it explaining why you believe it to be misinformation — 7%

Something else — 2%

0% 20% 40% 60% 80%

Q: When you see something on social media that you believe to be misinformation, what do you do? Select all that apply.