

Introduction

In June 2016, the Student Engagement team carried out a survey with current students to research their communications attitudes and behaviours. 2121 students completed this survey and the respondents reflect our overall student profile. Compiled here are results related to students' email communications usage and preferences, as well as personal comments provided in the survey.

Key findings

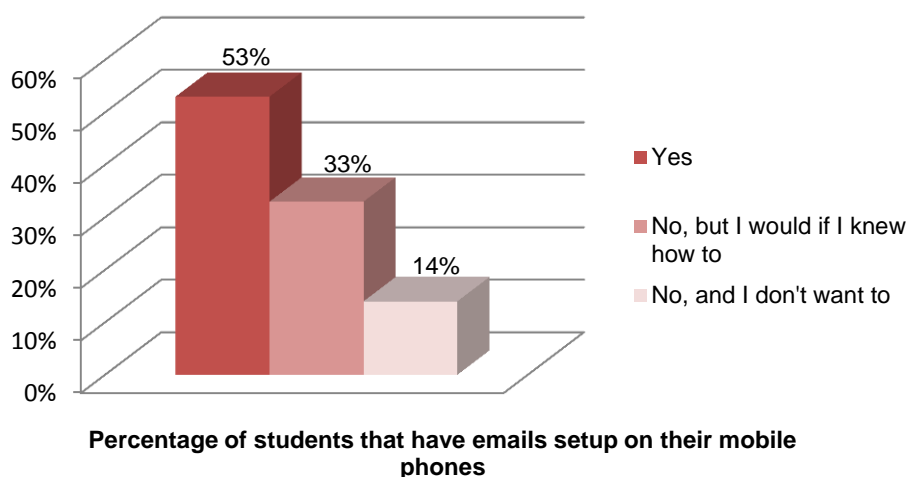
The key findings discussed in this report revolve around students' usage and engagement with email to communicate with the University:

1. One third of students currently do not have University emails setup on their phone, but would be willing to if they knew how to
2. Students are almost twice as likely to check their personal email account multiple times a day compared to their University email account
3. Less than one fifth of students read the monthly newsletter from the Student Engagement Team every month, but almost four fifths of students do read it at least occasionally
4. Almost a quarter of students say that they receive too many emails, however seven out of ten students are satisfied with the number of emails that they receive
5. 85 per cent of students say that University email is a preferred channel of communication for information about their academic life; compared to only 48 per cent for community information (e.g. events and University news)

Students' engagement with email

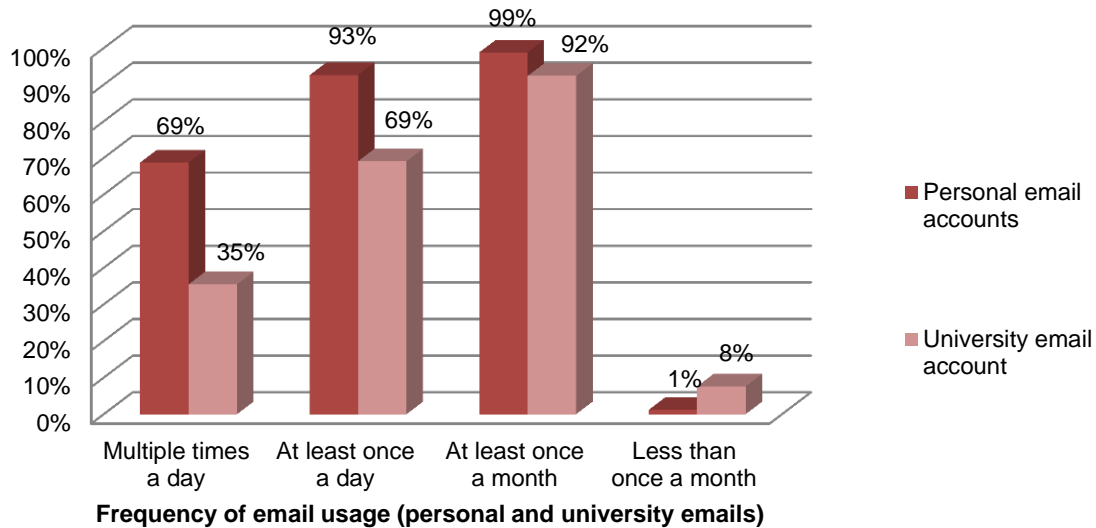
53% of the respondents said they do have emails accessible on their mobile phone, whilst only 14% of the respondents said they don't have access and do not wish to have access to the University's email account on mobile. It is noteworthy that 33% of the students would have access to the University email account on their phones if they knew how to set it up. That represents a good opportunity to increase the percentage of students checking their University email by providing guidance and instructions on how students can set up Middlesex University's email on their phones (Android and iPhone systems).

Figure 1 "Do you have your University email address setup on your phone?"



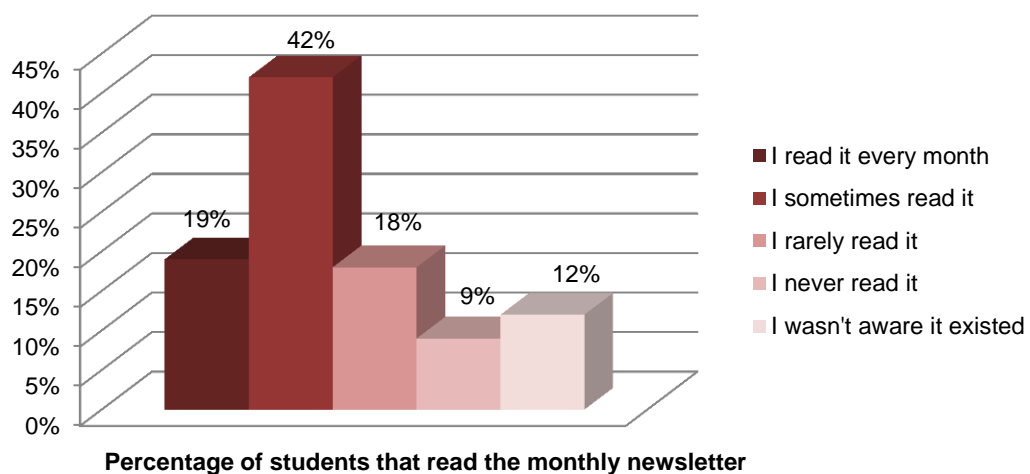
In regards to personal and University email accounts' usage, personal email accounts are accessed more frequently across all time periods. Even though University emails are considered an official channel of communication with students, 4% of the respondents said they *never* access it.

Figure 2: “How often do you use or check these social media platforms in term time (even if not to communicate with the University)?”



Only 19% of the respondents said that they read the Student Engagement newsletter *every month*, while 42% stated they “sometimes read it”. The newsletter is currently being reformulated by the Student Engagement Team with diverse topics and events of interest, in order to increase not only the visibility of the newsletter, but to also cater to students’ academic and community needs.

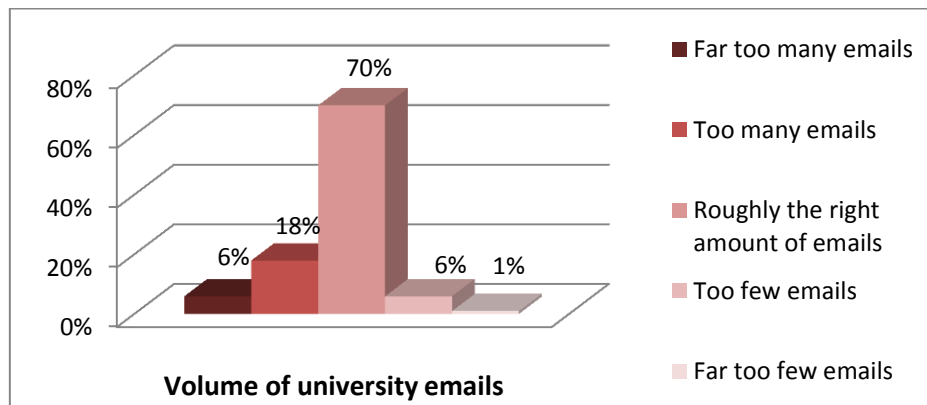
Figure 5 “Do you read the monthly email newsletters from the University’s ‘What’s happening at Middlesex?’”



Students’ attitudes towards email communications

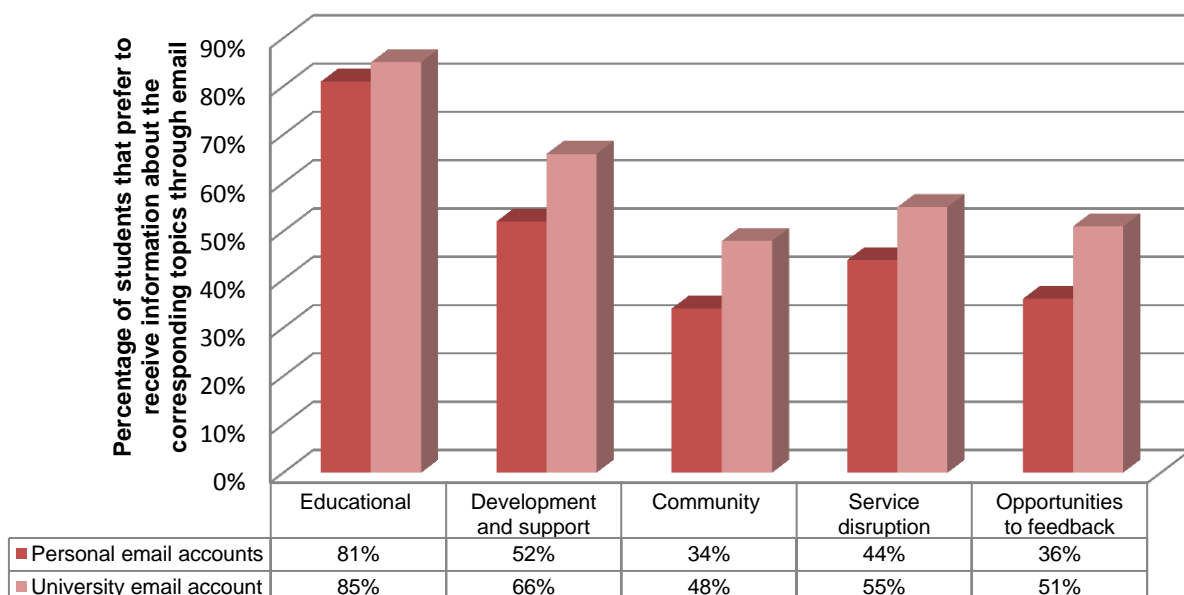
One of the main concerns when communicating with students via email is the volume of correspondence and how the students react to receiving university-related correspondence in their University email accounts (see Figure 3). The majority of the respondents (70%) said that they ‘roughly receive the right amount of emails’. Almost a quarter of students said that they receive either “too many” or “far too many” emails.

Figure 3 “How do you feel about the number of emails that you currently receive to your University email address?”



Students state that the most relevant topic to be emailed about is information related to their academic life / education at Middlesex. 85% of students would prefer to receive information about their academic life through their University email (81% personal email); compared to 48% of students who prefer to receive community information (e.g. events) through their University email (34% personal email). Whilst students access their personal email addresses more frequently than their University email, across all topics students would prefer to receive communications to their University email address.

Figure 4: “Which channels of communication would you prefer to be used when communicating about the following types of information (Tick as many channels as you like for each type of information)”



Open comments from students about email communications

“There should be an option to use the personal or the university’s email”

“Use only student email”

“More communication about grades”

“Use only personal email”

“University email often disconnects from mobile devices and does not work”