

Postgraduate Study Fair

In association with FindAMasters & FindAPhD

Tuesday 30 October 2018

Olympia Conference Centre, Kensington

11:30am – 4pm

Post-event report 2018



"Engaged prospective students. Very responsive staff when replying to queries before the fair." University of Reading

"Well organised event. Great support from the event organisers." Teesside University

"Good organisation and plenty of help available by staff. Timing of the event was just right".
Swansea University

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General Summary

The October Postgraduate Study Fair was held for the first time at Olympia London, Kensington. The location change was due to a planned march and demonstration by members of the IWGB union terminating at Senate House, University of London which we realised would affect visitor access to the fair and so we had to make the decision to move venue to prevent any disruption on the day. The decision to move was made with just over 3 weeks to go to the fair and we would like to thank all our exhibitors for their cooperation, patience and understanding.

The event was held in the Conference Centre on the third floor, where we utilised the main hall and foyer as the exhibition area. We used one of the large conference rooms for the general careers talks, and two smaller meeting rooms for the more specific exhibitor talks.

Vital statistics

- **68** exhibitors took part this year (69 in 2017).
- A total of **1,444** people pre-registered.
- The total attendance figure this year was **458**

We believe the last minute venue change as well as it being off-campus had a knock-on effect on the attendance figure.

Our marketing messages reached a wide audience in the weeks leading up to the fair. We sent out several information-loaded pre-registered emails ensuring our visitors were well prepared and informed before they arrived. Information included the Presentation Programme, useful careers advice guides, a list of all the exhibitors expected to be at the fair, as well as a link directing them to the exhibitor list containing more information about the courses they offer.

Exhibitors were offered the opportunity to give talks and presentations throughout the day, which were available to visitors to attend free of charge on a first-come, first-serve basis. We had a wide range of talks, including general advice such as *Applying to study a Master's*

Degree delivered by Goldsmiths, University of London, and *Loans for Postgraduate Study* by University of Portsmouth. Some of the subject-specific talks on the day included *Broaden your mind and develop a new career in Psychology* by University of Reading, and *Masters degree opportunities in Health at City, University of London*.

The average attendance at the general advice talks was 33 and at the exhibitor talks it was 8.

Marketing

For our marketing campaign, we used a variety of mediums both offline and online as detailed below:

Careers Services: To help advertise the fair, University of London Careers Services displayed buttons and banners on their websites, screensavers on their library PCs, and displayed posters and postcards around their campuses. Information Officers made use of social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook posting links to the fair website to encourage visitor registrations. They also included information about the fair in their calendar that sits on their student portal sites.

Careers Services across the country were also sent posters and postcards to display within their offices and other prominent positions around their universities.

London Underground Advertising: We ran a two-week campaign of posters in London tube station platforms which commenced on Monday 8 October and ended on Sunday 21 October.

Online promotion: Online promotion continued to be successful in promoting the fair extensively to a wide range of students and graduates, resulting in 82% of attendees hearing about the fair online. We advertised with the Students' Union at Queen Mary running a one week digital screen campaign, and had a slot in their weekly newsletter with a mailing list of 23,000.

Other online advertising included email shots and web banner advertisements via our sponsor websites www.findaphd.com and www.findamasters.com, and other websites included TARGETpostgrad and Prospects.

In addition, social media played an extensive role in our marketing this year, with dedicated pages on Facebook and on Twitter where we used #PGLondon to increase activity and to attract new followers.

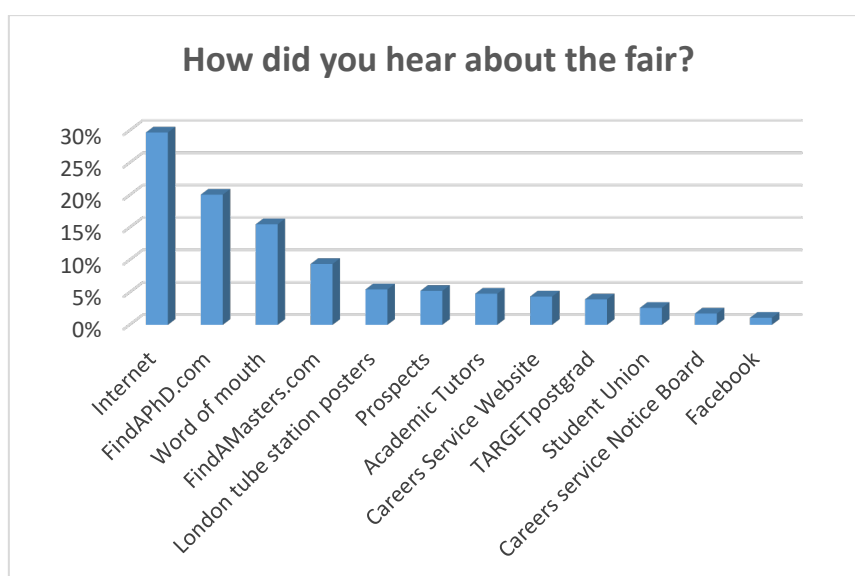
We also used the UoL social media – facebook and twitter – to further promote the reach of the fair.

We worked alongside a digital agency and utilised a range of campaign channels such as Adwords PPC, Facebook carousel and Mobile geo targeting.

Marketing results

We had a steady stream of pre-registrations up to the end of October and used the opportunity to advertise the fair at our Autumn London Graduate Fair which took place 2 weeks earlier on 9 October. We displayed A6 postcards on the organisers desk so that visitors could pick one up on their way in.

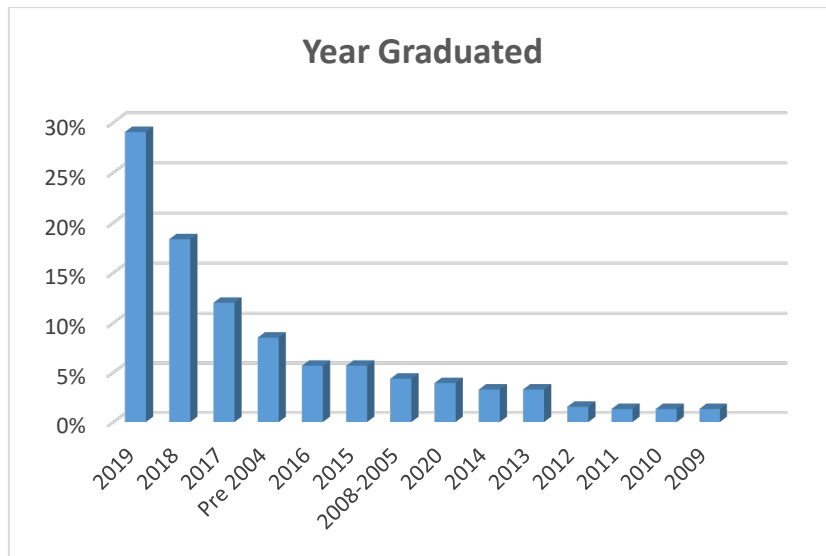
The graph below illustrates the different types of channels by which our attended visitors heard about the Fair. Internet came out on top, one of the reasons to explain this could be that our website ranks first place in google when typing in “postgraduate fair”. As expected, our sponsor FindAPhD & FindAMasters played a huge part in driving visitors to our website. Word of mouth also ranked highly which shows that a buzz was generated around the event and had people talking about the fair.



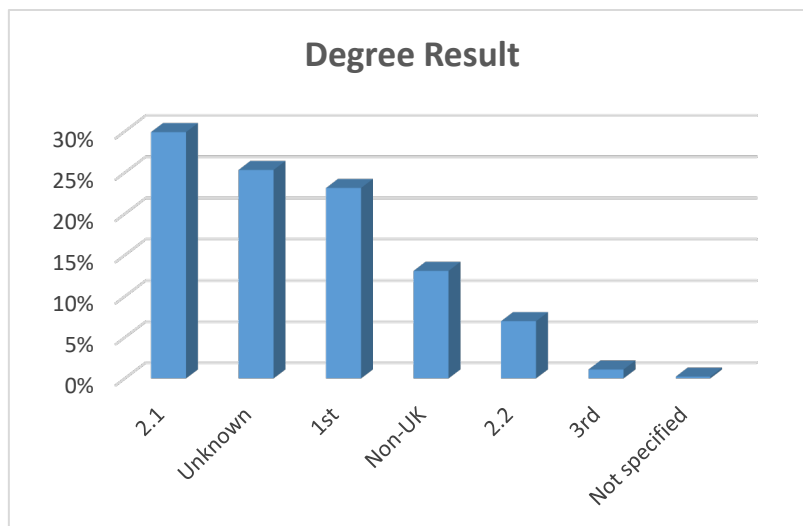
Visitor Information and Statistics

Year of Graduation

As expected the highest percentage of our visitors were expecting to graduate in 2019, this is followed by recent graduates from 2018 and 2017 at 18% and 12% respectively. This makes the fair an ideal place to promote courses starting in the next year.



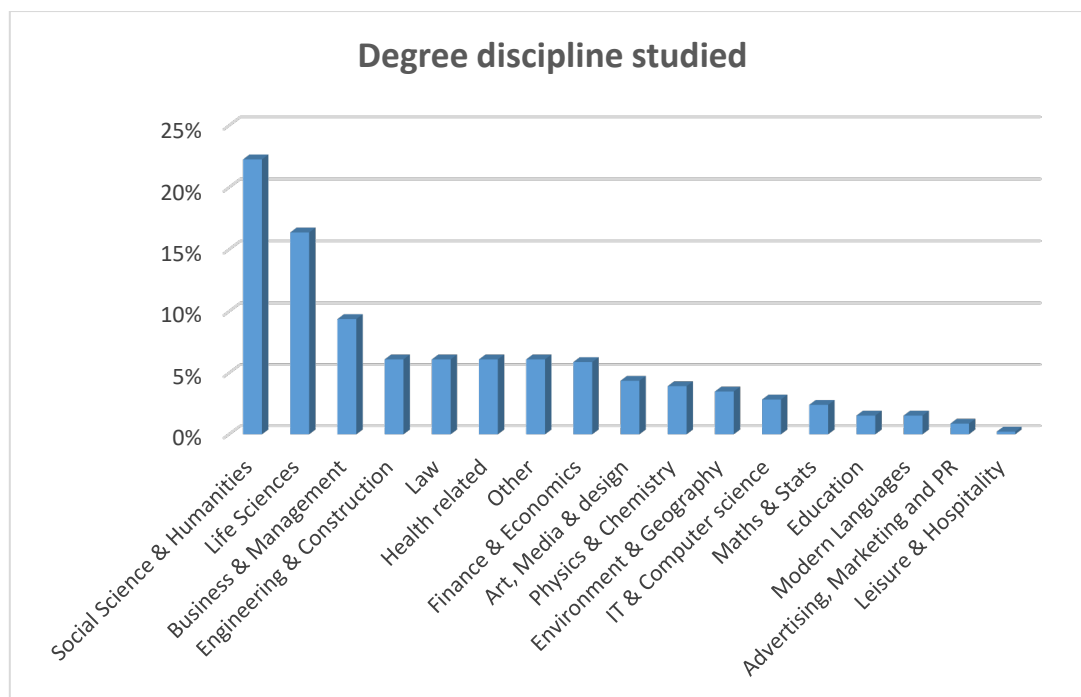
Degree result



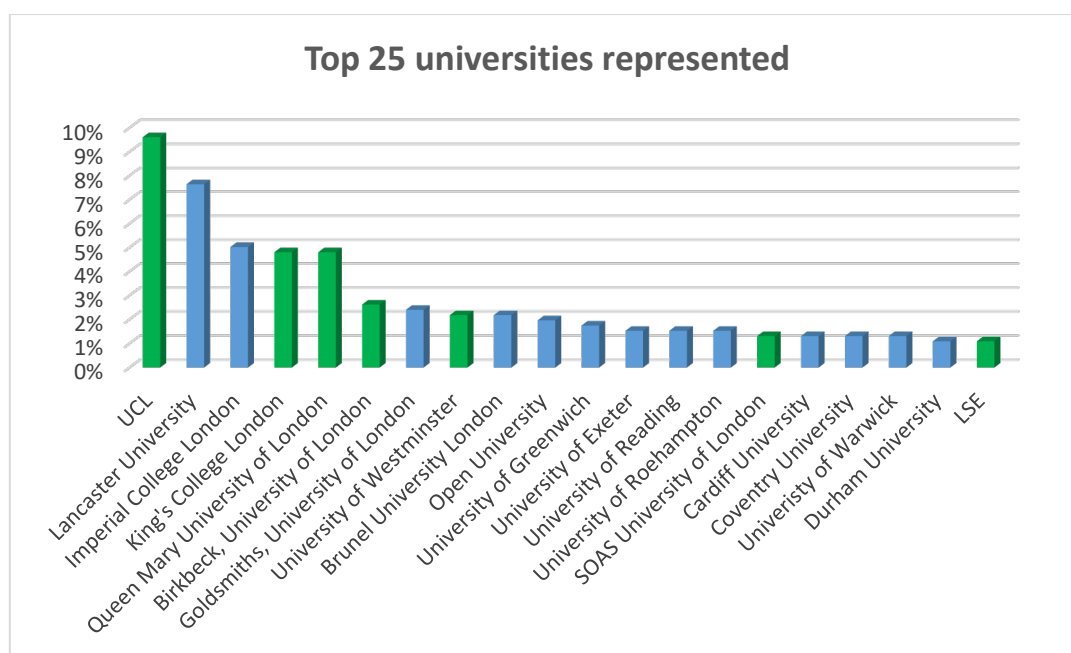
The chart above shows the degree results of our visitors to the fair this year. 53% of attendees had achieved or are expecting to achieve a 2.1. A quarter of them were unsure of what they would achieve.

Degree discipline

We can see from the chart below, the diverse range of subjects studied by our visitors. Although very broad categories, Social Sciences & Humanities tops the list again this year followed next by Life Sciences. Business & Management yet again made it in the top 5. One change we notice is an increase in Engineering & Construction students as it jumps from 9th to 4th most popular degree discipline studied from last year.



Universities attended

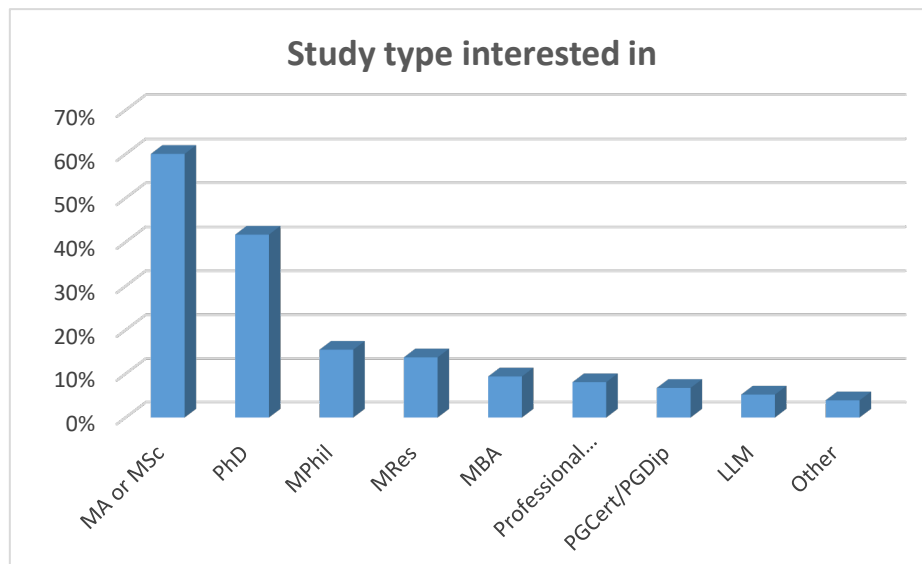


Over 125 different UK universities were represented at the fair and 7 of the top 25 universities represented were our own University of London federal colleges (highlighted in green above), making up 27% of the total visitors. UCL has always been traditionally the highest represented university and was once again, despite the change in venue, indicating the move to Olympia did not have an impact. Interestingly, this is followed by Lancaster University who did not make it in the top 15 universities represented last year. There was also an increase in the number of Imperial College London students, they were the third most represented university at the fair compared to 12th the previous year. This increase

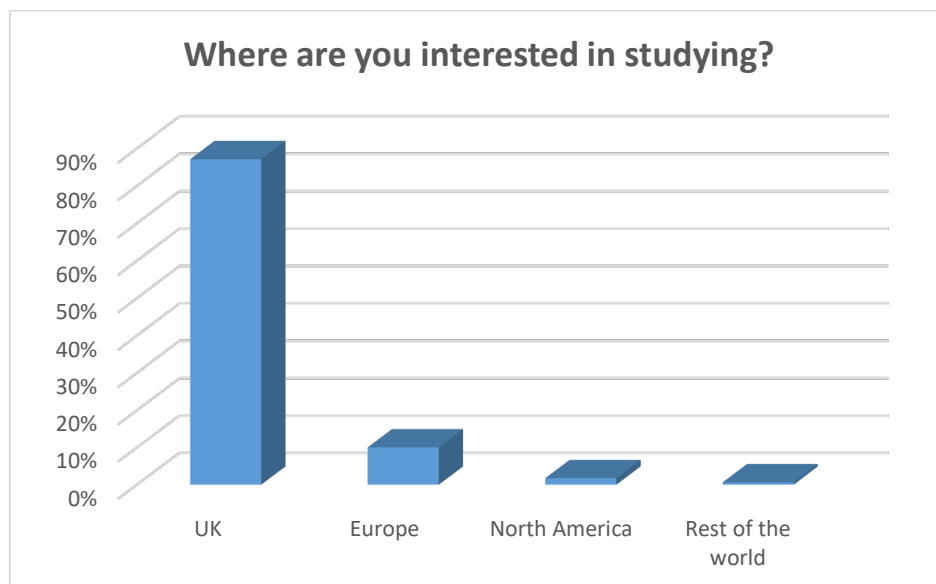
could be explained by the venue move to Olympia as it is closer to their campus than Senate House.

Further Study Type

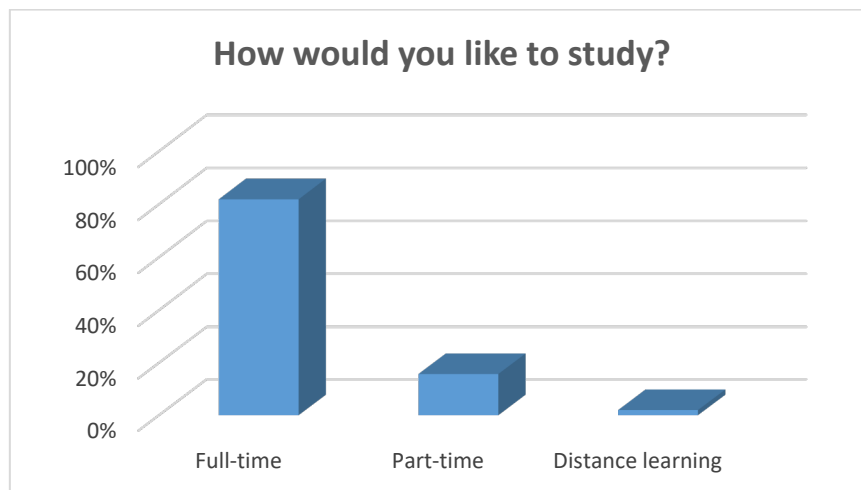
The chart below shows the type of postgraduate study visitors are interested in. The majority of visitors were interested in MA or MSc, and PhDs.



The chart below shows that 87% of visitors would like to study in the UK which is not surprising as 50% were British or Irish. There was a decrease from last year on those wanting to study in Europe and North America.



Study type preferences



No significant change this year in preferred study modes as the chart displays the majority of visitors at 82% wanted to study full time. 16% were looking to study part time and 2% were interested in distance learning.

Visitor feedback

The following feedback is based on a total of 28 visitor responses.

We asked our visitors why they visited the Fair:

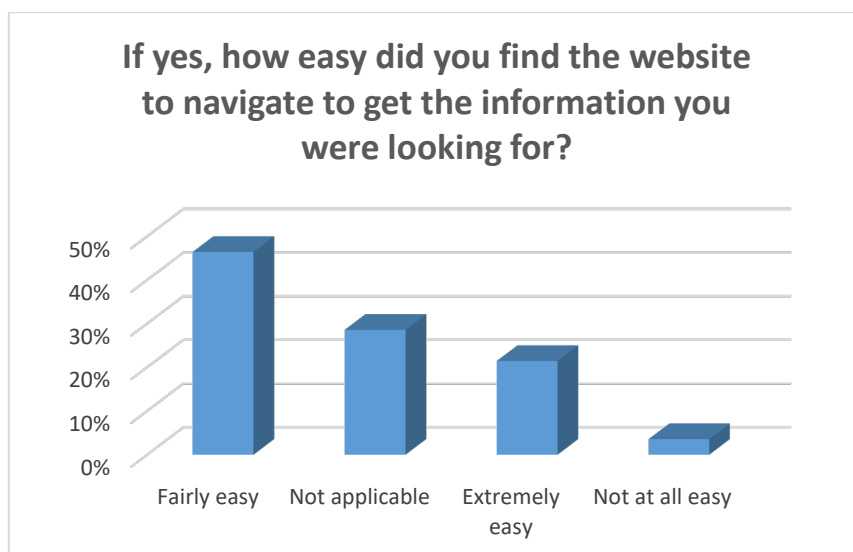
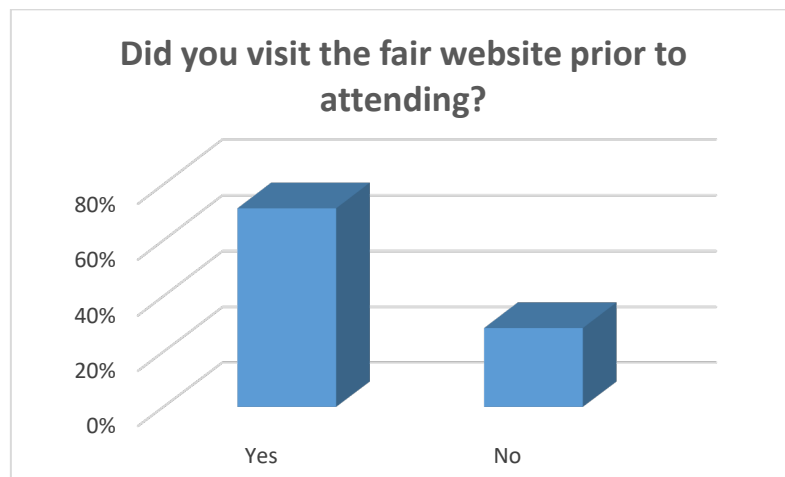
Respondents were allowed to select multiple answers to this question.



The graph shows that there isn't one reason that stands out as to why visitors attended the fair. The most popular reason (at 68%) for visitors attending was because they had a general

interest in finding out about postgraduate study options available to them. Although the talks programme was listed as the least popular reason, this still made up 29% of total attendees so is still quite a high figure.

We asked our visitors whether they visited the fair website:



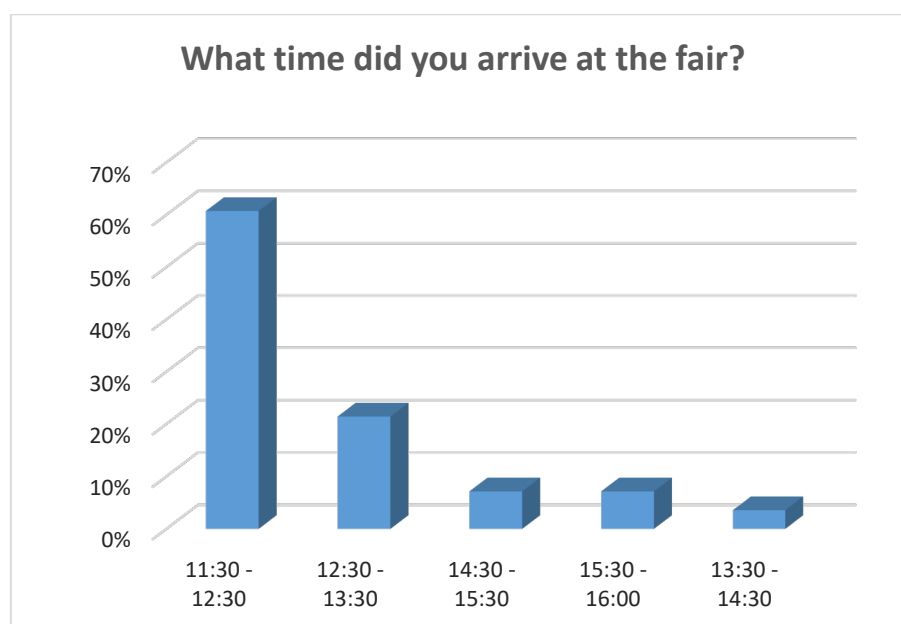
Almost three quarters of visitors said they visited the fair website prior to attending the fair, and most of them found it fairly easy or extremely easy to navigate. We work hard to provide lots of resources on the website before the fair and to give as much information about what to expect on the day. It also highlights the importance for exhibitors to complete their online profile thoroughly and in good time so visitors are able to use the information provided in their research.

How did you find the following aspects of the fair?

How did you find the following aspects of the fair?	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	N/A
Layout of the fair	18%	43%	25%	11%	4%	0%
Number of exhibitors	11%	25%	46%	4%	14%	0%
Quality of exhibitors	14%	14%	43%	18%	11%	0%
Usefulness of information received	7%	18%	36%	18%	21%	0%
Friendliness and helpfulness of staff	43%	21%	29%	4%	4%	0%
Free talks and presentations	11%	18%	14%	14%	4%	39%
Catering facilities	7%	7%	7%	29%	11%	39%

The table above tells us what visitors thought of various aspects of the fair including logistics, exhibitors and information available on the day. On the whole, visitors felt very positively about all those aspects, however 21% were expecting to receive more useful information on the day, and to see more exhibitors taking part.

What time approximately did you arrive at the fair?

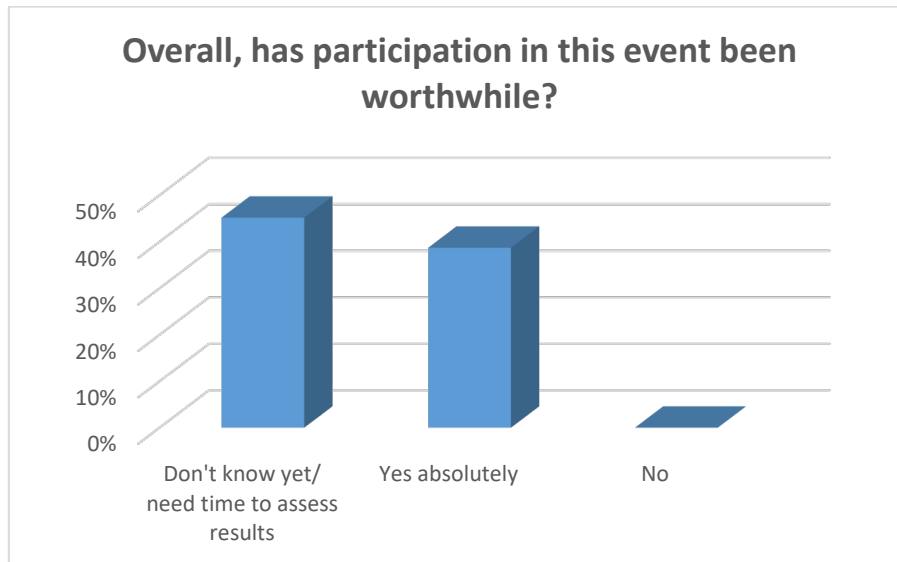


We can see that the busiest entry time was 11:30am – 12:30pm which is the first hour of the fair. We advertised an incentive to visitors that the first 100 visitors to the fair would receive a free lunch voucher, which may have contributed to this.

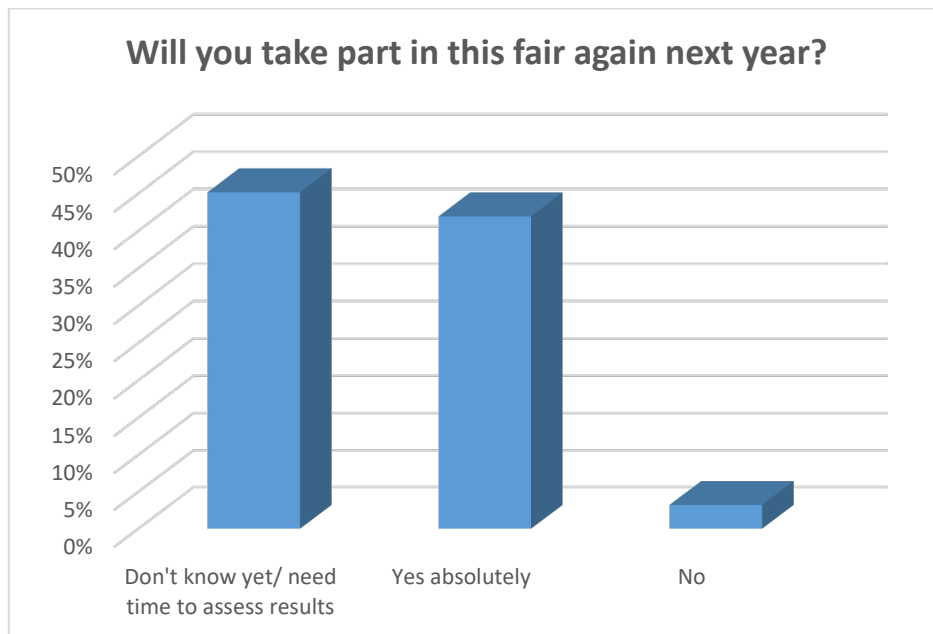
Exhibitor Feedback

The following feedback is based on 31 replies (46% of our exhibitors)

We asked exhibitors whether participation at the fair has been worthwhile for their organisation:



Will you attend this fair again next year?



39% of responses said attending the fair was worthwhile and 45% were either not sure or needed more time to assess results. 45% would take part again next year and only 3% of exhibitors said they wouldn't.

How many visitors did you see at the Fair?



We asked exhibitors how many visitors they saw on their exhibition stands and the graph above shows that most exhibitors at 61% saw up to 50, with 26% saying they saw 51 - 100 visitors.

How would you rate the quality of visitors to this event?



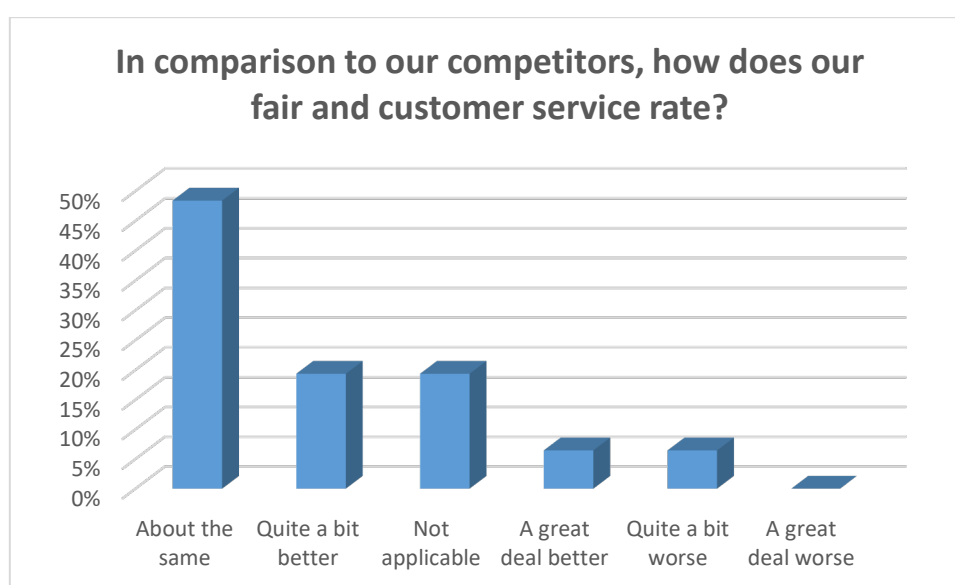
When asked to rate the quality of visitors to the event, 77% of responses rated our visitors to be of very good or good quality.

How did you find the following aspects of the fair?

How would you rate the following?	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Reasonable	Poor
Refreshments and catering	32%	23%	23%	19%	3%
Exhibition stand set up	30%	33%	33%	3%	0%
Pre-event logistics (exhibitor manual, profile)	32%	42%	16%	10%	0%
Parking and delivery arrangements at Olympia	17%	37%	33%	13%	0%
Overall event experience	10%	45%	29%	16%	0%

Exhibitors were asked how they felt about refreshments, stand set up, logistics, arrangements at Olympia, and overall event experience of the fair. With largely positive ratings, most of the exhibitors rated all these aspects as Excellent, Very good and Good. 3% said refreshments and catering was poor and could be improved.

In comparison to our competitors, how does our fair and customer service rate?



Exhibitors who attended a competitor's fair as well as ours said that the customer service and overall fair was about the same. 26% said we were quite a bit better or a great deal better. 6% thought we were quite a bit worse.

Exhibitor comments:

- *Fantastic set up and very helpful staff*
- *Excellent student enquiries, very well organised*
- *Good pre-event information, the timing of the event was just right*

Suggestions for improvement from exhibitors:

- *Try to do the event on a Saturday, could attract more students*

We have previously suggested that we change the hours of the fair to accommodate evening visitors and/or weekend visitors, but this has not received positive response from exhibitors in general. We plan to hold the event back at Senate House next year which means it will be on campus, which would help in attracting visitors to the fair.

- *It was a very London-centric event. I would like to see more visitors from a wider locale.*

We do advertise the event to universities, libraries, careers services across the country, however, a drawback for some visitors attending is the long commute.

- *It felt as though the new venue may have hit attendance, while this was a necessary move – it would be preferred to be at Senate House next year.*

While Olympia serves as a purpose-built exhibition space, we do plan to move back to Senate House and back on campus next year.

Dates for future fairs:

London Graduate Fair	Tuesday 15 October 2019, 11am – 4pm	Senate House
	https://london.ac.uk/london-graduate-fair	
Postgraduate Study Fair	Tuesday 29 October 2019, 12pm – 4pm	Senate House
	https://london.ac.uk/postgraduate-fair	
Postgraduate Study Fair	Thursday 30 January 2020, 12pm – 4pm	Senate House
	https://london.ac.uk/postgraduate-fair	
London Graduate Fair	Wednesday 17 June 2020, 11am – 4pm	Senate House
	https://london.ac.uk/london-graduate-fair	

To book for any of the above fairs, or to find out more, please contact the Events Team on email: events@cosector.com or call us on 020 7863 6050.