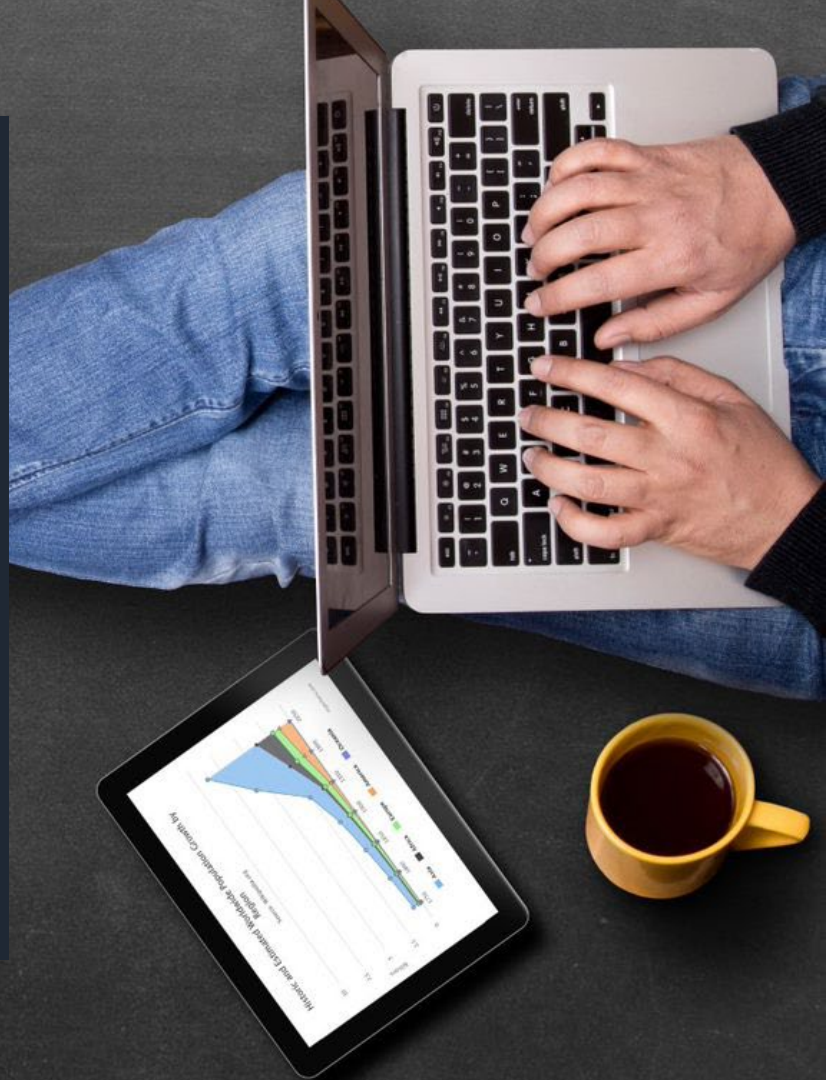


# Insight Newsletter

June 2022

UCAS



## Welcome to the UCAS Insight Newsletter – June 2022

As the first of the summer heatwaves passes through, things are heating up for students as well.

Pre-applicants are coming to the end of open day and exhibition season, meaning they're getting closer to having what they need to make their decisions.

Applicants are facing the final deadline to narrow down their offers. Any late applications from next month go straight into Clearing. For those who have already decided, it's time to get spending on the essentials...

But with summer holidays on the horizon, and the May DBD deadline passed, we've been looking closely at student sentiment. As COVID slips into the background and the cost-of-living crisis takes centre stage, there are some big changes in how young people are feeling about their next big step.

**Let's get stuck in.**

# What are students doing?

Across [ucas.com](https://ucas.com)

## WHO'S ENGAGING WITH UCAS?

Top ten searched for subjects on UCAS Search in May 2022

Position for May  
2022

=	1	Medicine
▲ <sup>1</sup>	2	Psychology
▼ <sup>1</sup>	3	Law
=	4	Nursing
▲ <sup>1</sup>	5	Business

▲ <sup>1</sup>	6	Computer science
▲ <sup>2</sup>	7	Economics
▼ <sup>3</sup>	8	Midwifery
▼ <sup>1</sup>	9	Physiotherapy
▲ <sup>6</sup>	10	Pharmacy

▲  
Change in  
position since  
May 2021



## WHO'S ENGAGING WITH UCAS?

ucas.com users: Top ten non-UK countries in May 2022



Position for May 2022		
▲ <sup>2</sup>	1	China
▼ <sup>1</sup>	2	India
▼ <sup>1</sup>	3	United States
▲ <sup>1</sup>	4	Nigeria
▼ <sup>1</sup>	5	Ireland
▲ <sup>1</sup>	6	Hong Kong
▲ <sup>3</sup>	7	United Arab Emirates
=	8	Pakistan
▲ <sup>3</sup>	9	Malaysia
▼ <sup>1</sup>	10	France

Change in position since May 2021



## WHO'S ENGAGING WITH UCAS?

ucas.com users: Top ten UK cities in May 2022



Position for May  
2022  
▼

=	1	London
=	2	Birmingham
▲ <sup>4</sup>	3	Leeds
▼ <sup>1</sup>	4	Manchester
▲ <sup>4</sup>	5	Liverpool
▲ <sup>5</sup>	6	Edinburgh
▲ <sup>3</sup>	7	Sheffield
▼ <sup>4</sup>	8	Glasgow
▼ <sup>4</sup>	9	Bristol
▲ <sup>38</sup>	10	Leicester

▲  
Change in position  
since May 2021

POSTCODE DISTRICT MAP



## WHO'S ENGAGING WITH UCAS?

Top five undergraduate pages on [ucas.com](https://ucas.com) in May 2022

Position for May  
2022



=	1	Tracking your UCAS application
▲ <sup>2</sup>	2	Applying to university
▼ <sup>1</sup>	3	Replying to your UCAS undergraduate offers
▲ <sup>1</sup>	4	UCAS undergraduate: When to apply
▼ <sup>2</sup>	5	How to write a UCAS undergraduate personal statement

▲  
Change in  
position since  
May 2021



# Our PAD23 database

Pre-applicants interested in studying HE in 2023



# PAD23 opt-ins

Our pre-applicant database, consisting of potential applicants interested in studying HE in 2023, currently has:

**268,535**

opted in for Education emails.

This is **up by 13% on** PAD22 Education email opt-ins compared to the same point last year, and **128% up** on PAD21 Education email opt-ins.

UCAS



## Pre-applicants

Top preferred subjects for the 2023 entry cohort so far

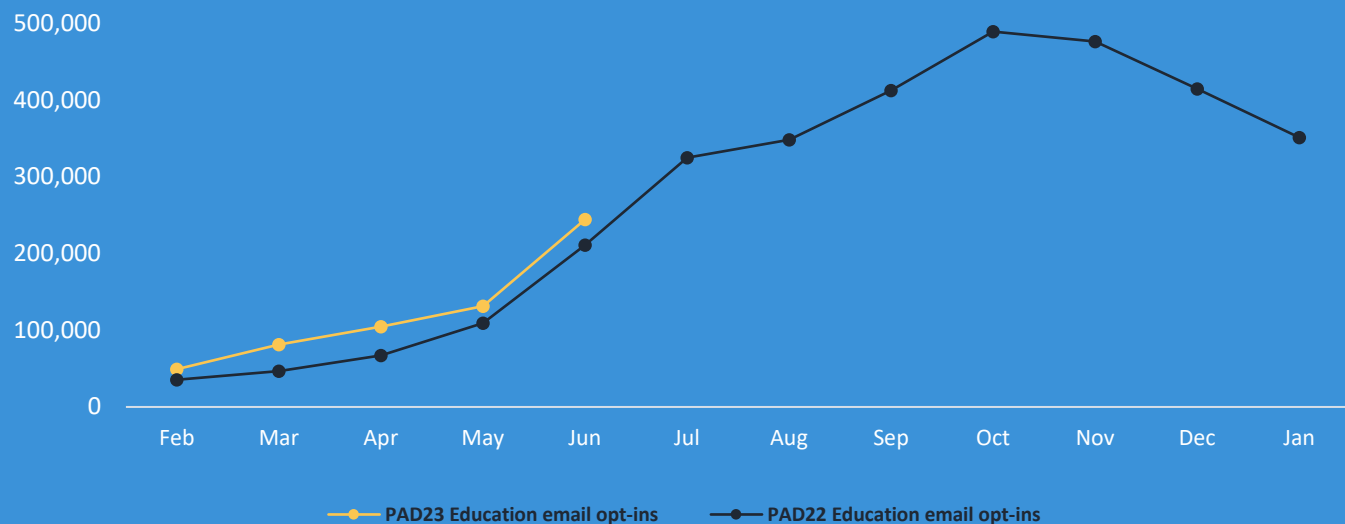
<b>1</b>	Medicine
<b>2</b>	Business Studies
<b>3</b>	Psychology
<b>4</b>	Law by Area
<b>5</b>	Computer Science

<b>6</b>	Biology
<b>7</b>	Economics
<b>8</b>	Art and Design
<b>9</b>	Applied Criminology
<b>10</b>	Sport and Exercise Science



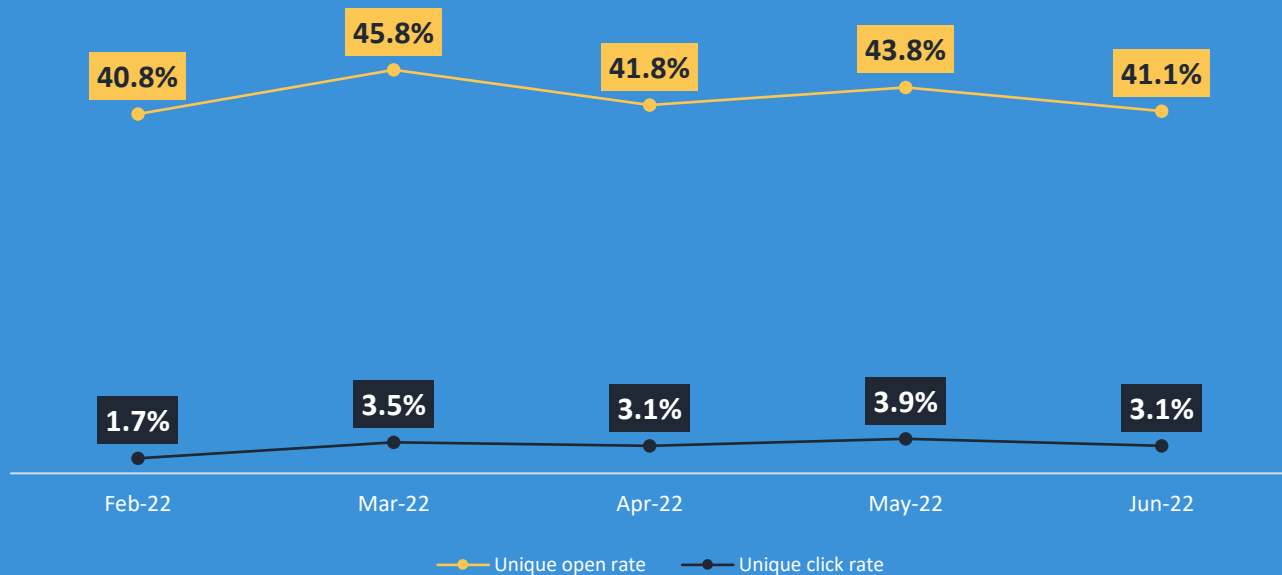
## Pre-applicants

PAD23 Education email opt-ins so far vs PAD22 (at the mid-point of each month)



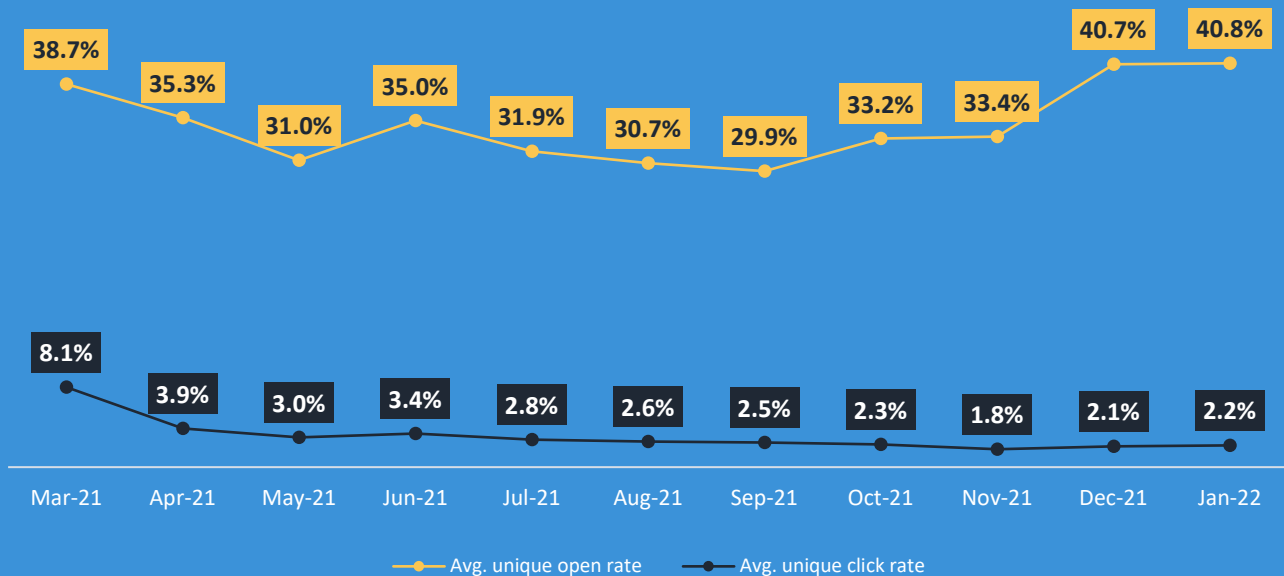
# Pre-applicants

PAD23 email response rates so far



# Pre-applicants

PAD22 email response rates



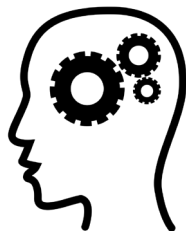
While response rates do lower slightly over this period compared to earlier in the cycle, they're still very positive as it's one of the key times for student engagement - so there's still time to influence decisions before the January deadline.



# Student sentiment

Insights from the latest UCAS/YouthSight survey after the May DBD deadline

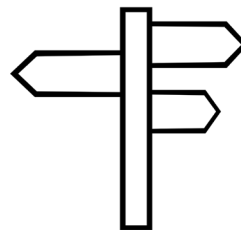
We explored...



The applicant  
mindset



Attitudes to  
exams/assessments



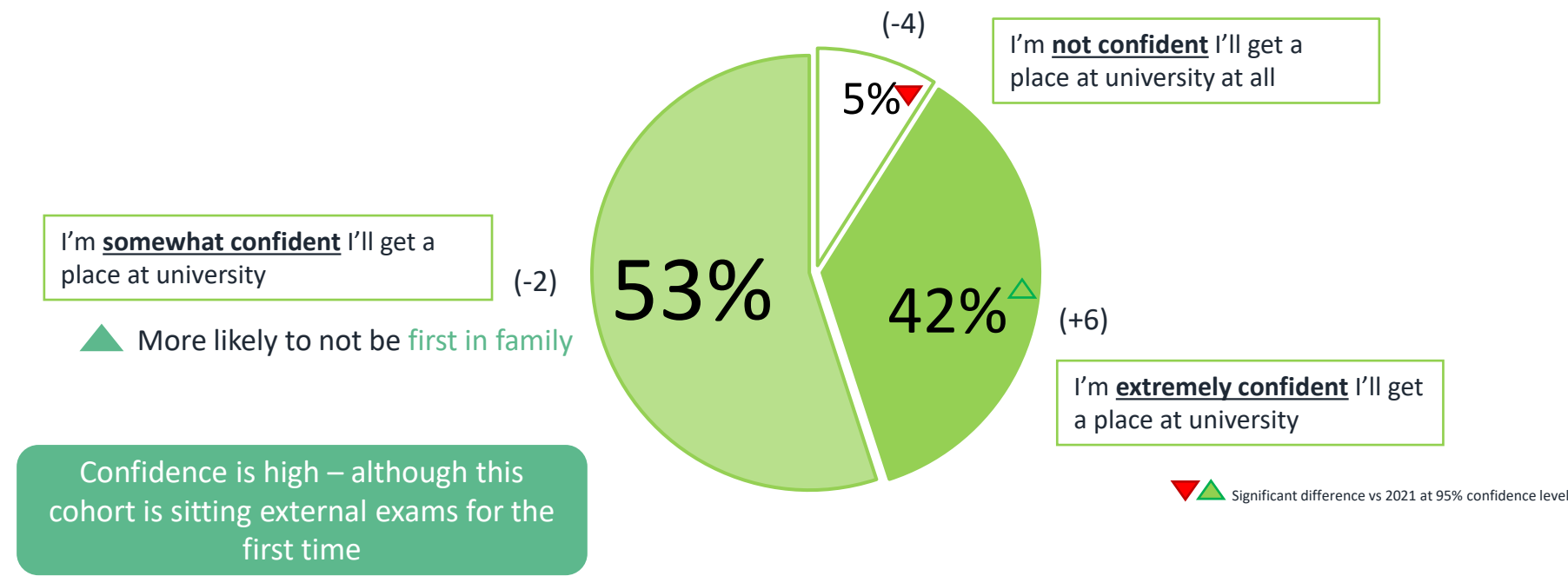
Results day decisions



University  
expectations

# Overall confidence in getting a place has increased since 2021

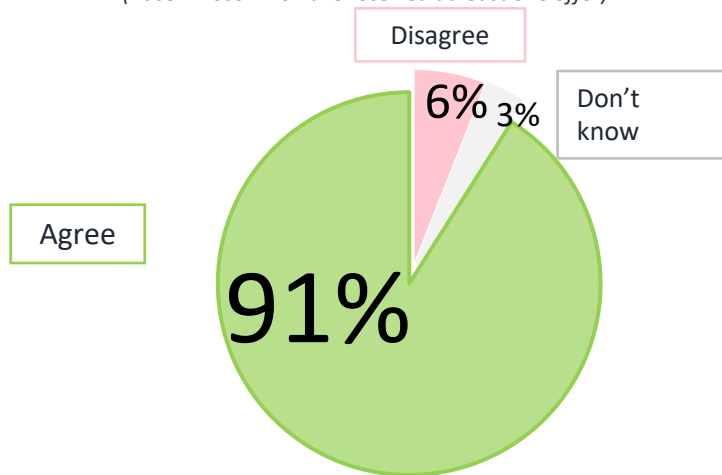
Confidence in getting a university place, % selected



Since February, applicants' happiness with offers has increased by 30%

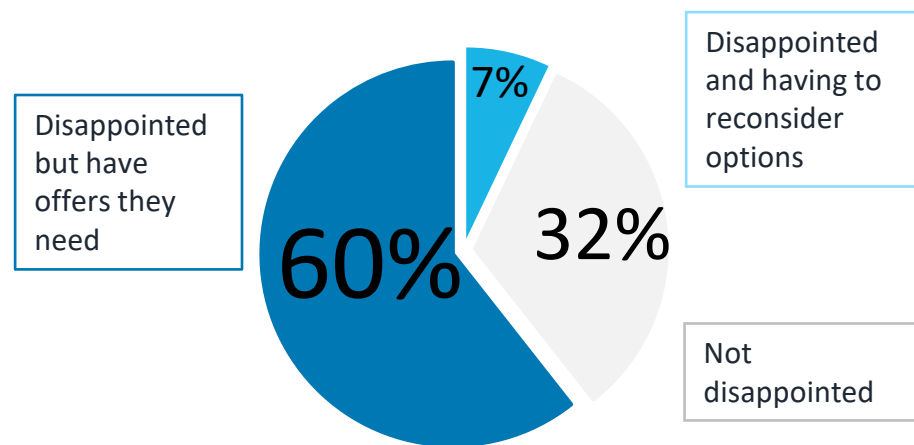
### % happy with the offers they have received

(Base: Those who have received at least one offer)



### Reaction to not receiving offers, % selected

(Base: Those who didn't receive an offer from all of the universities they applied to)



Students are largely happy with the offers they've received, but some are disappointed and could use Clearing to consider alternatives

**65%**

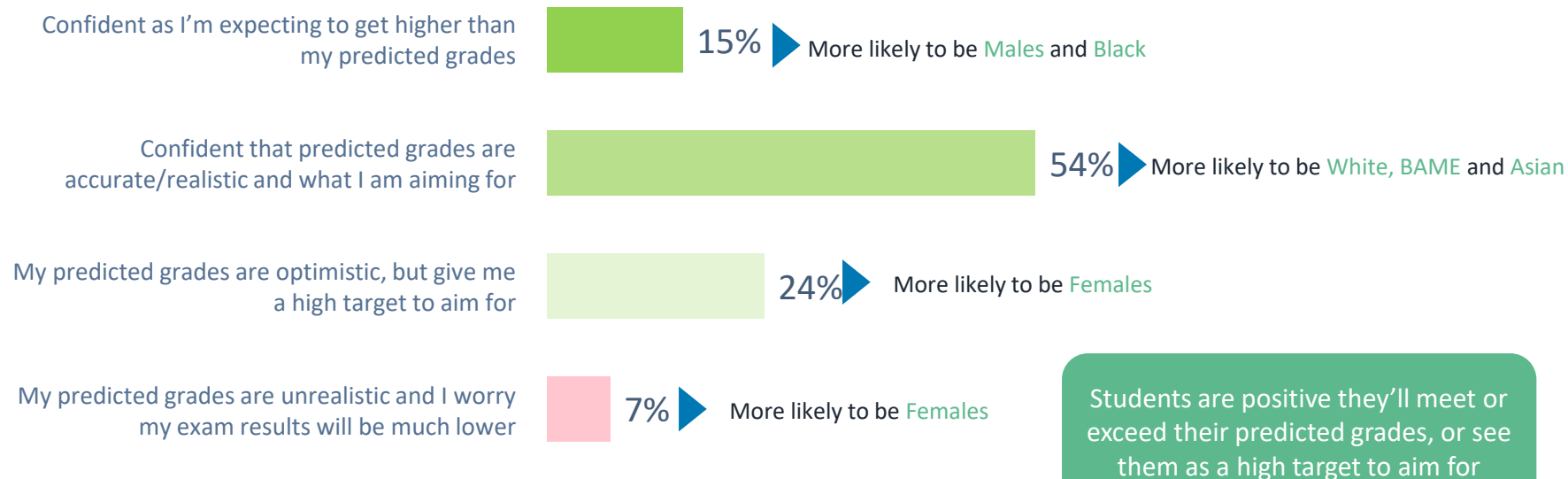
**of all applicants feel they are likely to  
get the grades required for their firm  
choice...**

**...10% feel they are not likely to get the grades  
required & 24% are unsure**



# Students are positive about their predicted grades, with females having lower confidence levels than males

## Confidence in achieving predicted grades, % selected

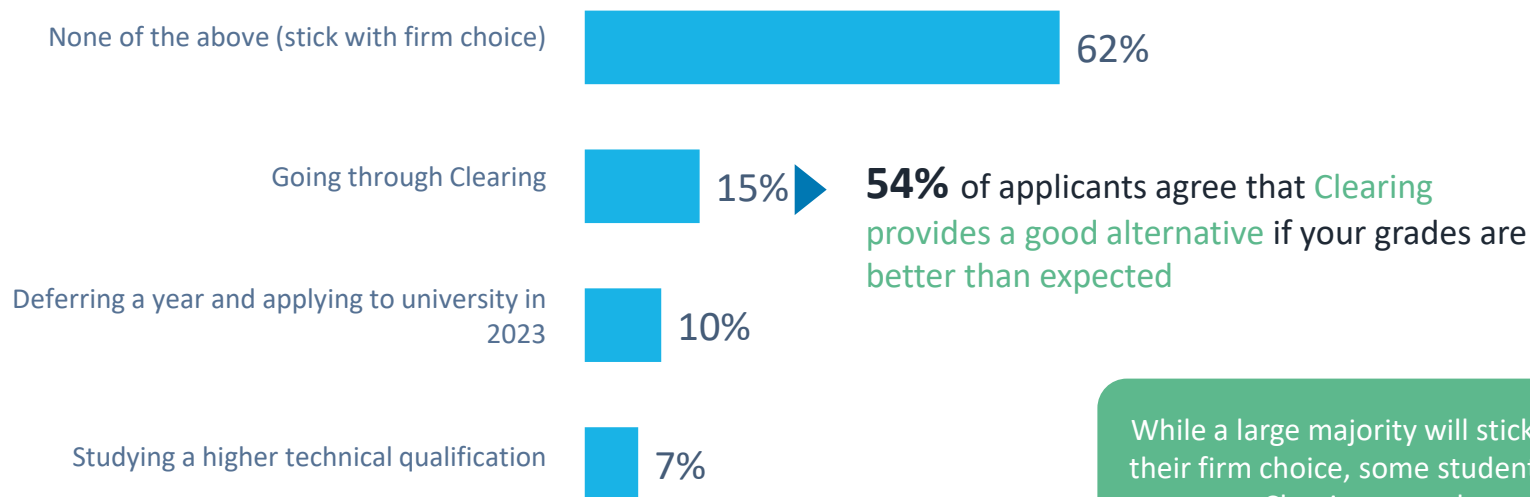




**37%**  
**applicants anticipate  
using Clearing**  
*(up slightly from 35% in July 2020)*

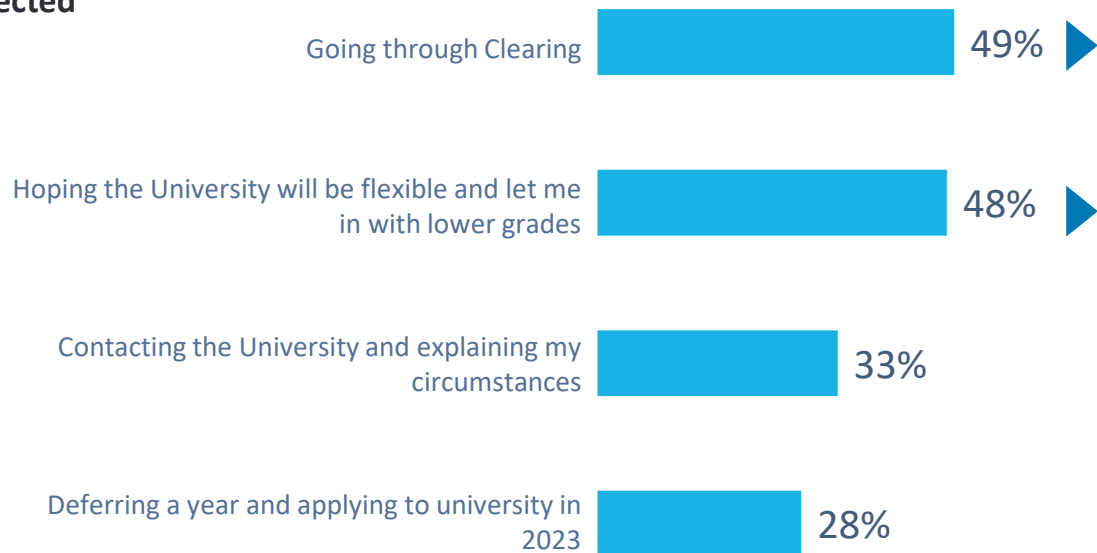
# If applicants get better grades than expected, the majority would stick with their firm choice

## What students would do if they got better grades than expected, % selected



# If they get worse grades, many expect to go through Clearing, or hope their university will be flexible

## What students would do if they got worse grades than expected, % selected

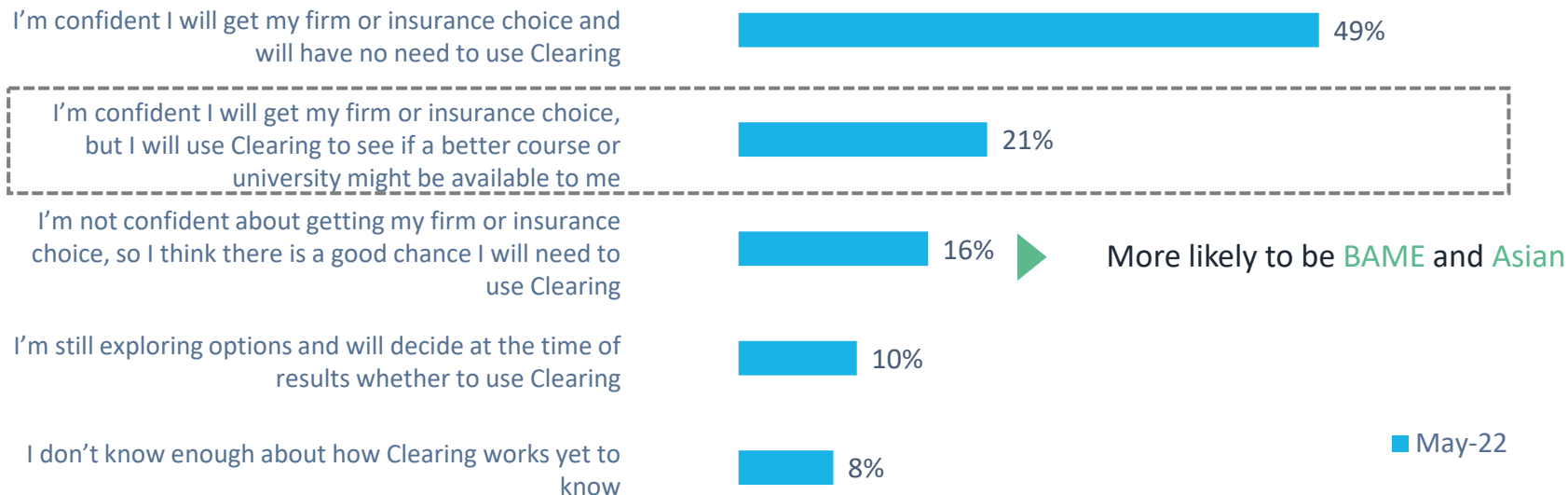


**79%** of applicants agree that Clearing provides a good alternative if your grades are worse than expected

**2/3<sup>rd</sup>s** of applicants would feel less confident getting a uni place if unis are not flexible on entry requirements

# Almost a quarter of applicants who anticipate using Clearing would use it to trade up

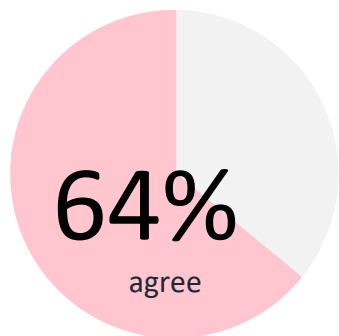
## % Considering Clearing





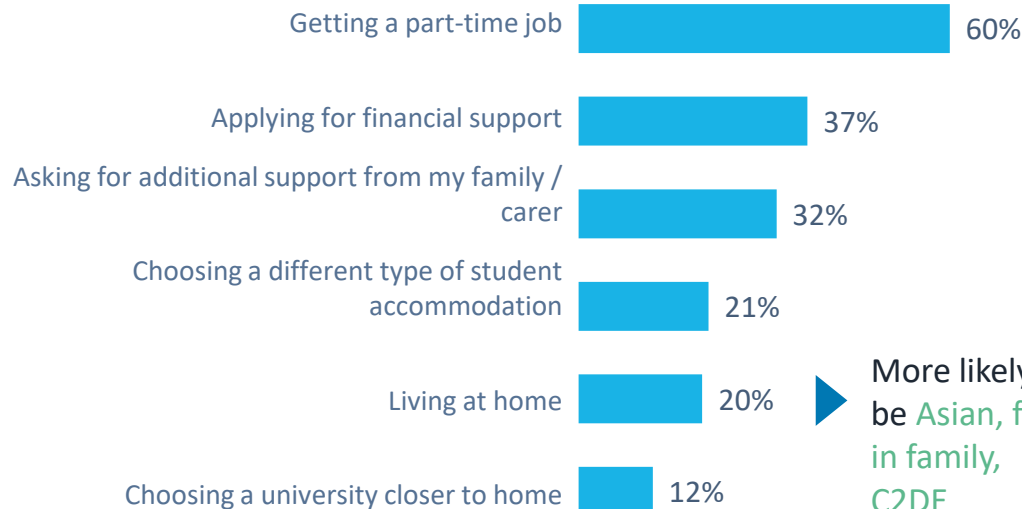
# The cost-of-living crisis will hit students hard – more students will have to juggle part time work with study

The cost-of-living increase will negatively affect my ability to have the university life I planned...



More likely to be female

## Top options considered due to cost of living, % selected



More likely to be Asian, first in family, C2DE

## Key messages for new student sentiments in 22/23

Today's applicants have already experienced a more exceptional build up to university than most. Now they're about to embark on another chapter, which is, once again, going to be shaped by the affairs of the wider world.

So what do you need to bear in mind? What should you be saying? And what do you need to avoid?

**DO**

**Be ready to offer advice and support if they don't make the grades.**

Many are confident, but their position may change on results day.

**DON'T**

**Underestimate the changing perception of Clearing.**

21% will use it to 'trade up' to a better course or provider – even if they get their first choices.

**DO**

**Be a cheerleader for the growing confidence and satisfaction of students.**

91% are happy with the offers they've received, which is 30% higher than February.

**DON'T**

**Neglect your cost of living communications.**

64% think it will impact their experience and 60% are considering working while studying

**Watch the webinar and view the full slides at**  
**[ucas.com/student-mindset-surveys](https://ucas.com/student-mindset-surveys)**

## The bottom of the funnel

It's uncharted territory as we near the bottom of the funnel this year. Clearing is fast approaching, the summer holidays are opening up and students are making life-changing decisions in a strange new world.

As providers, there's little you can do to change the legacy of COVID or influence the cost-of-living crisis. But like all things in life, communication can make all the difference. You can help students navigate the next few months sensibly.

Targeted Pre-Clearing and Clearing campaigns focusing on your opportunities and support will create the biggest impact at this time for this year's cohort. Awareness campaigns for 2023 students over summer could make all the difference for your autumn applications.

**We can help with that.**

# Get in touch

For further information and insights contact your UCAS account manager or email us at [educationservices@ucas.ac.uk](mailto:educationservices@ucas.ac.uk).