

Brunel
UNIVERSITY
WEST LONDON

Accommodation

Office Survey

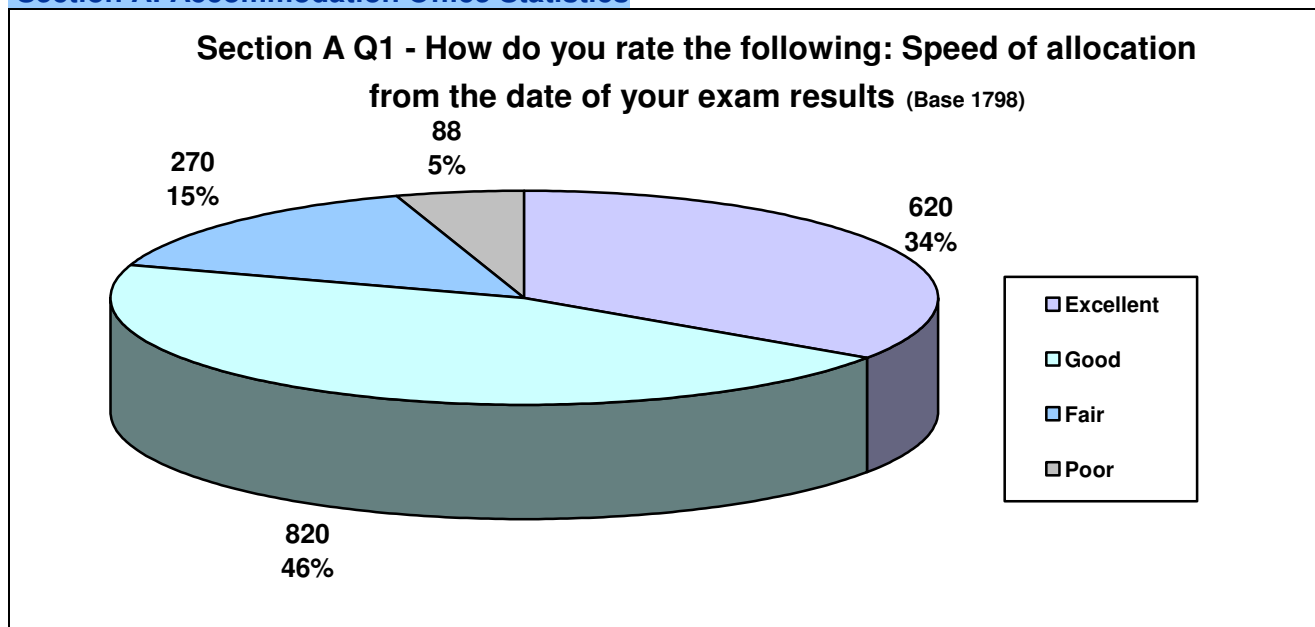
2007



ACCOMMODATION OFFICE SURVEY 2007

Surveys were emailed to 3229 students on the Uxbridge Campus. A total of 1932 were returned, of which 794 were completed online and 1138 were completed face-to-face in the Accommodation Office and door-to-door in Residences. An overall response rate of 59.8% was achieved (51% Survey 2006). The Residences Survey results are published separately.

Section A: Accommodation Office Statistics



- An overall rating of 80% said good or excellent and a further 15% thought the speed was fair (total 95%). 5% recorded a poor rating.

Explanation

- All main scheme students who provided mobile numbers were text on the day the University made them an Unconditional Firm (UF) offer to advise that they had been allocated a room on-campus (if they had requested one)
- Students are allocated when they hold a UF offer with the University; therefore, the allocation process starts in August rather than at Conditional Firm (CF). This ensures that we do not allocate students who may not intend coming to Brunel.
- Students are also allocated in date order of acceptance into the University. Those who are accepted later may have had to wait a bit longer. Late students may also have to wait until the A/O receives room cancellations from the 1st wave of student allocations.
- Students who enter the University through the Clearing system are not guaranteed accommodation for the start of term and may also have to wait longer for a room and this may reflect in both the 15% fair and the 5% poor rating. Students however, are able to consider other off-campus accommodation options.

Overall we feel this is a good result. 95% of students rated the speed of allocation as excellent to fair. This is an increase of 6% on last years' results. However we will continue to seek new ways to increase the speed of room allocations during the hectic allocation period and what is understandably for students an anxious time in securing accommodation.

Proposed Improvements

- To further improve the allocation time frame for students, by speeding up contact between student and Accommodation Office we are reviewing and continuing to improve current communication systems and new updates will be in place for next session.

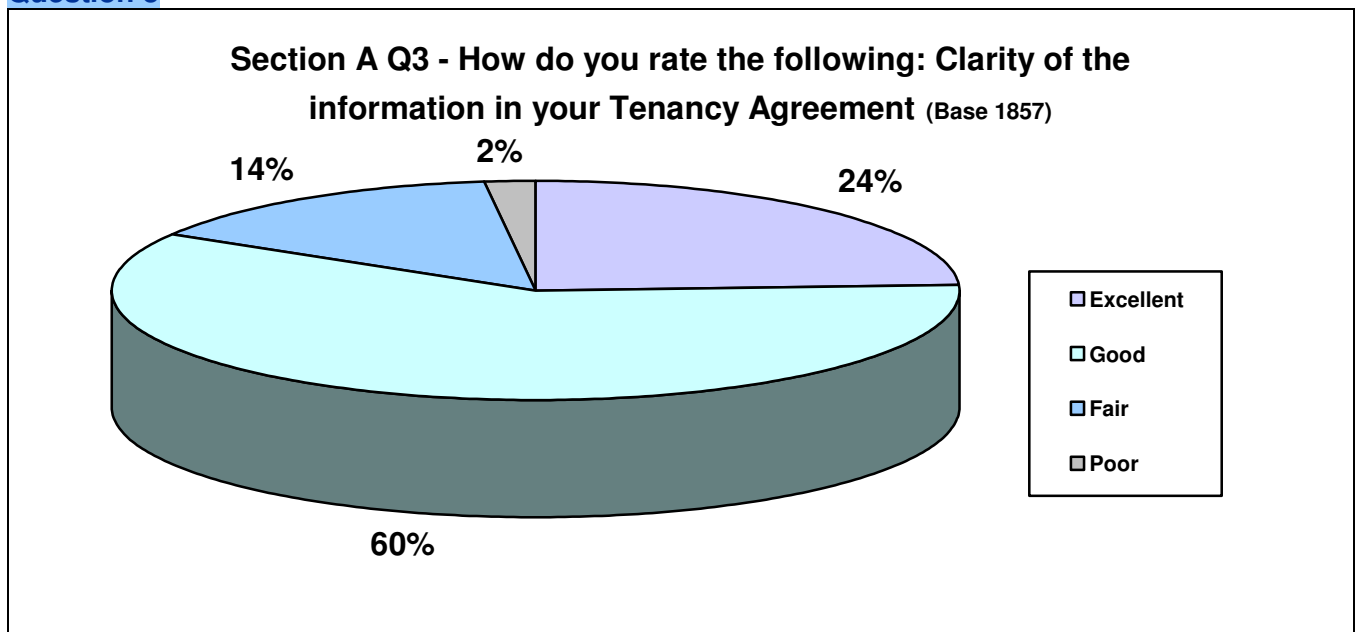
Question 2

How long did it take to be allocated from the date of your exam results?

This question unfortunately did not provide the information that we were hoping for. Many students did not remember when they were allocated a room on-campus so we cannot give an average for allocation. Next year this question will be revised to facilitate conclusive data. All allocations were sent to first year main scheme students on the day they were made an Unconditional Offer by the University. An example of the data that was collected is below:

Student Comments
A few hours
About a year but I deferred entry
Gap year so didn't get a form till July
2 weeks
Excellent
Can't remember
5 days after I got here-late applicant
Same day
2 days
Immediately
About 3 days

Question 3



- 98% of you rated the information as excellent to fair. 36 students (2% of base / 1% of students in residence) rated the clarity of the information as poor.

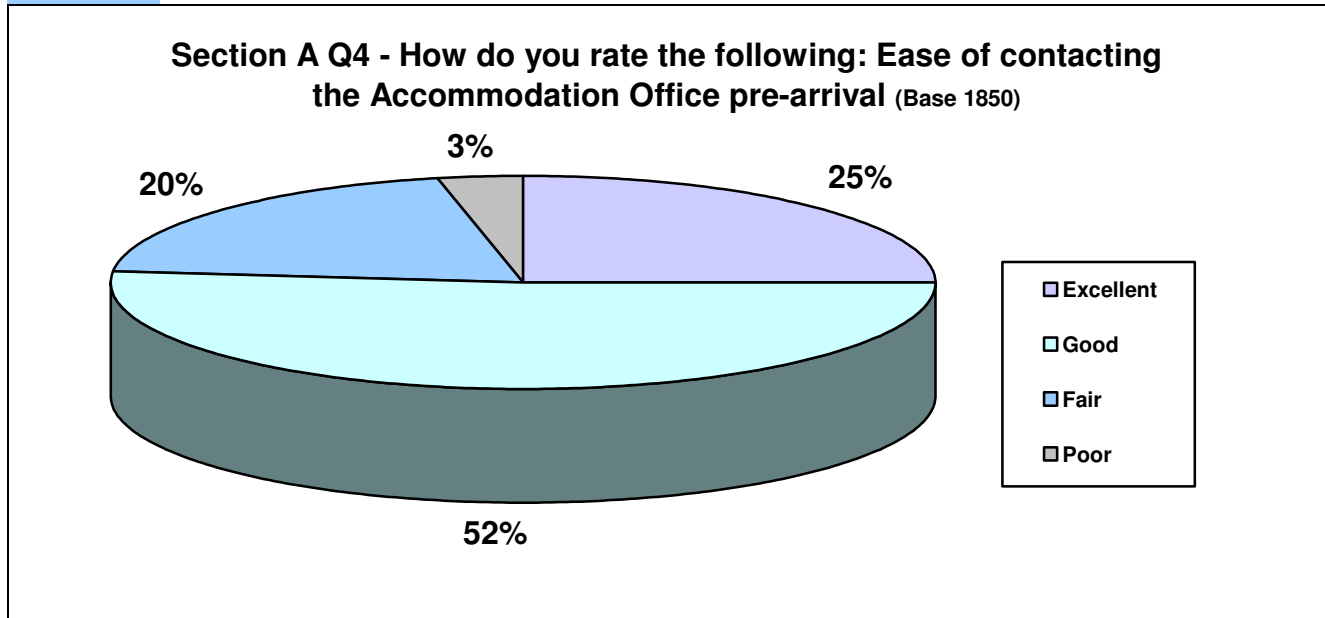
Explanation

The poor rating may be attributed to the large number of International Students who come to Brunel to study not being familiar with British legal obligations. The Tenancy Agreement contains legal terminology which International Student may find different from their home countries. For many of the fresher students it will be the first time they have been required to sign and agree to a legal document.

Proposed Improvement

To create an international information section on the website which will offer more international specific information and to explore with Brunel International ways of offering legal interpretation of tenancy terminology for main international groups.

Question 4



- 97% of you rated the ease of contact with the A/O pre arrival as excellent to fair.

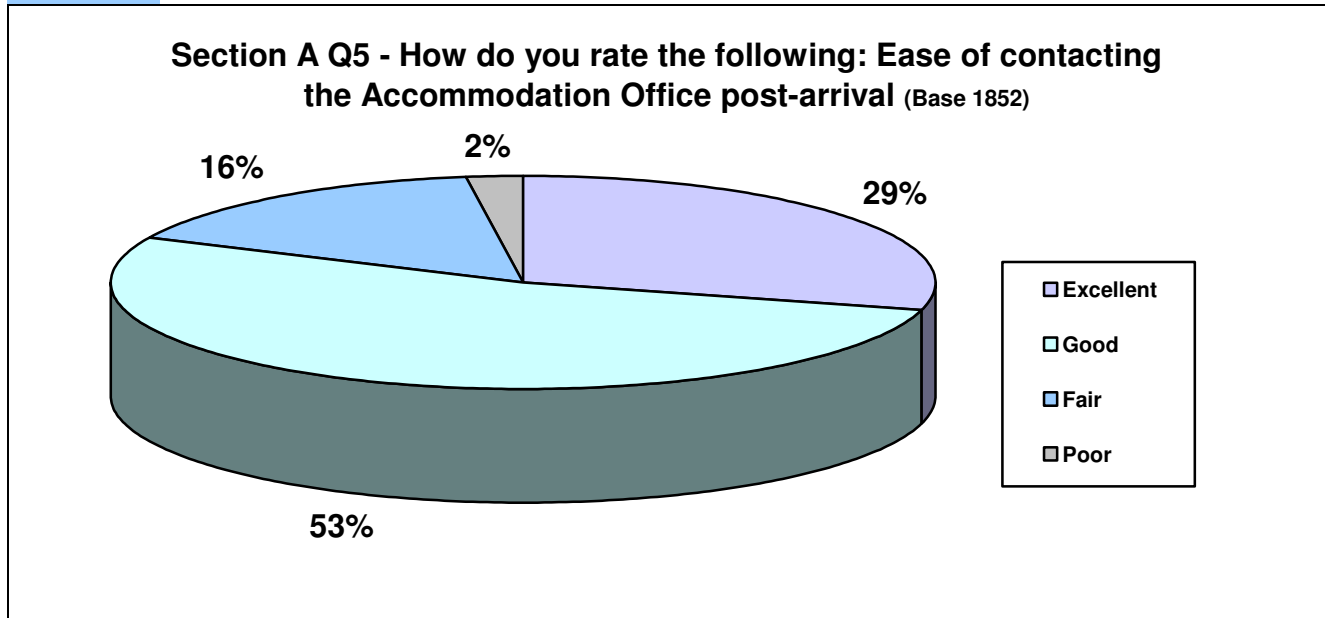
Explanation

During session 06/07 the A/O installed a new Call Centre that allowed it to meet our response rate targets and ensure that students did not wait more than ½ minute for the A/O to answer incoming calls. Many of you also tried to contact the A/O to make deposit payments (that should be made to the Finance Office) which in previous years has caused a 'bottleneck' of callers when deadlines were approaching. This year the A/O was able to manage the calls more efficiently by identifying who they needed to speak to before coming through to an A/O agent. The Cash Office, where all payments are taken for accommodation fees and deposits, now has a Call Centre that the A/O links to. This allows callers to be put through to the Cash Office without the need to come through to the A/O.

Proposed Improvements

- We always appreciate your patience during this busy time and would suggest that an email to accom-uxb@brunel.ac.uk will save you queuing in the automated system. You can leave your contact number and a member of staff will call you back immediately.
- Alternatively you can text the A/O on 07624805069.
- The A/O guarantees to respond to all enquiries within a maximum of 2 working days but usually can do so on the same day.
- The A/O will continue to improve its communication services and hope that you continue to be happy with our response times.

Question 5



- 82% rated the ease of contact post arrival as excellent or good with a further 16% giving us a fair rating (totalling 98%). 42 students (2% of the base) rated the ease of contacting the A/O post arrival as poor.

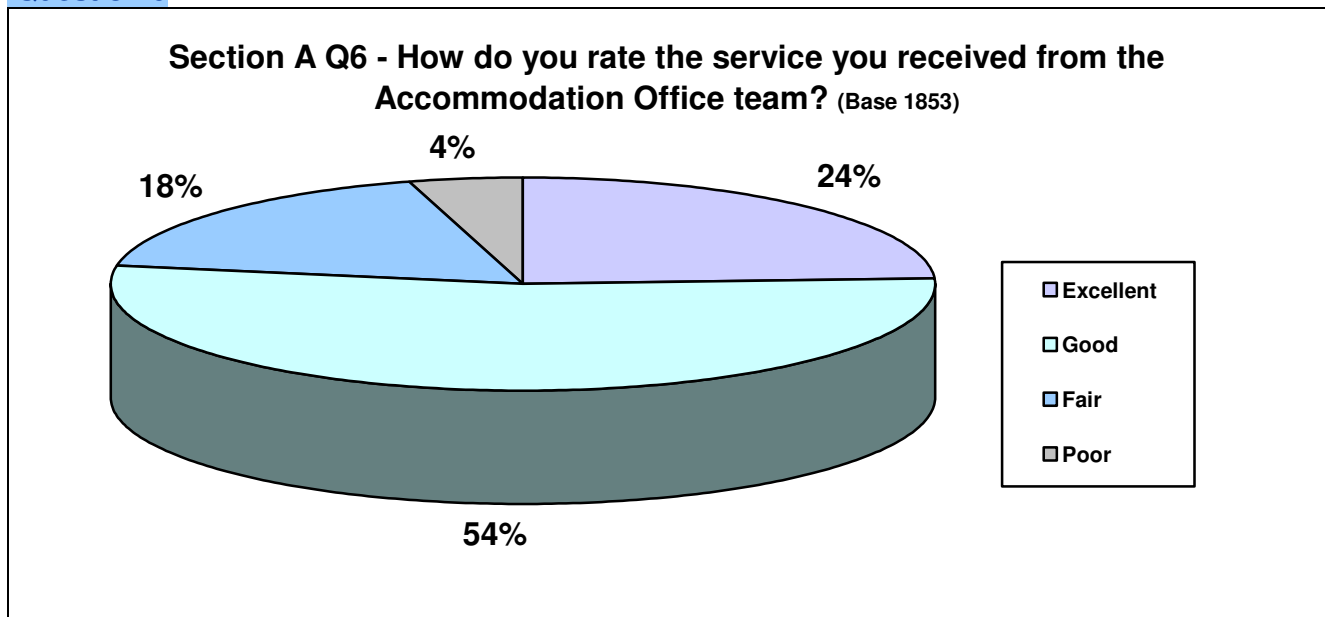
Explanation

- This has improved since last year due to the implementation of the A/O Call Centre. This has allowed you a more efficient way of being able to contact the A/O. Improvements also have been made in other areas e.g. students are able to text/SMS the A/O. Although this in its early stages of development we are hoping that students will continue to use this as a method of contact throughout their stay.

Proposed Improvements

- Improvements to communication systems with students will continue in the future. The A/O will continue to strive to reply to your emails and other correspondence even quicker.

Question 6



- 78% of you rated us as excellent to good with a further 18% rated fair (total 96%). The A/O will treat a poor rating as a complaint.

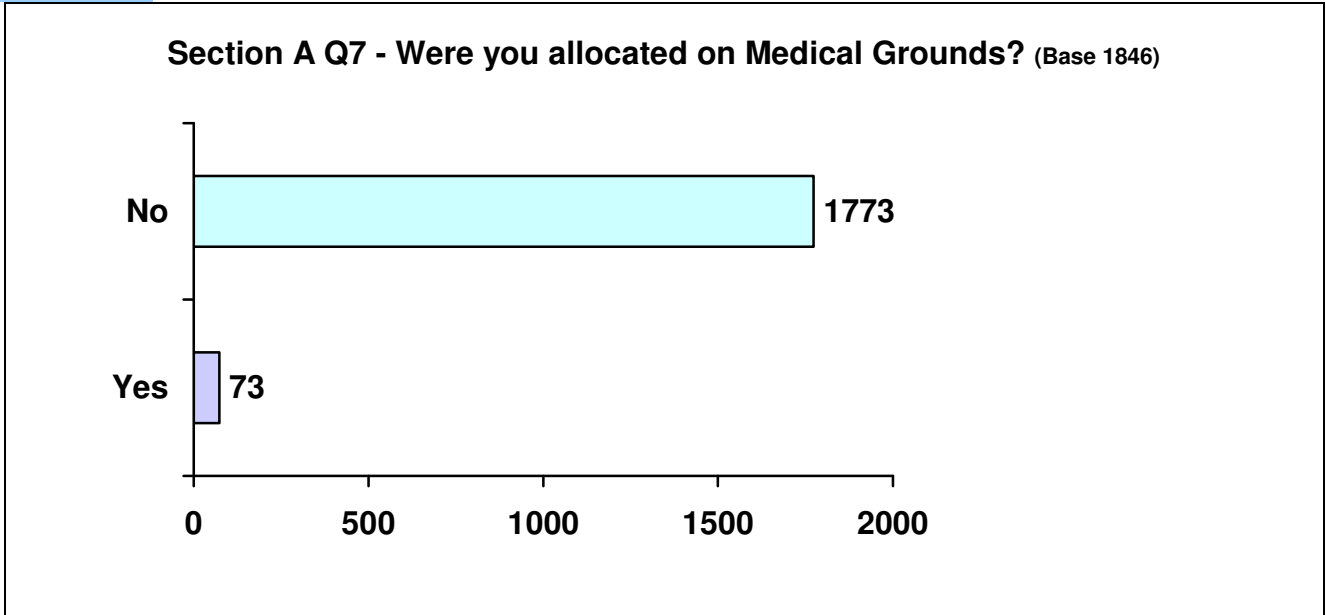
Explanation

- The survey as in previous years shows that many students are confused by the different services of the A/O and their Residences Office and frequently refer to the A/O when they actually mean the Residences Office. A number of the 4% who responded with a poor rating referred to being unhappy with a Residences service and not an A/O service.

Proposed Improvement

- In future surveys clarity of services will be highlighted.

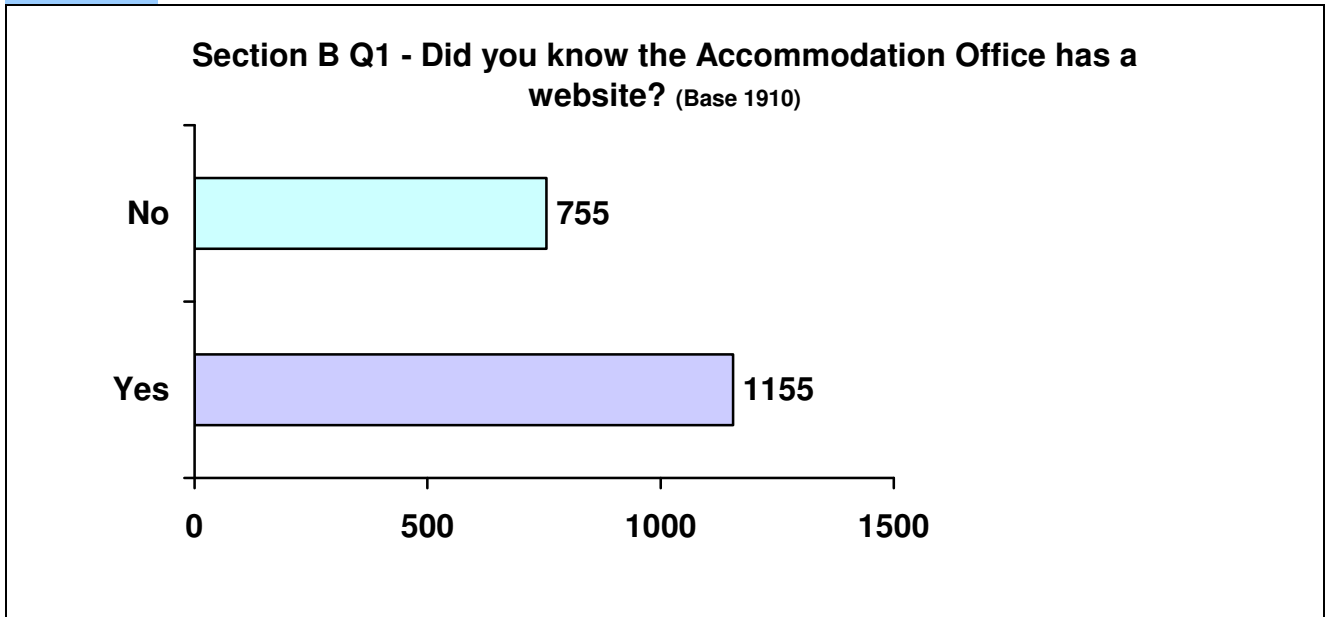
Question 7



- Only 28 students were allocated on medical grounds but 73 responded yes to the question. A number of you who may have ticked yes to this question because you are currently living in an adapted room although you hadn't been allocated this room on medical grounds.

Section B - Accommodation Office Information for Students

Question 1



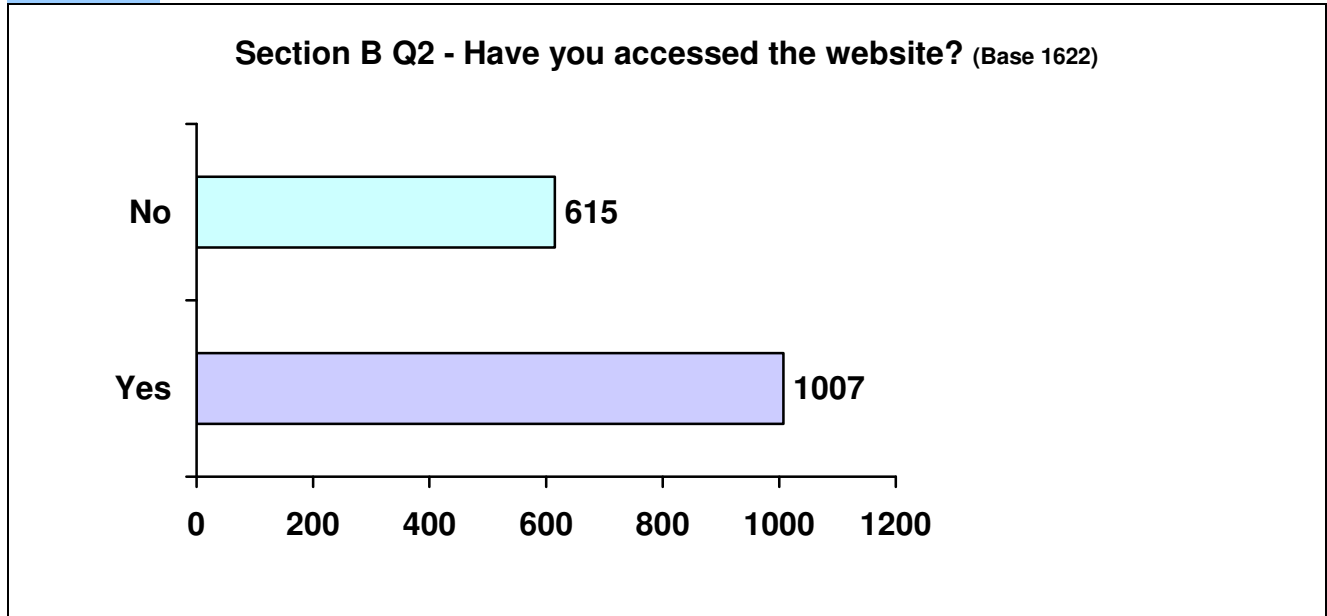
Explanation

- We are surprised that more of you are not aware of the website. Approximately 85% of Tenancy Agreements were accepted online via our website. This means that only 480 should perhaps not be aware of the website as opposed to 755.

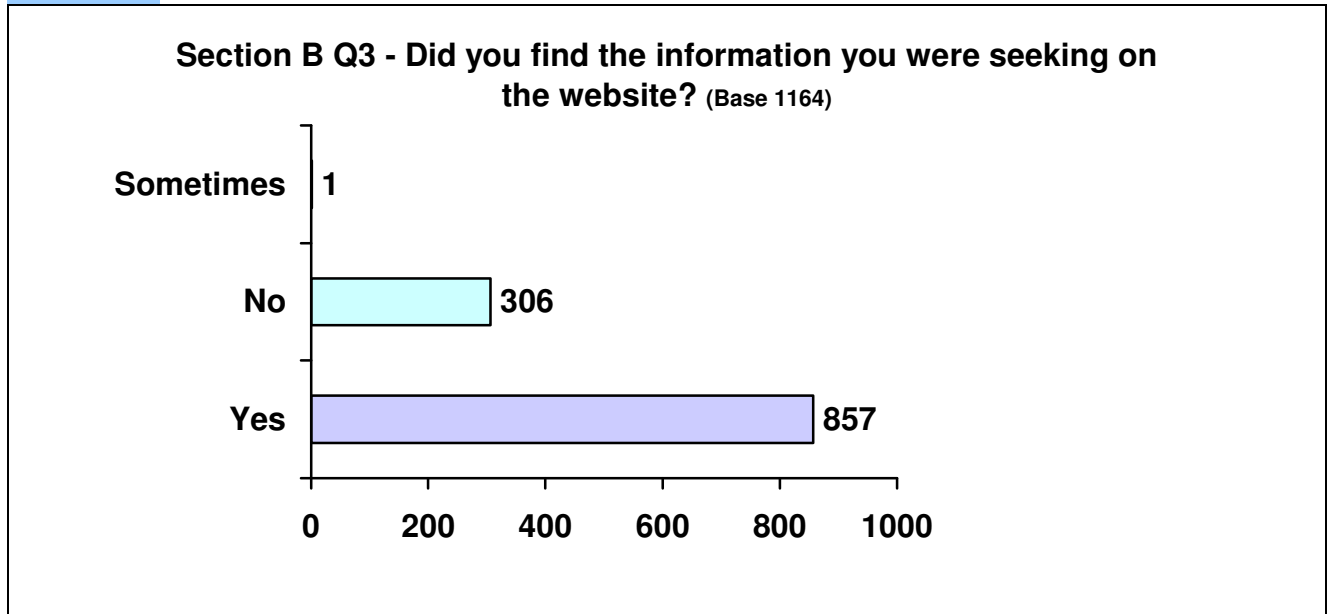
Proposed Improvements

- The A/O is intending to continue to raise awareness of the website through call centre messages, text alerts and pre arrival documentation.

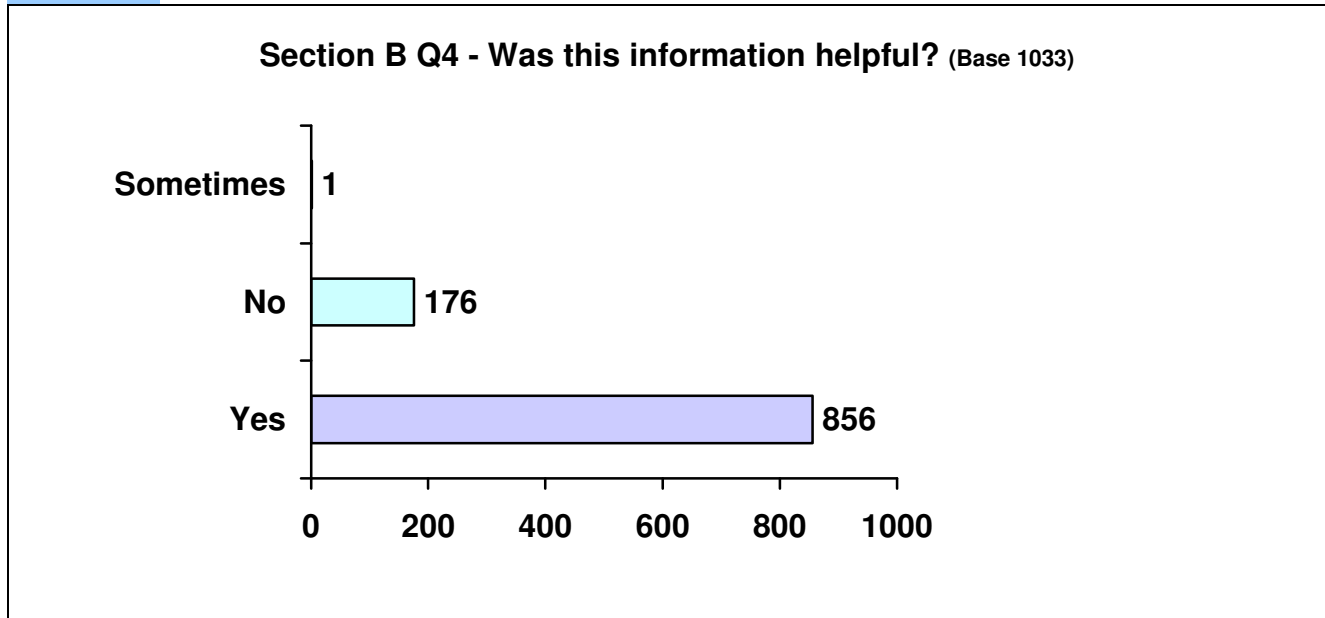
Question 2



Question 3



Question 4

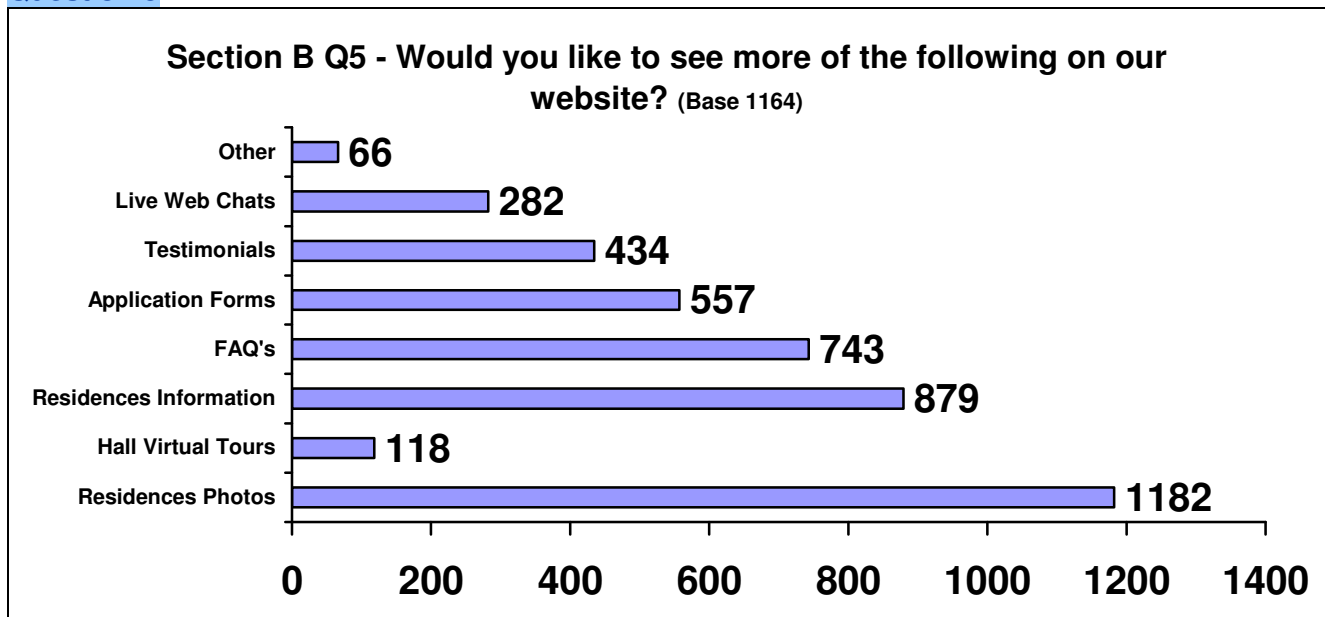


- 176 (17% of base, 23% of base in 2006) students said they did not find the information they were looking for on the website. Although this is an improvement on last years results we will continue to improve on the design and information on the A/O website. The A/O has a feedback facility to encourage comments from students during their visit to our website. Students are also able to use a search function available throughout the Brunel University website.

Proposed Improvements

- The A/O will continue to promote the A/O website and the services we provide online and therefore appreciate your feedback.
- A further update of the frequently asked questions (FAQ's) will be implemented to further increase information available on the website for the future
- It is still not too late to email suggestions for information you would like to see on our website.

Question 5



- As in previous years the majority of students wanted to see more detailed photographs of the residences on the website and more information in the residences.

Proposed Improvements

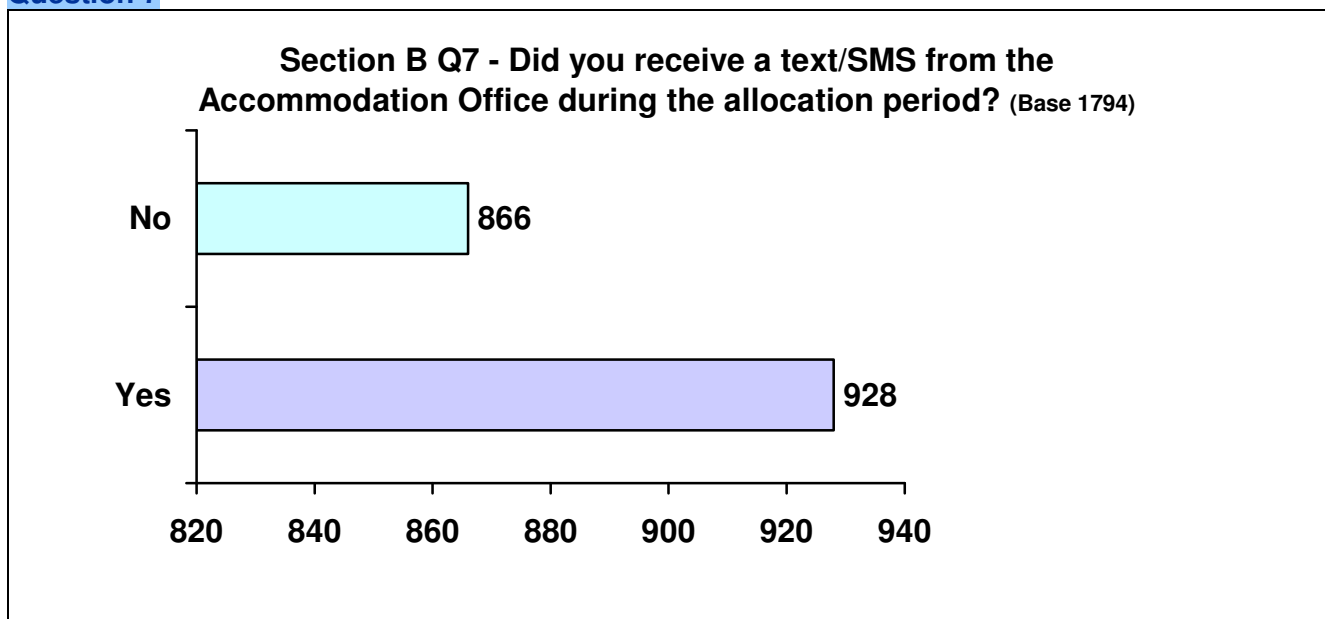
- The website will continue to be developed and improved in the future in an effort to meet your requests
- We are currently exploring the possibility of including testimonials in the future
- There is currently a virtual tour of some of the Residences online at www.brunel.ac.uk/tour and it is the intention to increase this information to include more of the Residences

Question 6

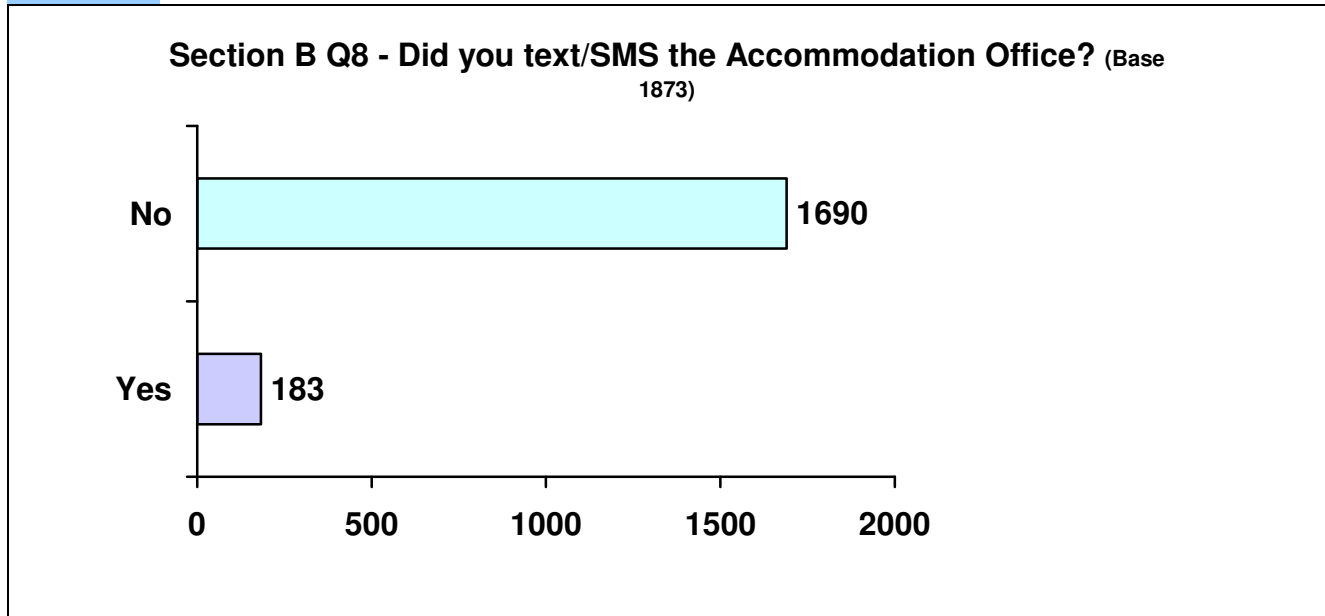
Is there any information that we do not currently provide that you would like to see during term time?

Student Comments	A/O comments
Advice about when to start searching for houses/flat	The A/O emails all students details of how to apply for campus returner's accommodation in January of each year. The University also has a Housing Office that advertises its services throughout the University.
Better description of rooms	More information will be added to the website regarding the Residences
Cleaning Schedule	This information can be provided by your Residences Manager and it not an area the A/O deals with. We will pass this information on.
Microwaves in the Kitchen	Unfortunately this is not an area the A/O deals with however these comments will be passed to the Residences Office
More information on the internet connection	This is provided in your allocation pack and online on the A/O website
The number of vacancies on-campus should be displayed	This information changes minute to minute from the second a room is vacated this room would be offered to a student on the waiting list
Text alerts for when the Accommodation Fees are due	Currently all residents are sent an email reminder, an invoice and provided with this information on the Tenancy Agreement

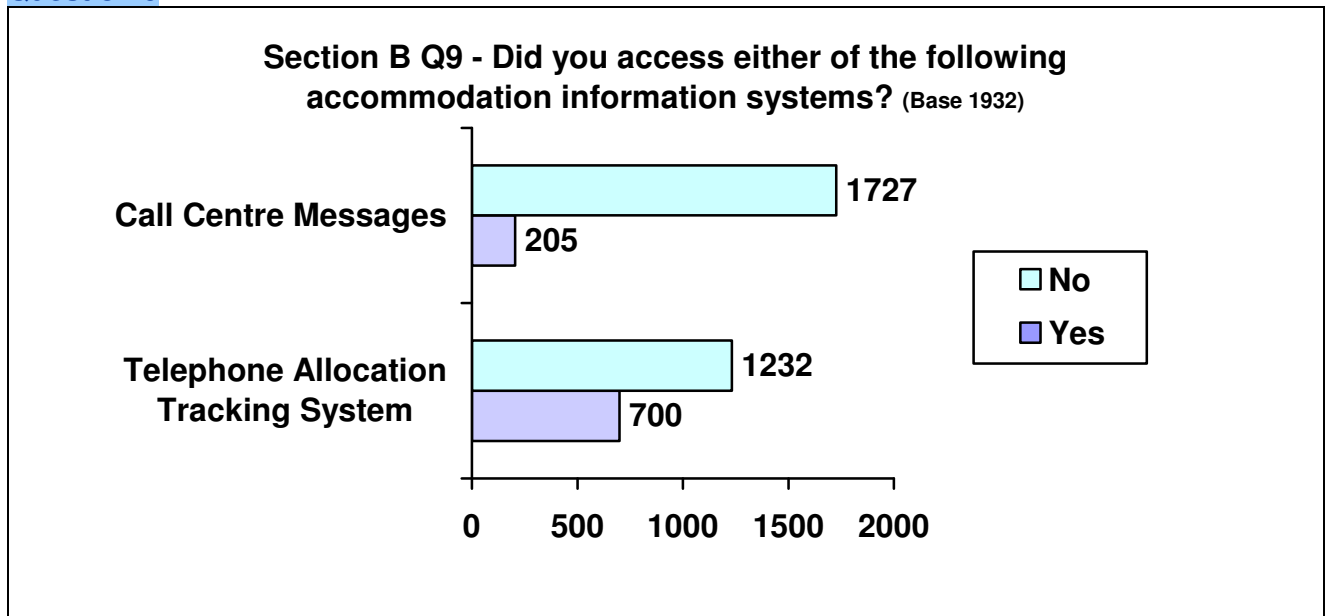
Question 7



Question 8



Question 9



Section B Q10 - Please rate from 1-5 (1 being your preferred method) how you would like to receive accommodation information and/or alerts

Below is the order of the preferred methods that students like to be contacted (1 being their most preferred method):

1. Email (Average score = 1.8)
2. Text/SMS (Average score = 2.7)
3. Letter to on-campus (Average score = 3.0)
4. Phone (Average score = 3.1)
5. Letter to home (Average score = 3.3)

Section C - Accommodation Office Services

Q1 - Please rate from 1-6 (1 being your preferred method) the issues you consider to be most important to you when selecting campus accommodation

Below is the order of the most important issues that students consider when selecting accommodation on-campus (1 being the most important):

1. Type of room i.e. Ensuite or standard (Average score = 2.2)
2. Cost of room (Average score = 2.5)
3. Size of room (Average score = 3.0)
4. Distance from study facilities (Average score = 3.41)
5. Who you are living with (Average score = 3.43)
6. Distance from social facilities (Average score = 4.3)

When students were asked whether they disagree or agree to certain statements the following were voted the top and bottom 3 statements the students most agreed/disagreed with (full details in appendix A).

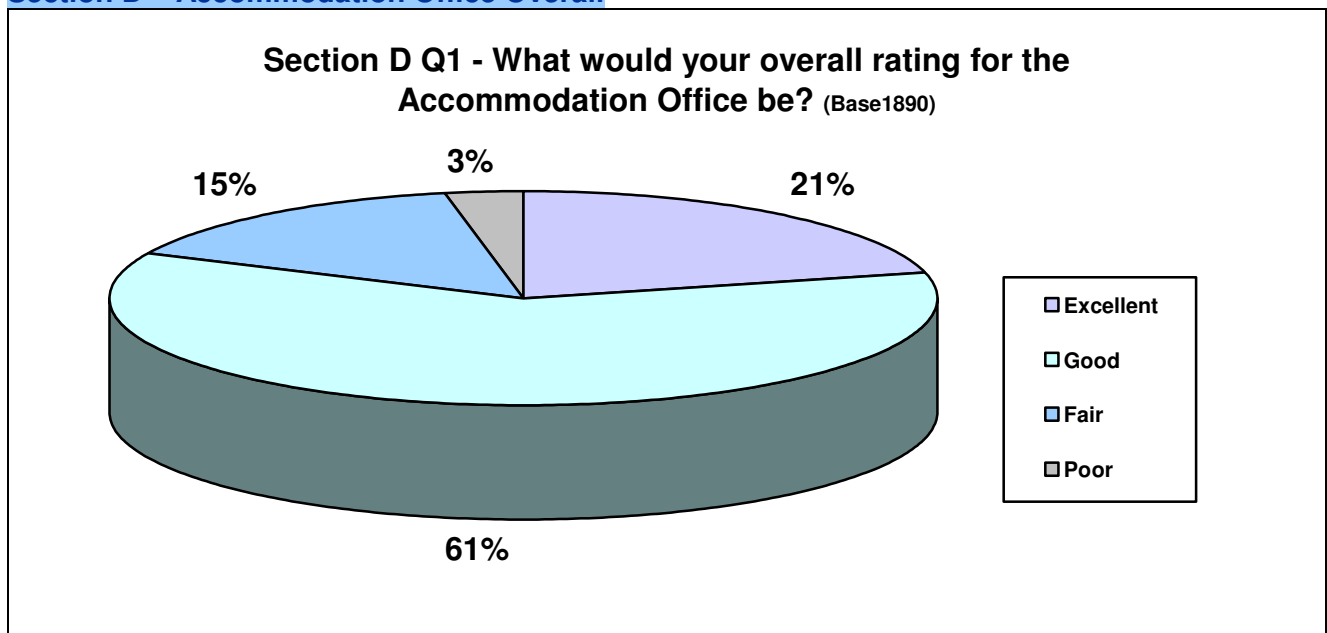
Top 3 Statements students strongly agreed with

1. If I stayed on-campus again I would like the option to be able to live with my friends (76%)
2. It is important for your studies to stay on-campus in your final year (67.1%)
3. I would like to be able to vary the length of my accommodation contract (66.8%)

Top 3 Statements students strongly disagreed with

1. On campus accommodation should be mixed all levels of study living in the same flat (38%)
2. I would rather live off campus if I didn't get my room preference (33%)
3. I would like to live on-campus for the duration of my studies at Brunel (23%)

Section D – Accommodation Office Overall



- 82% gave an overall rating for the A/O as excellent or good an improvement on 73% from 2006 and further 15% rated the A/O service as fair giving a total of 97% rating. 3% of students (59) rated the A/O as poor.
- The 59 students who rated the A/O service as poor equates to 1.8% of those living in residence and as previously indicated the A/O considers a poor rating to be a complaint. We continue to strive to improve our service levels in an effort to achieve a 100% satisfaction response to our service.

Section D Q2 – How could we do better?

Student Comments	A/O comments
Allow second year students to live on-campus	The University is building more residences on-campus to help meet the demand from students
Allocate students with at least one person on your course	
Allow students to pick the floor/hall they want to live in	Students are allowed to provide any information that can assist the A/O with their allocation. Certain floors/halls will always be oversubscribed so unfortunately we are not able to meet all of your requests but try to do so wherever possible
Cheaper rooms	
More staff	
More even payments	
No rubbish collection from rooms	Unfortunately this not an A/O area. We will however pass this information to the Residences Office.
AO should be ready for students to arrive early rather than the student having to tell you	The AO has 3229 rooms on-campus with 1000's of students all stay for different periods of time and many rooms undergoing maintenance. To ensure that you have somewhere to stay when you arrive at the University it is important that you let us know so that we can ensure your room will be vacant at this time and ready for your arrival

Summary

Accommodation Office Statistics

The Accommodation Office carried out a joint customer service survey with the Residences Offices. This is the Accommodation Office section only. The main method used was face to face with residents across the campus. This was carried out by RCCS staff. All residents were invited by email from the Accommodation Office to complete the Accommodation and Residences Survey online. All students were contacted by email via Brunel University email accounts. 1932 (increase of 292 on 2006/07) surveys were completed out of 3229 resident's on-campus of which 41% were completed online. The overall achieved response rate was 59.8% an increase of 8.8% on the previous year's rate of 51%. Because we appreciate the time students have taken to complete the survey we feel it is important to include many of the comments made, particularly negative ones, even if these are in the minority. This allows us to demonstrate that even if one student is not satisfied with one aspect of our service we take this seriously and will seek ways to resolve this positively for the student.

Section A: Accommodation Office Services

The Accommodation Office implemented a call centre for session 2007/08. This proved to be highly effective in streamlining the calls which were received by the Accommodation Office. The A/O reduced the number of calls (that we had to pass onto other areas such as the Cash Office and the Residences Office), by providing students with the correct information in our welcome message. The welcome message provides information on each area allowing the student to use a touchtone system to be transferred to the correct area. Students also made use of the self service system to find out if they had been allocated a room on-campus. We are aiming to advertise this service to increase the use of this facility. This system allows student access to information 24 hours a day and will especially benefit international students who may find it difficult to contact us during British office times.

Section B: Accommodation Office Information for Students

As in previous years the A/O will continue to review the information on our website and provide you with more information on the Residences. We are hoping in the future to be able to provide a video of the Residences including students' comments about living on-campus.

The SMS (texting) system was utilised by the A/O during the allocation period. This system was used to notify you that you have been allocated giving you more time to meet your deposit payment and Tenancy Agreement acceptance deadlines. It is anticipated this will continue to increase communication efficiency between the A/O and students.

364 students have shown an interest in joining an AO forum group. We are hoping to make use of your input to assist us with continuing to improve our services to you. This will be an ongoing future project.

Section C: Importance of Accommodation Office Services

The format for this question was new for 07/08. When asked to rate what was the most important to you when considering on-campus accommodation the top rated item was the type of room you are allocated. The full responses can be found in Appendix A. The University has addressed this by building more ensuite room's on-campus to help with the demand we have for rooms with private bathroom facilities. With a new residence opening in September 2008 containing 1228 ensuite rooms and 112 studio flats we are hoping that we will meet your requests in the future.

Section D: Overall rating

The majority of your comments have been very positive and constructive and are directly used to review and implement improvement to the services provided by the A/O. The overall rating of those who took part in the survey for the A/O was 82% excellent and good, and a further 15% rated the service as fair (total 97%), reflecting that you are either satisfied or very satisfied with the level of our service. However in keeping with our achievements in retaining Hospitality Assured accreditation during the last 4 years as a department, we will continue to review our service and implement change and improvements in an effort to achieve higher levels of satisfaction. The A/O understands that all

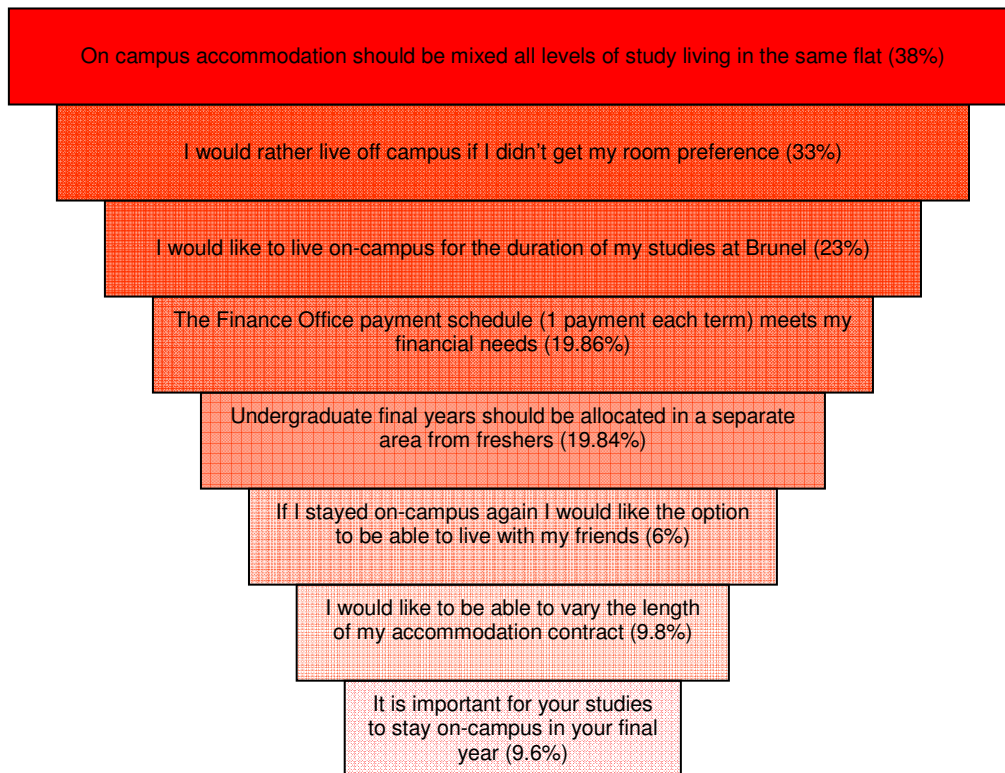
feedback from students is important and does take this into consideration when reviewing policy. We also do pass on your feedback to other University departments when relevant.

The Accommodation Office therefore would like to thank those that took the time to complete the Accommodation Office and Residences Surveys. The Residences Offices Section results are published separately please visit www.brunel.ac.uk/life/accommodation/news. If you have any further points you would like to raise with the Accommodation Office please contact us at the Accommodation Office or by email to accom-uxb@brunel.ac.uk or via our comments page on our website.

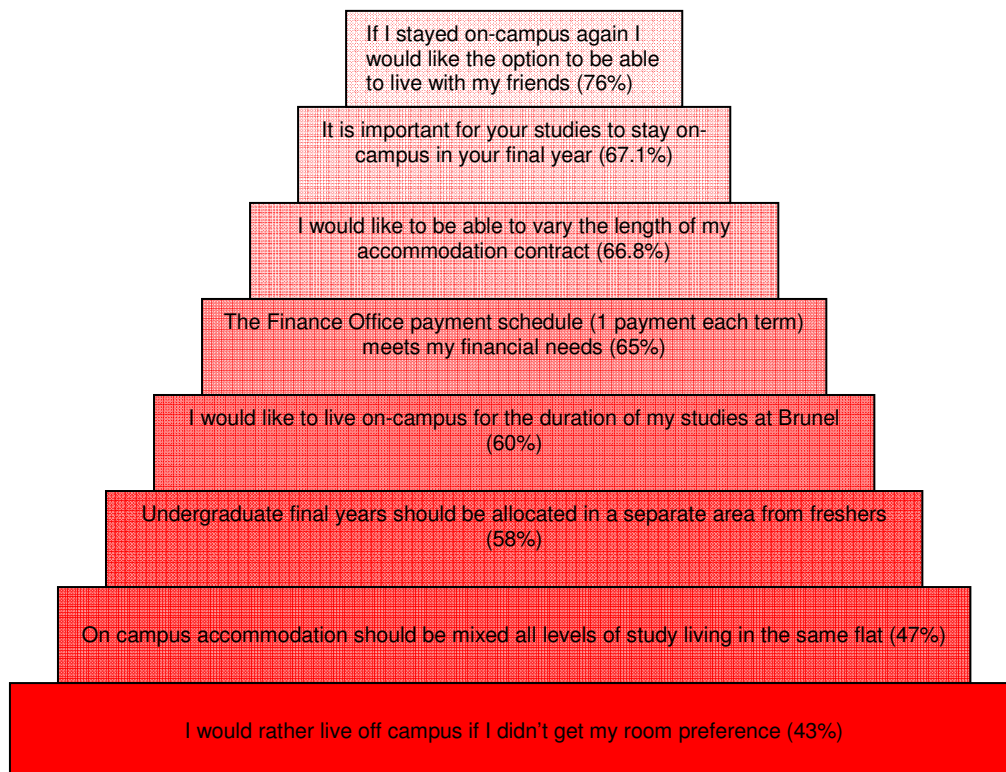
The Accommodation Office Team
February 2008

Appendix A

Statements Students Disagreed with:



Statements students agreed with:



Appendix B

ACCOMMODATION OFFICE SURVEY 2007/08 SUMMARY OF SCORES

MEAN SCORES

Each question was marked as follows:

Excellent	4
Good	3
Fair	2
Poor	1

The closer the mean is to 4 the higher the rating. The following questions/sections were each given a mean score

Accommodation Office Service

Section A	07/08	06/07	05/06
Q1	3.1	2.8	N/A
Q3	3.1	2.9	2.8
Q4	3.0	2.7	2.8
Q5	3.1	2.9	N/A

Overall Rating

Section D	07/08	06/07	05/06
Q1	3	2.8	2.8

The above mean scores will be recorded and used in future surveys to allow a quantitative score of our service