Student Travel Survey 2022
Analysis

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Background

The annual Student Travel Survey was available for completion from March – April 2022. An invitation was sent via the Student Newsletter and social media for them to complete the survey via Microsoft Forms.

125 students participated in the survey, and it took just under 22 minutes to complete. This is a 83% reduction in responses to the survey in 2020.
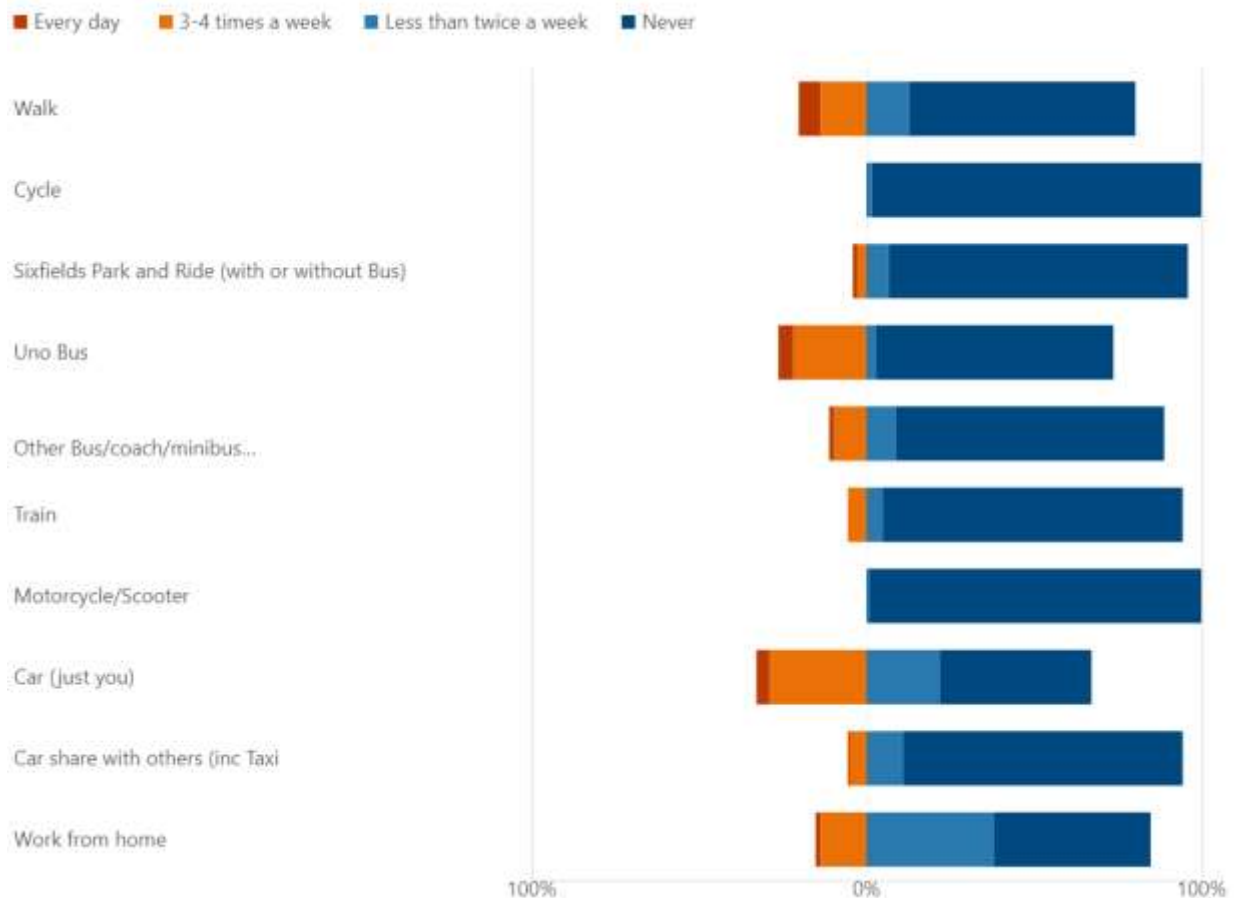
2. The Results

Key Findings

- 52% of students are studying from home, with 32% travelling to UON on foot and 54.4% still using a Single Occupancy Vehicle (SOV)

- To increase sustainable travel students would like to see: improved cycle ways, better lighting, cheaper public transport fare and more frequent/direct buses.

- Many students choose to drive as UON is located far away from their homes and that it is cheaper. However, due to our permit system, only 29 responses confirmed they park on campus

- Timetabling seems to be a recurring theme in reasons as to why such sustainable travel like the Park and Ride cannot be used.
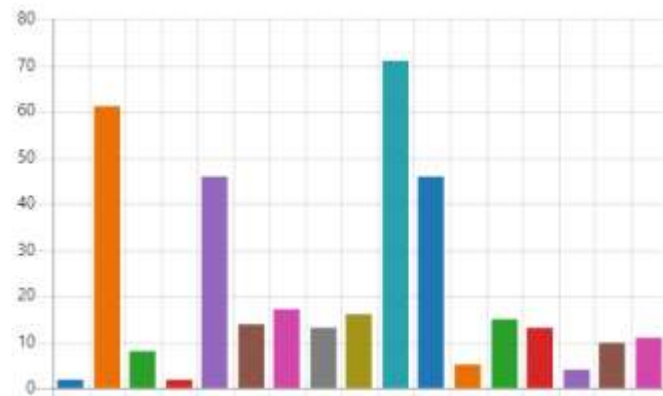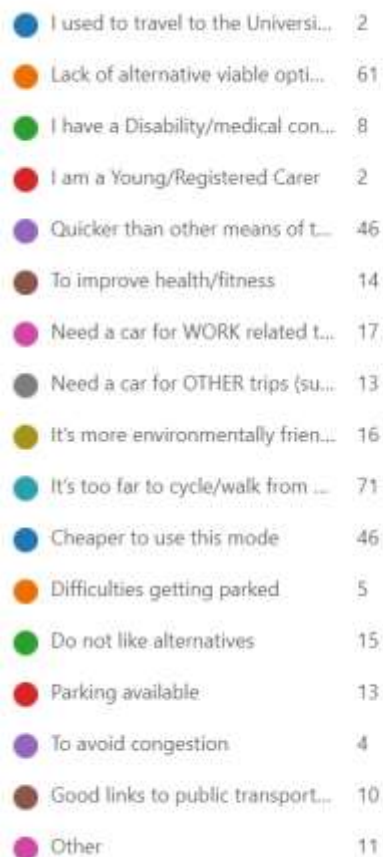
Q3. In a typical week, how do you normally travel to the University?

4% of responses selected they travel by car alone every day whilst 28.8% stated they only do this 3-4 times a week. This could because of online lectures, timetabling meaning they do not need to be on campus each day or because of financial implications of using public car parks.
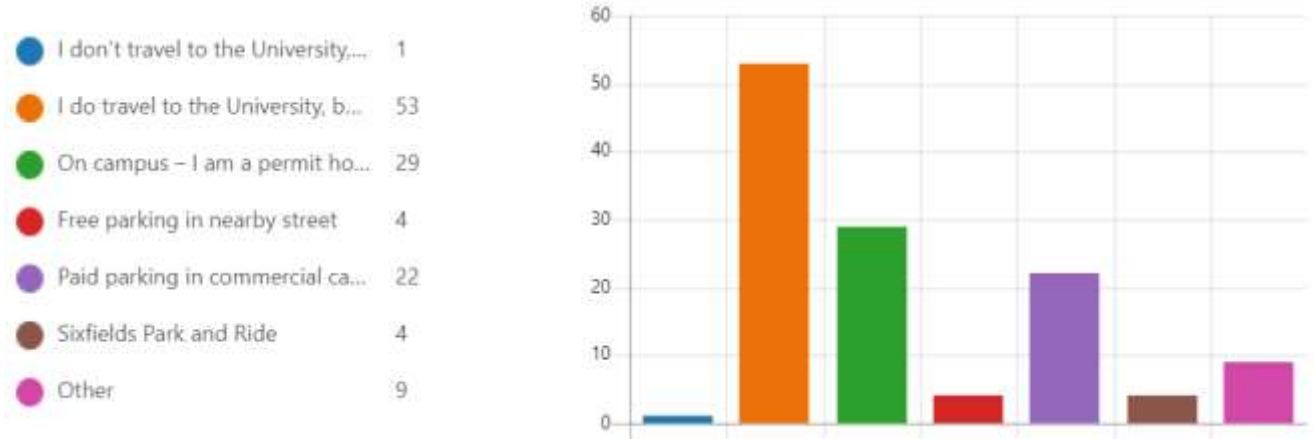
6.9% walk, 0% cycle and 6.4% use the Uno bus every day.

Q4. Thinking about your main mode of transport (the one you use the most), why do you travel by this mode? (Please tick all that apply)

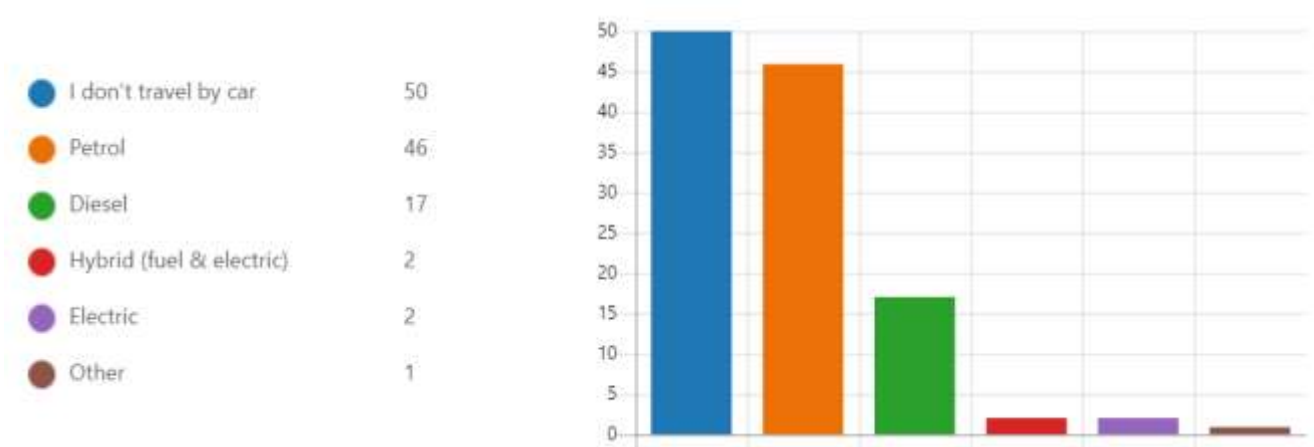|	
I used to travel to the Universi...	2
Lack of alternative viable opti...	61
I have a Disability/medical con...	8
I am a Young/Registered Carer	2
Quicker than other means of t...	46
To improve health/fitness	14
Need a car for WORK related t...	17
Need a car for OTHER trips (su...	13
It's more environmentally frien...	16
It's too far to cycle/walk from ...	71
Cheaper to use this mode	46
Difficulties getting parked	5
Do not like alternatives	15
Parking available	13
To avoid congestion	4
Good links to public transport...	10
Other	11

The most common answers are that they live far from campus, and they have a lack of alternatives to not use the car. A common theme from students is that they live on the Eastern side of town where we do not have strong bus links. However, a Park and Walk at the Development Hub was created in 2021/2022 to help those unable to park at Waterside that come from the east.

Q5. Where do you park most of the time when at the University?

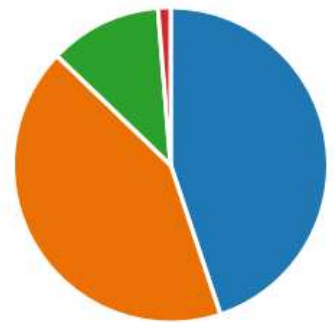|	
● I don't travel to the University,...	1
● I do travel to the University, b...	53
● On campus – I am a permit ho...	29
● Free parking in nearby street	4
● Paid parking in commercial ca...	22
● Sixfields Park and Ride	4
● Other	9

The most popular answer was that students do travel to campus, but they do not drive. This could be because of our permit system which limits the number of cars on site.

Q6. If you travel to the University by car, please indicate your vehicle fuel type (indicate predominant use, if access to more than one vehicle)
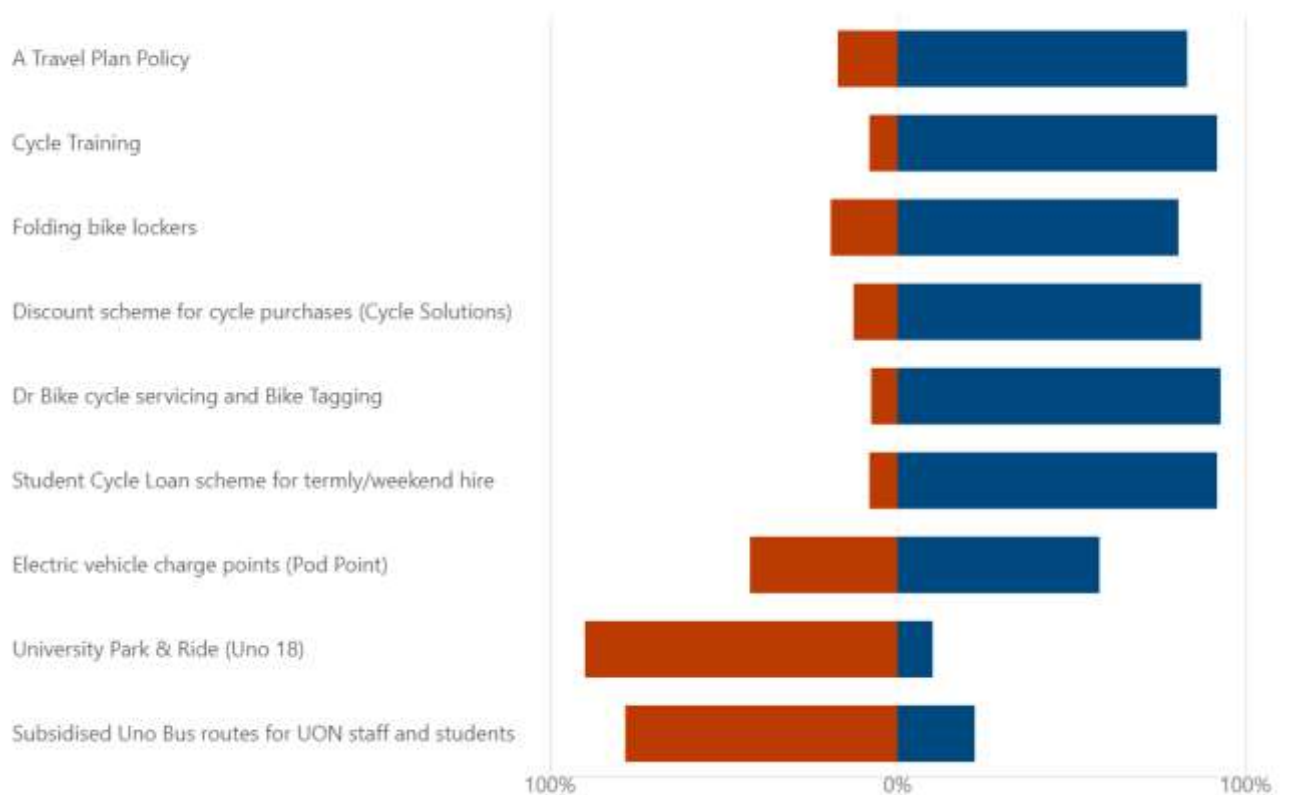

● I don't travel by car	50
● Petrol	46
● Diesel	17
● Hybrid (fuel & electric)	2
● Electric	2
● Other	1

Q7. Please indicate the size of your vehicle (indicate predominant use, if access to more than one vehicle)

🔵	Small car (e.g. Kia Picanto)	35
🟠	Medium car (e.g. Ford Focus)	33
🟢	Large car (e.g. Range Rover)	9
🔴	My car is electric	1

Q8. The University has implemented several measures to support students in getting to and from the University. Are you aware that the University has the following?

■ Yes ■ No

A Travel Plan Policy

Cycle Training

Folding bike lockers

Discount scheme for cycle purchases (Cycle Solutions)

Dr Bike cycle servicing and Bike Tagging

Student Cycle Loan scheme for termly/weekend hire

Electric vehicle charge points (Pod Point)

University Park & Ride (Uno 18)

Subsidised Uno Bus routes for UON staff and students

100%   0%   100%

83.1% of students stated they are not aware of our travel plan. This will be more widely advertised by our Travel Plan Coordinator at upcoming events to help explain what it is, why we have it and the benefits to lowering our Scope 3 emissions.

89.9% of students stated they did know about our Park and Ride, but only 8.3% knew about our cycle loan scheme. Cycling and various reward initiatives will be investigated for the new academic year to help increase this number.

Q9. What would encourage you to walk or cycle to get to/from the University (all or part of the journey)? If you already walk or cycle, what improvements would you most like to see?

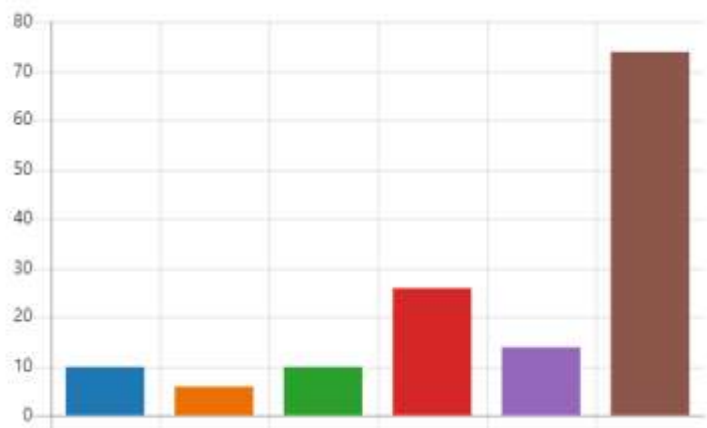There were 93 responses to this question. The main feedback was

- Safer, more well-lit routes around the town.
- Timetabling issues – if lectures started later to allow travel time and pre-Uni commitments such as childcare
- Availability of maps
- Parking half of the way on the East of town
- Nothing – distance is too far to cycle/commitments/driving is easier.

Q10. What would encourage you to use public transport to get to/from the University (all or part of the journey)? If you already use public transport, what improvements would you most like to see?

There were 106 responses to this question. The main feedback was

- Better and more frequent bus routes to incorporate timetabling
- Routes from the East of town (e.g. Wellingborough, Kettering)
- Free bus travel
- Park and Ride on the East of town
- Nothing

Q11. Whilst travelling at/for study, would any of the following help you travel sustainably? (Please tick all that apply)

● Improved cycling facilities	10
● Ability to loan a pool cycle	6
● Provision of a car club / pool c…	10
● Improved information on how…	26
● Use of Council's Voi eScooter …	14
● None of the above	74

Unfortunately, the most common answer was that students would not find any of the suggested options encouraging to travel more sustainably. However, information on how to travel more suitably was also popular and this can be incorporated to the Travel Plan Coordinator's communications and talks for the new academic year. Information can also be made readily available at Open and Discovery Days to ensure new and perspective students are aware of their greener options.

Further feedback comments

- Free parking – Due to our carparks being commercial spaces when building UON, we are not able to offer free parking. In Northampton town centre, there is little to no free parking for many businesses and members of the public. We do offer our staff, students, and visitors a highly competitive rate (Council public car parks are around £8 a day, UON is £3 for a full day) as well monthly parking passes for motorbikes, ASSIST students and Young/Registered Carers.
- More bus routes – this is something that will be looked in to for 22/23 and a heat map of student postcodes will allow us to note where there are areas that need our focus. Another repetitive comment is that the times do not work for students who have commitments prior to classes e.g. dropping child off school and getting here for a 9am lecture.
- Incentives for cycling, walking and car sharing. Whilst we do currently offer permits for car sharers, increasing cycling and walking incentives will be looked in to and could liaise with departments such as Catering to offer further discounts at our eating establishments or with local cycle shops.
- More parking spaces – Currently there are a set number of permits designated to those students with higher needs for a car such as Young/Registered carers, placements with unsociable hours and those who commute extremely long distances. Each academic

year, the number of permits has increased to try and capture growing demand, but this cap will soon be reached. We introduced a Park and Walk as a 'second chance' to those who were unsuccessful in a Waterside permit and to favour those on the East of town e.g. Wellingborough, Kettering. These have proved popular and allowed an extra 150 students have parking. Midsummer Meadows, a council owned public car park, is right next to University Bridge offering another parking alternative to students without permits.

- More EV charging points – we currently have EV chargers outside Senate, in CP1 and CP4. We will be looking in to increasing our number of chargers as the demand increases and students with EVs will be given permits to encourage low emission travel. Students can also benefit from discounts at local garages such as Richard Sanders when purchasing an electric vehicle.

Conclusion

The university will need to continue with its strategy to encourage sustainable transport options in order to meet Travel Plan targets and plans to decarbonise the university. This will need to be well balanced with public transport options and incentives for active travel.

There are several improvement requests from students that the university could assist with: improved cycle and footways, better lighting, changes to Uno buses including more frequent travel and trips to the Development Hub, public transport to the East of town and timetabling improvements to incorporate home/study balance.

Whilst this will allow UON to lower its SOV rates, impacting positively on Travel Plan targets and plans to decarbonise the university, the 83% reduction in responses means that the calculation for our SOV is severely impacted. Whilst we offered students incentives to complete the survey, the responses remain low. This will need to be reviewed in 2023.