

# BALANCING



Each year we survey our university community to find out about physical activity and wellbeing levels on campus. The insight from **Balancing Life** plays a key role in shaping future plans and initiatives and driving Sport and Physical Activity's DO WHAT MOVES YOU strategy, which outlines our vision to make Leeds the best university to be active.

This year we were interested to find out about the longer-term impact of the pandemic continuing from the 2020 survey, which found a significant drop in activity levels and changes in people's attitudes and behaviour towards physical activity. The results this year have found that physical activity and wellbeing levels amongst staff and students are back on the up. This could be due to the easing of restrictions, or that people are more settled into the 'new normal' and feeling less anxious.

## 2021 HEADLINE RESULTS

1055

total responses to our survey-  
that's 31% more than 2020...  
thank you



10%

67% of you are active,  
which is up 10%  
from last year



4%

43% of people reported high  
levels of anxiety, down 4%  
from 2020

57%

of you are regularly  
doing physical exercise  
and sticking with it

27%

of staff are reporting  
caring responsibilities as a  
barrier to exercising

11%

of students are concerned  
of catching Covid which is  
stopping them from exercising

## LIFESTYLE



91%

do not smoke or have never  
smoked



25%

are 'binge drinking' when they  
typically consume alcohol (8  
or more units for men or 6 or  
more for women in a single  
session)



68%

aren't getting recommended  
daily intake of fruit and veg.

Results also found that the  
more fruit and veg eaten per  
day, the higher wellbeing and  
physical activity levels were



35%

report trouble with their  
sleeping (compared to 47%  
last year.)

Results found positive  
correlations between sleep  
and overall wellbeing.

# WELLBEING

We used two different methods to assess wellbeing among staff and students: The Office for National Statistics Personal Wellbeing (ONS) questions and the Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (SWEMWBS). ONS asks about four areas of your life and is scored from 0 (not at all) to 10 (completely). SWEMWBS asks you to what level you agree with positively worded statements, ranging from “none of the time” to “all of the time”, with the highest possible score being 35. Higher scores represent higher mental wellbeing.

## THE RESULTS FOUND THAT WITHIN OUR UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY:

- there is an average SWEMWBS score of 21.31. This is up from 19.98 last year.
- 43% of people reported high levels of anxiety, compared to 47% last year.
- results also show positive correlations between physical activity and wellbeing, with an average wellbeing score of 21.48 for those classed as ‘active’; compared to 20.84 for those classed as ‘inactive’.



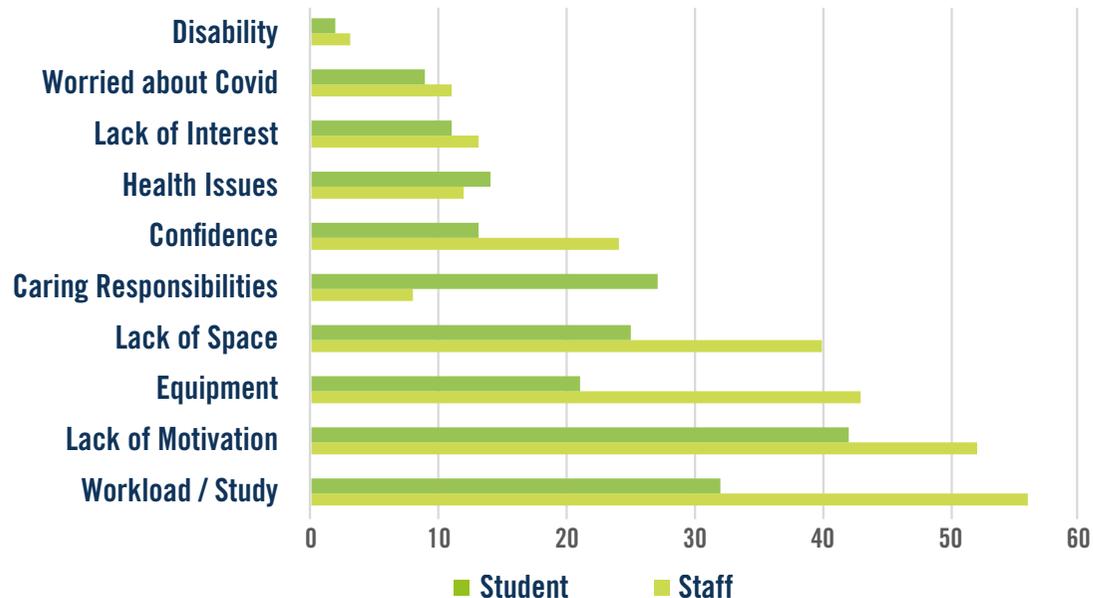
# PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

We based your perceived activity levels on guidance from the UK Chief Medical Officer and Sport England, who define activity levels as:



# BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

We wanted to know what was stopping people from participating in physical activity. The biggest barriers for both staff and students was lack of motivation, followed by workload/studies and lack of space.



The biggest barrier for staff was workload.



Lack of motivation was the largest barrier for students.



Caring responsibilities was identified as a barrier for 27% of staff.

# CONCLUSION

Physical activity, wellbeing and sleep across the University community has improved compared to last year, however, are still not at their pre-pandemic levels. Hopefully this means the impact of the pandemic is beginning to lessen and the University community have settled into the 'new normal'. The survey once again found positive correlations between physical activity and wellbeing, as well as nutrition and physical activity and sleep and wellbeing. We will continue to work hard to improve the wellbeing of our university community and raise awareness of the many benefits of being active; providing as many opportunities as possible for people to be active and to keep people motivated.

## SOME OF OUR PRIORITIES INCLUDE:

- Education and awareness around nutrition
- To gather further insight into sedentary behaviour
- To create targeted initiatives to close the gap on physical activity levels across different demographics
- To influence cultural change to help address the ongoing barrier of workload / studies preventing people from being active.

