

Freshers Fortnight

Freshers Fortnight is held twice a year, in September – October and in January – February. Freshers Fortnight is an opportunity for both new and continuing Open University (OU) students to engage with fellow students, take part in events and activities, and learn about the Association. This summary looks at the 28 September – 10 October 2020 (20J) and 25 January – 7 February 2021 (21B), and is organised by the Association’s Student Community Team.

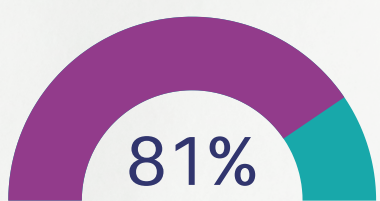
EVENT OBJECTIVES

- Provide a welcoming and friendly atmosphere for both new and continuing students; with a focus on social opportunities to connect with fellow students, informative sessions from student representatives, Association and OU staff, and wellbeing
- Provide an opportunity for students to learn more about the Association, their student representatives and opportunities available to them
- Encourage further involvement from students with the Association beyond Freshers Fortnight

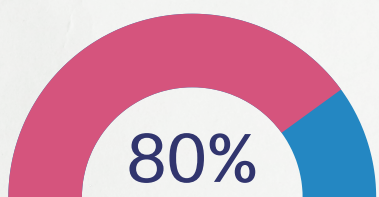
FRESHERS DURING COVID TIMES

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Freshers Fortnight, which is usually a mixture of online and face-to-face events, was held entirely online. As Freshers Fortnights 20J and 21B did not involve pre-registering for events, it is difficult to determine the exact number of students who engaged with the events and activities.

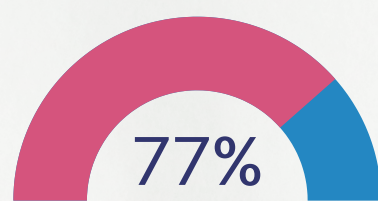
1765
Fresher
newsletter sign
ups



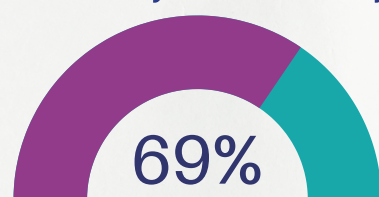
of survey respondents agreed with the statement ‘I found the hosts and facilitators friendly and welcoming’



of survey respondents felt that the Freshers events met their expectations



of survey respondents felt that the Freshers Fortnight reflected the Association's commitment to inclusivity and diversity



of survey respondents felt that attending Freshers has made a positive contribution to my student experience’

Attendees’ positive experience of attending Freshers Fortnight 21B is also reflected in the comments received throughout the survey. Attendees gave positive feedback on feeling welcomed, the variety of sessions, and the opportunity to meet fellow OU students. Several comments mention the sense of community that students felt as a result of having attended Freshers.

“I loved the feeling of being involved, the students and staff are great and welcoming and engaging”

“I found it very interesting and informative and it boosted my confidence in meeting new people.”

“I found the sessions I went to very informative. The range of things available to access was varied and diverse which I think attracted a wide range of people.”

“This was my third Freshers Fortnight and I think it gets better every time. More sessions, more opportunities and more fun! I can't wait for the next one!”