

ILSP student survey: Policy evaluation report.

June 2024

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Author.

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INTRODUCTION

This academic year (2023/24), the five sections within LICA -- Architecture, Design, Film, Fine Art and Theatre -- adopted their own policies to better support students with Inclusive Learning and Support Plans (ILSPs). The policies were created so that staff associated with teaching could be more proactive in addressing our students' needs.

The LICA Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee was interested in evaluating the impact of those policies on students. To do this, the Committee designed a survey to find out about students' experiences. The survey consisted mostly of multiple-choice questions with some open text response questions. On average, the survey took about 5-10 minutes to complete.

All LICA Undergraduate students with ILSPs were sent an initial email on Tuesday, 7 May, 2024, from Clare Coxhill (LICA Student Programmes Officer). The email contained a description of the survey, a survey link and QR code, and a link to Lancaster University's ILSP policy. Follow-up reminder emails were sent to the same students on each of the following 3 weeks, with a final reminder email sent on Tuesday, 28 May, 2024.

Of the 98 students who received the emails, 14 students completed or nearly completed the survey. This represents a response rate of 14%.

The following sections outline the findings from the survey, and concludes with a list of actions.

Survey findings: Contact and frequency of contact

The first question asked whether students with ILSPs have been contacted by LICA staff to discuss their ILSPs this academic year. Of the 11 students who responded to this question, 6 said they had been contacted, 3 said they had not and 2 did not know (see Figure 1).

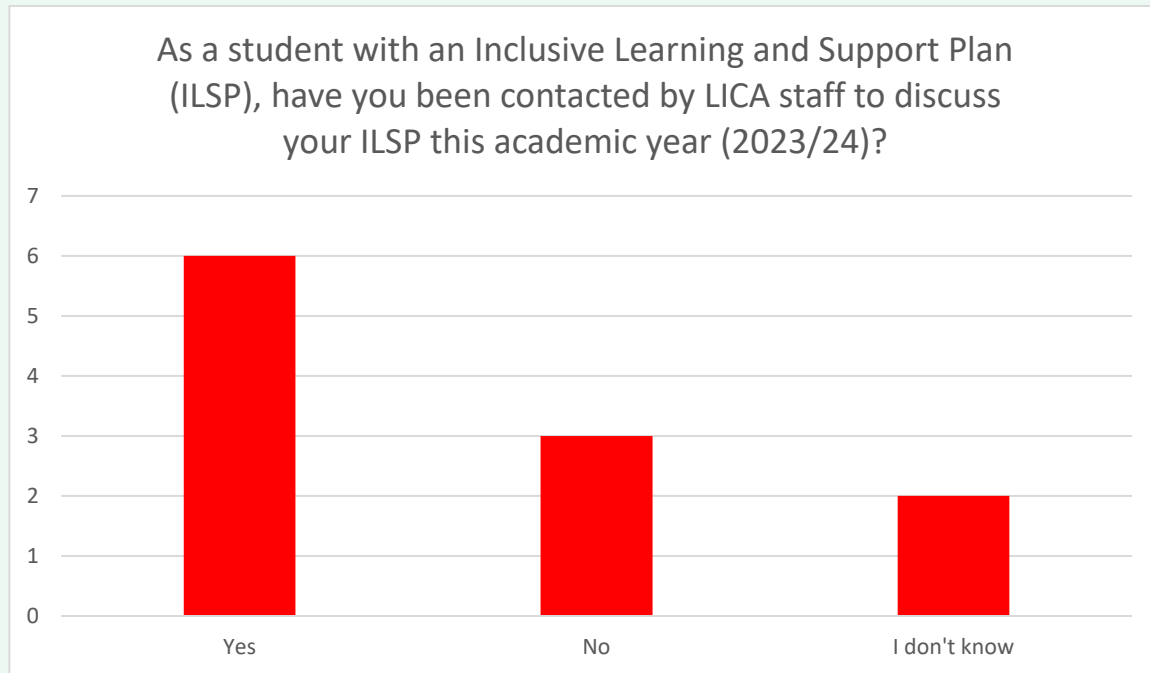


Figure 1. Have you been contact by LICA staff to discuss your ILSP this academic year?

The second question asked when students were contacted to discuss their ILSP throughout the academic year (students could choose multiple options). Of the 10 students who responded, 5 (50%) said they had not been contacted at all. Of the remaining 6 responses, there were 3 (30%) that fell into Term 2, 2 (20%) that fell into Term 1 and 1 (10%) that fell into Term 3 (see Figure 2).

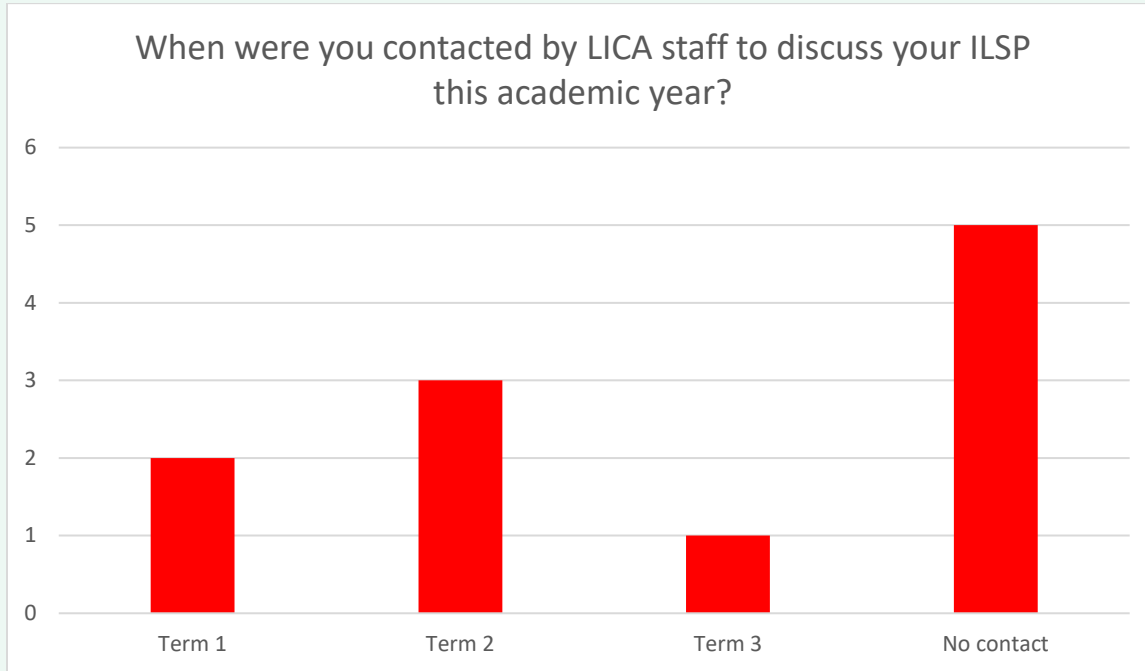


Figure 2. When were you contact by LICA staff to discuss your ILSP this academic year?

The third question asked how many times throughout the academic year has a member of LICA staff reached out to them about their ILSP. Of the 3 students who responded, 2 (66%) said 1-2 times, and 1 (33%) said never (see Figure 3).

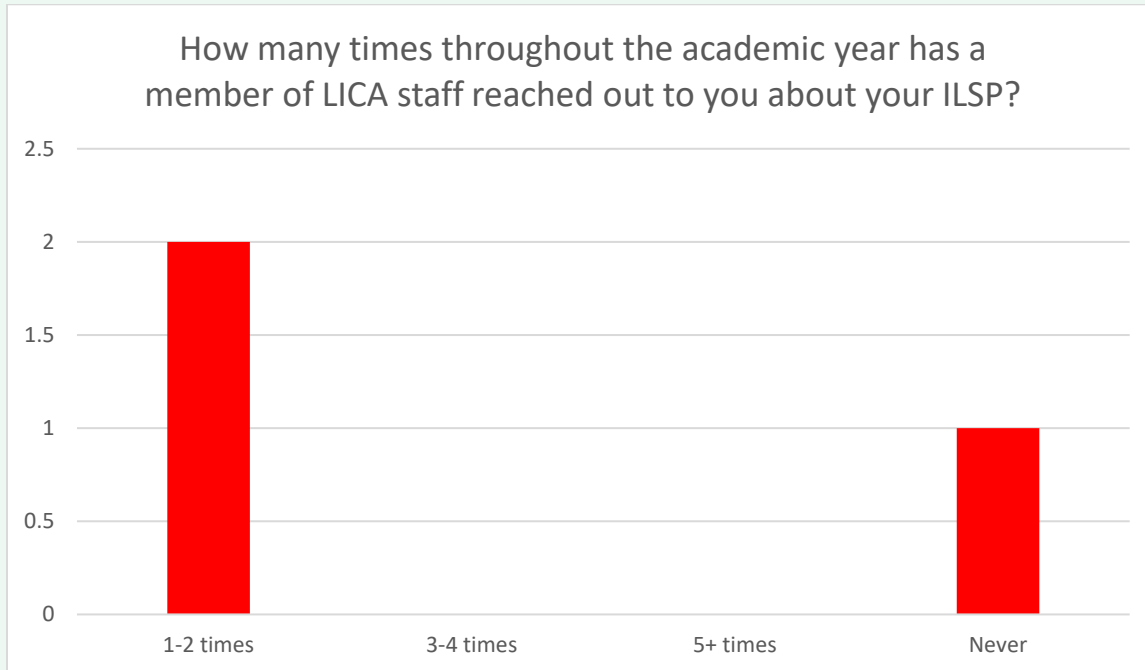


Figure 3. How many times throughout the academic year has a member of LICA staff reached out to you about your ILSP?

In summary, of those students with ILSPs who responded to this survey, **almost half had not been contacted** by any member of LICA teaching staff at any point in the academic year. **Of those who had been contacted, their ILSPs were discussed on average 1-2 times, and these discussions took place unevenly across the three terms, with slightly more occurring in Term 2.**

Survey findings: Contacting students and contacting staff

The fourth question asked students who had directly contacted them about their ILSP within LICA this academic year (students could choose multiple options). Three students responded to this question, with 6 responses in total:

- 1 (33%) response indicated that students were contacted by their module convenor(s);
- 2 (67%) responses indicated that students were contacted by their tutor(s);
- 2 (67%) responses indicated that students were contacted by their Academic Advisor(s);
- 1 (33%) responses indicated that students were contacted by a member of Administrative Services (see Figure 4).

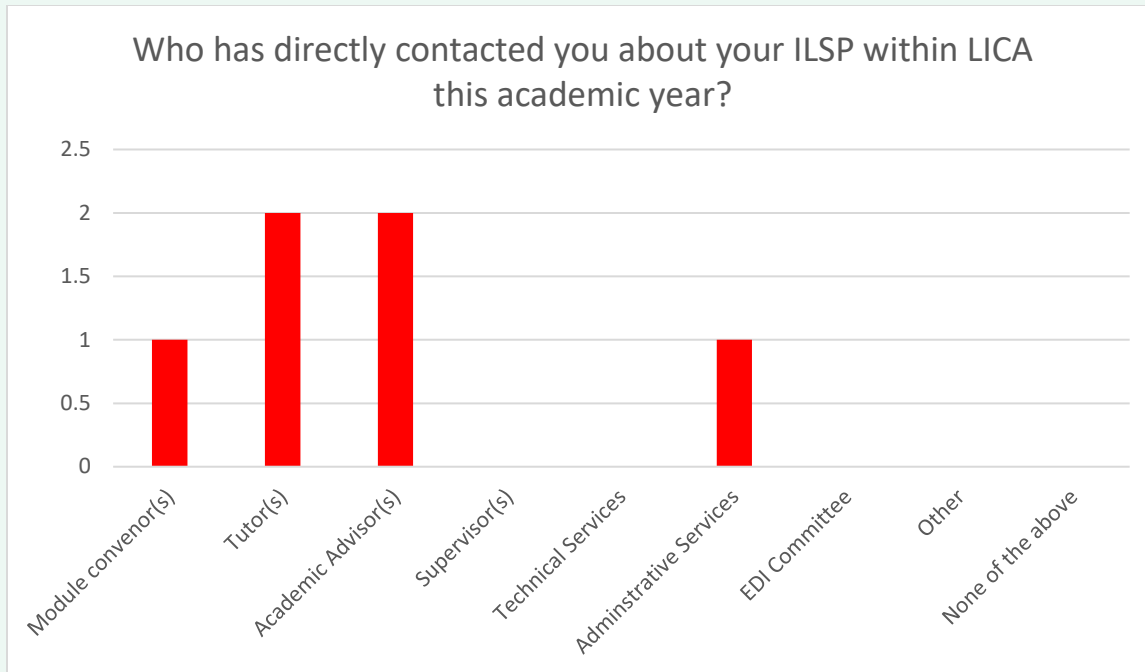


Figure 4. Who has directly contacted you about your ILSP within LICA this academic year?

The fifth question followed up from the previous question, asking about students' level of satisfaction when they were directly contacted by someone within LICA about their ILSP. Based on the 3 responses, 2 (67%) students said they were somewhat satisfied and 1 (33%) student said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (see Figure 5).

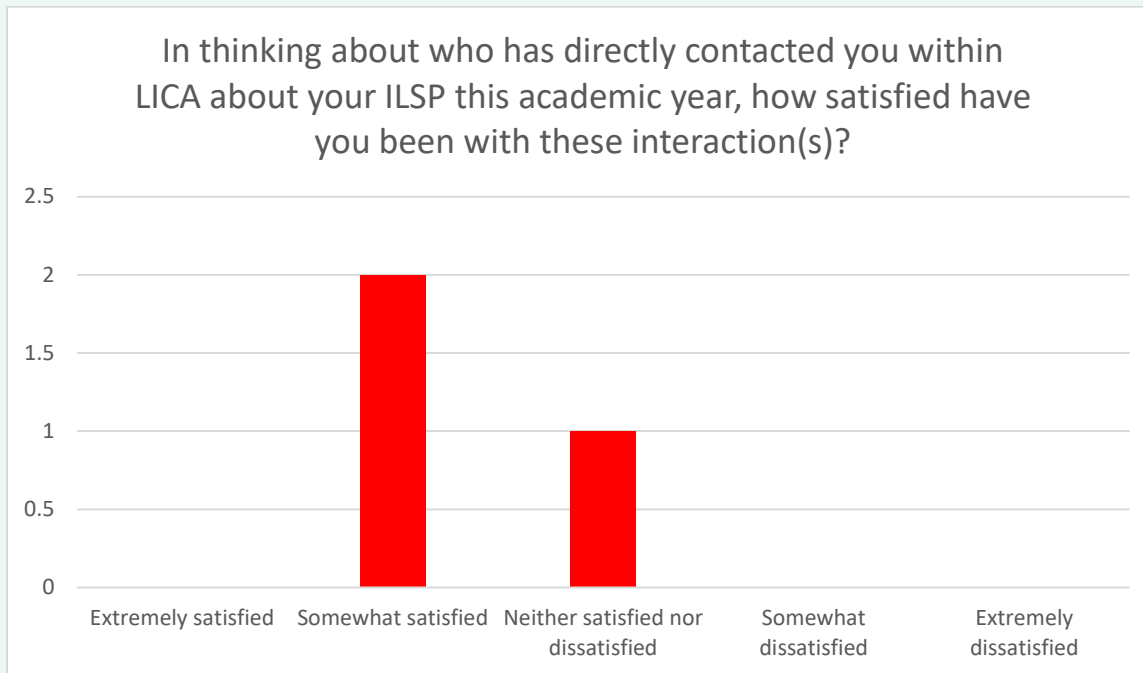


Figure 5. In thinking about who has directly contacted you within LICA about your ILSP this academic year, how satisfied have you been with these interaction(s)?

For the sixth question, the survey asked students to state whether they had actively reached out to anyone in LICA to discuss their ILSP over the academic year. Of the 8 students who responded, 5 (63%) said that they had not reached out and 3 (37%) said they had contacted a member of staff (see Figure 6).

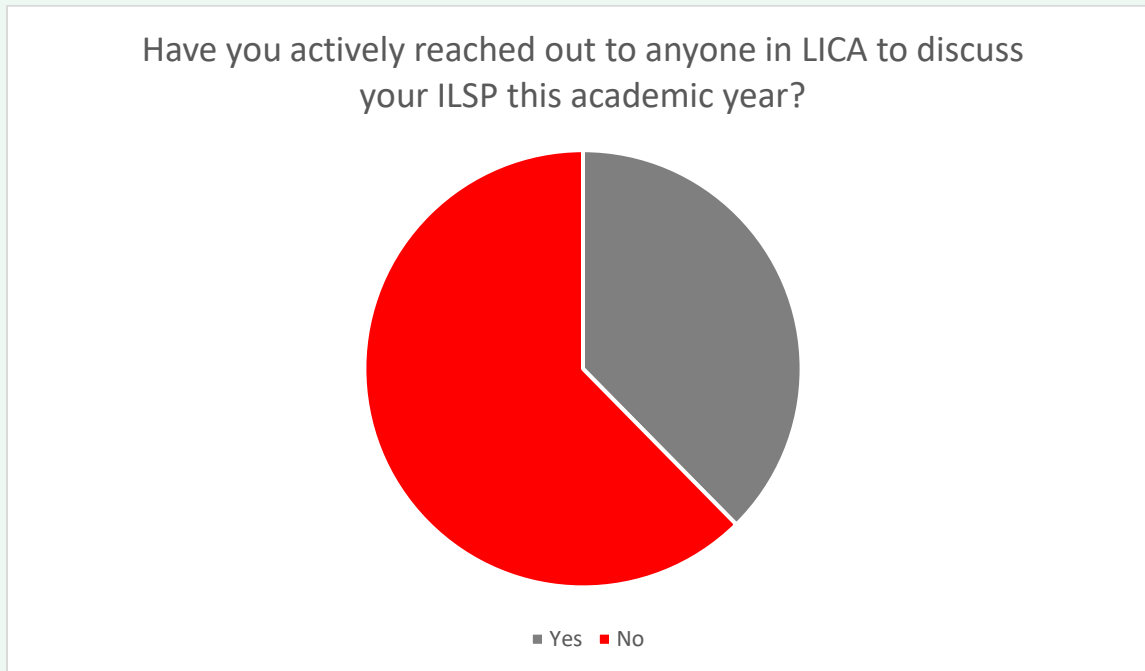


Figure 6. Have you actively reached out to anyone in LICA to discuss your ILSP this academic year?

As a follow-up question, students were asked who they reached out to in LICA to discuss their ILSP over the academic year. Out of the 3 respondents who answered this question, there were 11 responses:

- 1 (33%) response indicated that students contacted their module convenor(s);
- 3 (100%) responses indicated that students contacted their tutor(s);
- 3 (100%) responses indicated that students contacted their Academic Advisor(s);
- 1 (33%) response indicated that students contacted a member of Administrative Services (see Figure 7).

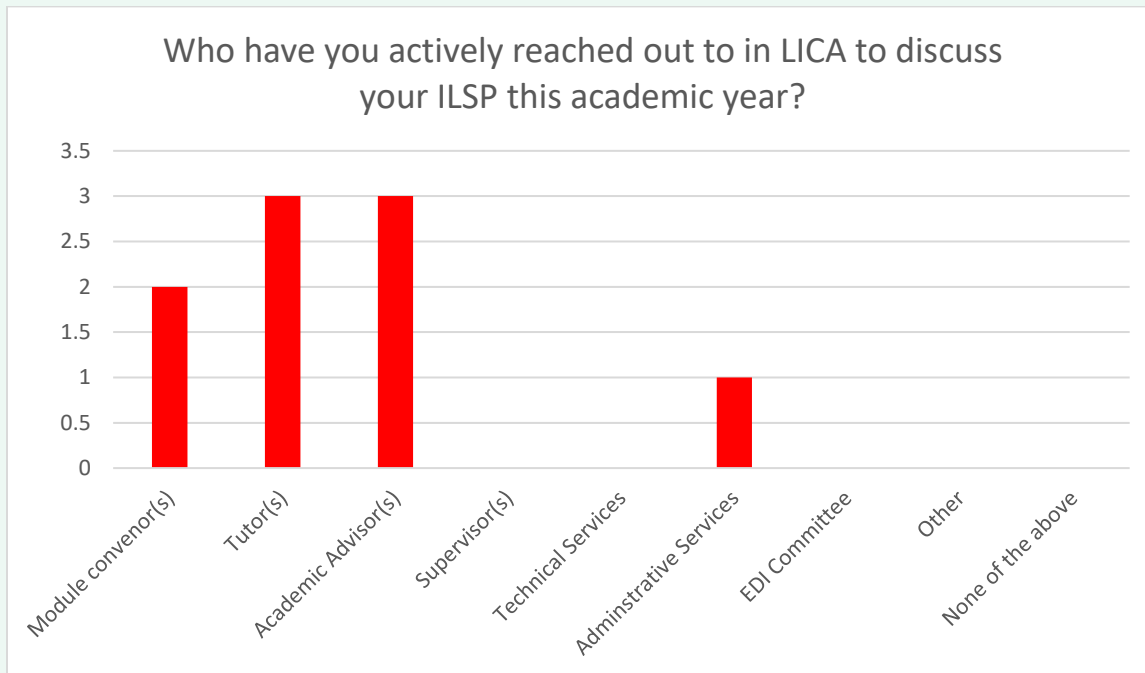


Figure 7. Who have you actively reached out to in LICA to discuss your ILSP this academic year?

As a further, follow-up question, students were asked for their level of satisfaction when they directly contacted someone within LICA about their ILSP. Of the 3 responses, 1 (33%) each said that they were extremely satisfied, satisfied and neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, respectively (see Figure 8).

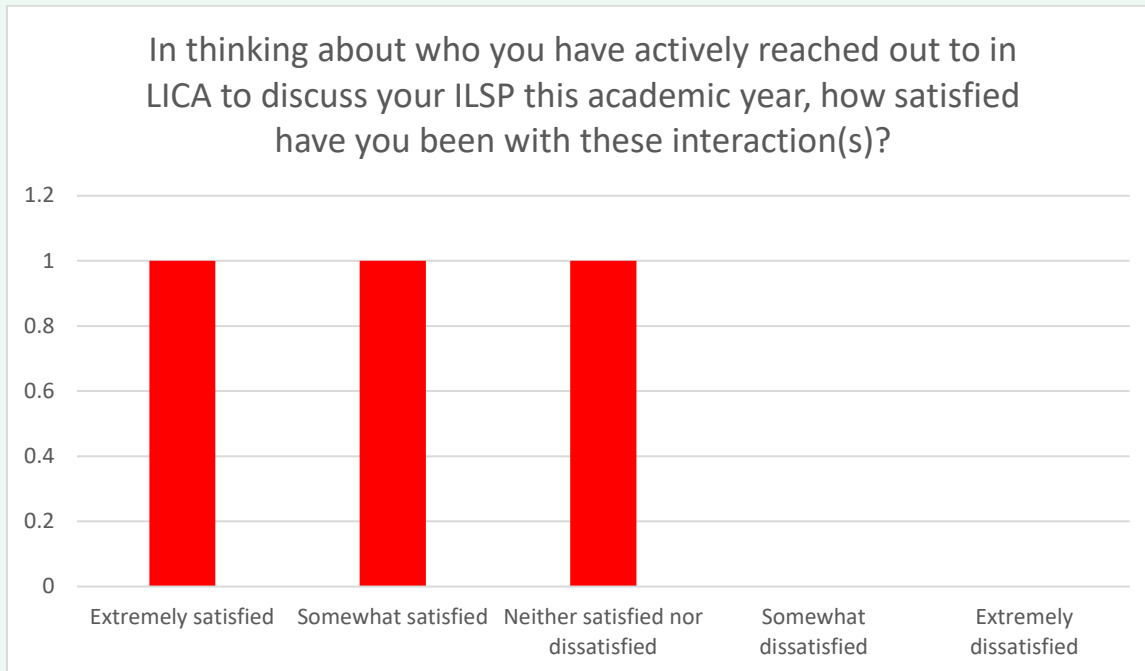


Figure 8. In thinking about who you have directly reached out to in LICA to discuss your ILSP this academic year, how satisfied have you been with these interaction(s)?

In summary, when contacted by a member of LICA staff to discuss their ILSPs, **tutors or Academic Advisors mainly reached out**. These interactions were principally positive or neutral. When asked if students reached out to staff in LICA to discuss their ILSPs, most said that they had not contacted anyone. For those students who had, again, **tutors and Academic Advisors were the most common members of staff they contacted**, and the interactions were mainly positive or neutral.

Survey findings: Overall needs being met

The ninth question asked students whether they felt that their needs were being met in relation to their ILSP this academic year. Of the 7 responses, 5 (71%) said yes and 2 (28%) said no (see Figure 9).

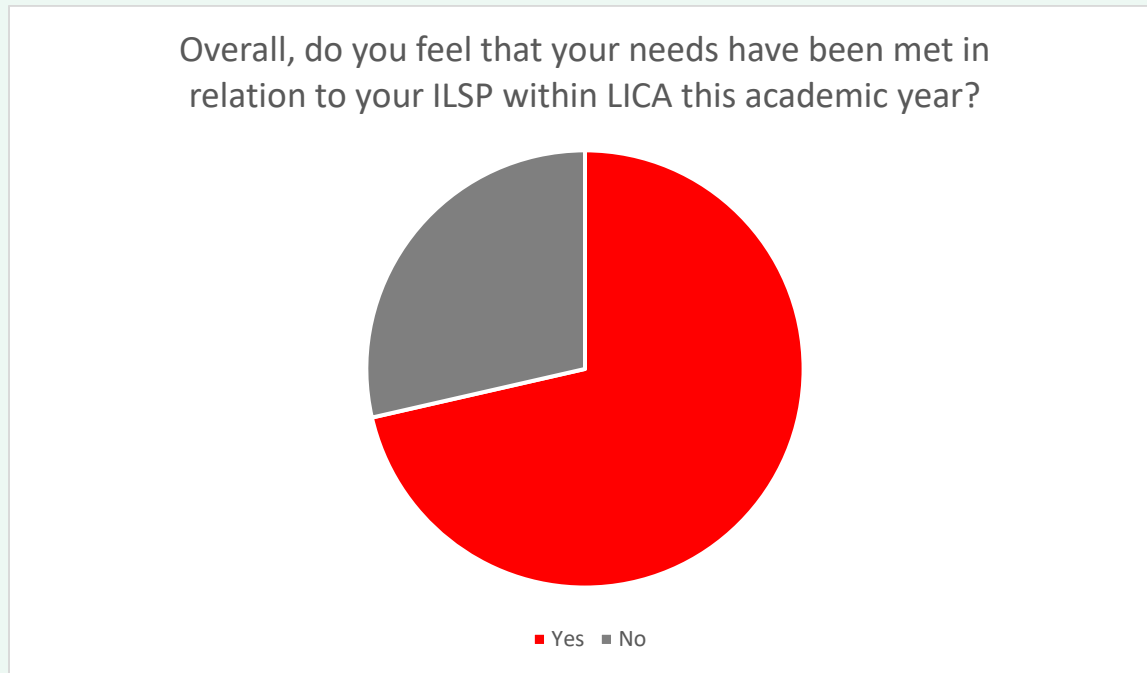


Figure 9. Overall, do you feel that your needs have been met in relation to your ILSP within LICA this academic year?

In an open-ended, follow-up question, students were asked to provide more details about their yes or no response. Five students replied:

The only reason I was contacted this year was because I reached out in summer before starting the new teaching year (23/24). I have had an ILSP since first year and nobody had a clue I had one until this year. It has been a truly shocking time at this university being a student with health issues (Third-year student).

I feel that my tutors have been very understanding and supportive; however, I feel not all staff have entirely respected my ILSP in terms of uploading content online in decent times in advance of lectures etc. (First-year student).

When I needed an extension, one was given to me straight away which was very helpful (Third-year student).

The institution could be more accessible but often students have to repeatedly advocate for themselves and are eventually heard (Third-year student).

I haven't really asked for help because it hasn't been too bad. Recording lectures and posting PowerPoints has helped me stay up to date in and outside of lectures. I'll probably get in contact for my later years, since the workload will increase (First-year student).

For the eleventh question, students were asked how satisfied they were that actions associated with their ILSP in LICA has been taken to support them in their learning. Of the 7 responses, 5 (71%) said they were slightly satisfied, 1 (14%) said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 1 (14%) said they were extremely dissatisfied (see Figure 10).

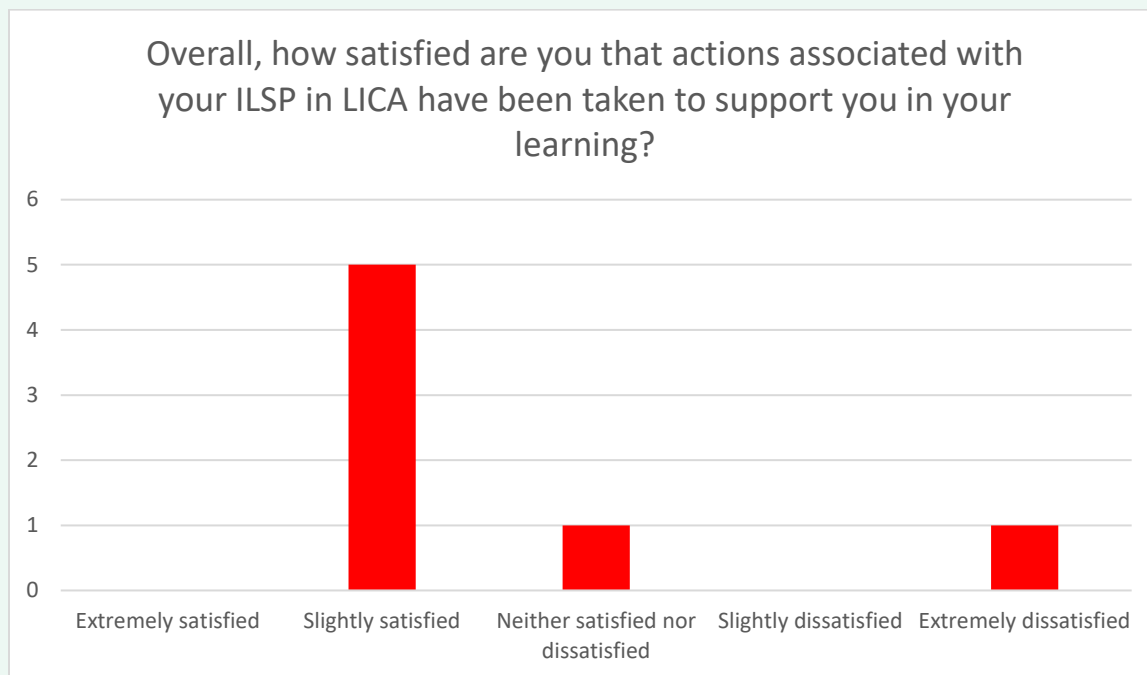


Figure 10. Overall, how satisfied are you that actions associated with your ILSP in LICA have been taken to support you in your learning?

In an open-ended, follow-up question, students were asked what could be done to better support them in LICA in relation to their ILSPs. Below are the 2 responses received:

Ensure all staff understand [that] uploaded content for pre lecture and seminar work needs to be enough in advance, perhaps with tutor organised check ins regarding mental health related things as I am not very good at reaching out for support (First-year student).

For tutors and staff, other than Jane Hoctor (who has been brilliant) to be made aware of who has an ILSP and to actually discuss what they can do to help. I have been treated appallingly until this last year. Turns out none of my tutors had a clue I had a medical condition that impacted me (Third-year student).

In summary, students who responded to this survey suggested that their **needs around ILSPs broadly have been met** and that they have been **satisfied that actions have been taken to support them in their learning**. Open-ended replies reflect this, particularly relating to teaching staff uploading module material ahead of lectures and liaising with administrative services staff to obtain extensions for assessment submissions. However, **some students stated that no one knew about their ILSP** until this year and that **they had to be proactive in getting support, rather than staff actively reaching out to them**. Especially for those students who are not good at reaching out for support, this could be problematic.

Demographics

Four demographic questions were asked of students: current year of study, LICA subject, gender identity and sexual orientation.

Of the 7 responses received to a question about current year of study, 3 (43%) students were in their first year, 1 (14%) student was in their second year, and 3 (43%) students were in their third year (see Figure 11).

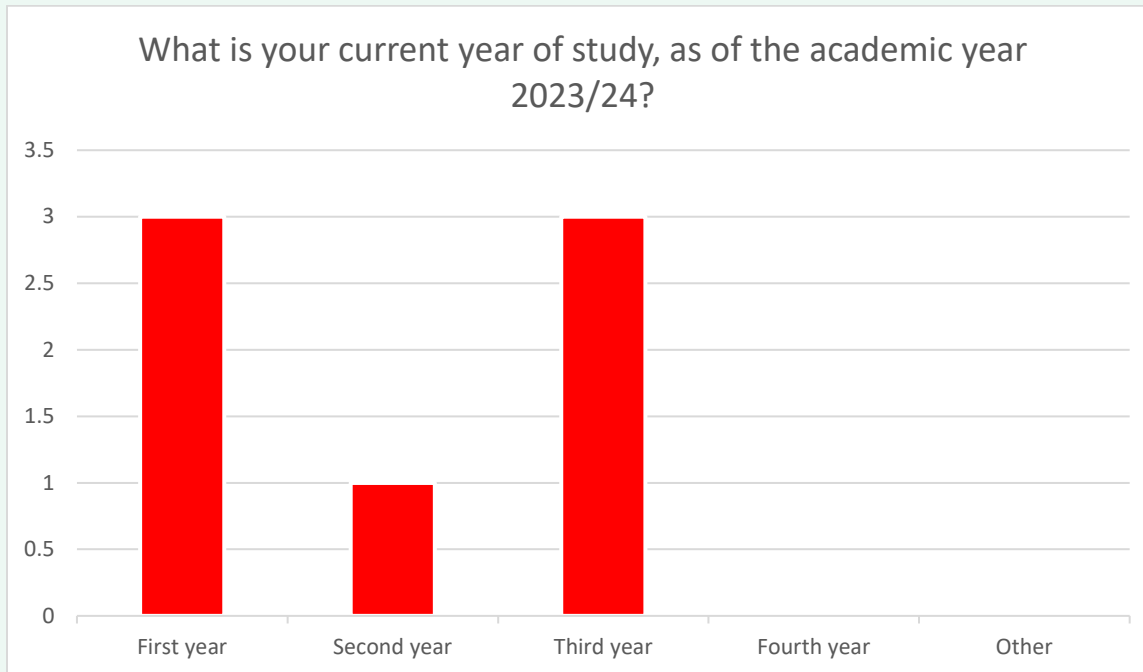


Figure 11. What is your current year of study, as of the academic year 2023/24?

In terms of the LICA subject that students were currently studying, the 7 responses revealed that 3 (38%) were from Theatre, 2 (25%) were from Film, 2 (25%) were from Fine Art and 1 (13%) was from a combined degree (see Figure 12).

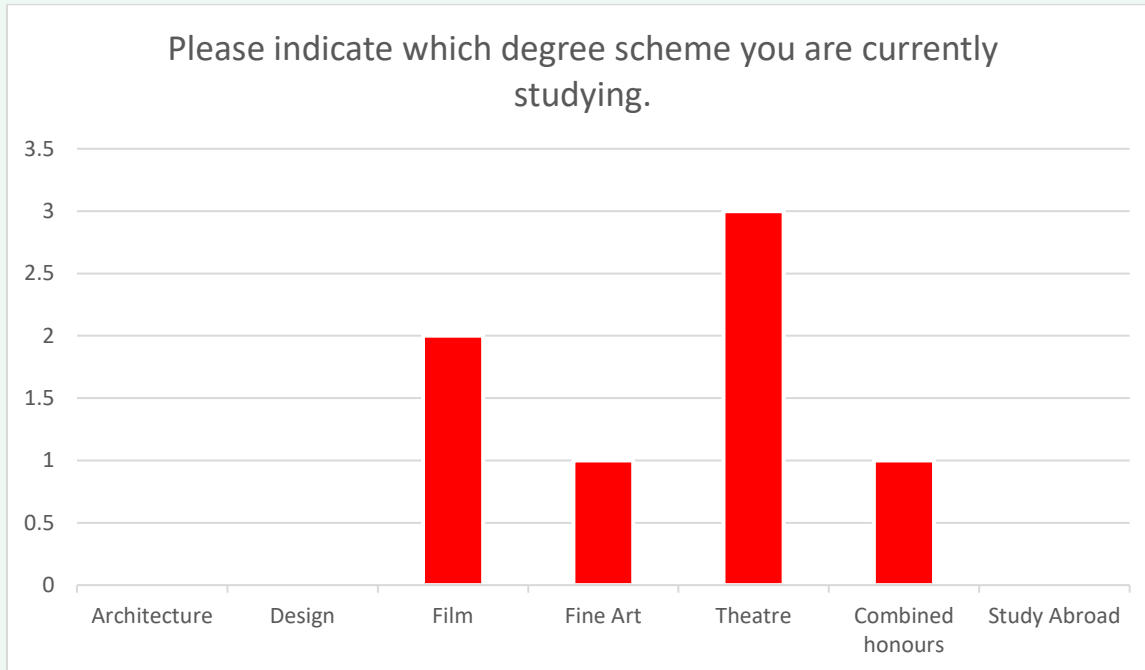


Figure 12. Please indicate which degree scheme you are currently studying.

Regarding gender identity, 7 responses were recorded: 3 (21.4%) students identified as female, 1 (7%) student identified as male, 1 (7%) student identified as non-binary, 1 (7%) student identified as another gender not on the list and 1(7%) student preferred not to state their gender identity (see Figure 13).

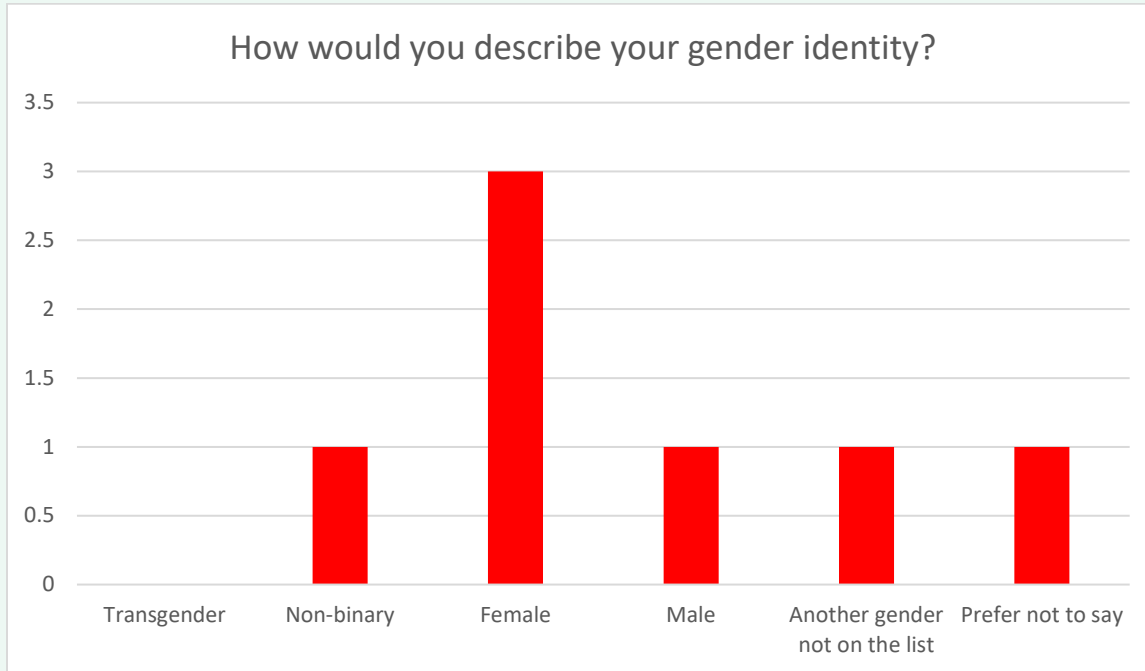


Figure 13. How would you describe your gender identity?

Finally, students were asked about their sexual orientation. Of the 7 responses, 3 (21.4%) students identified as bisexual, 2 (14%) students identified as gay or lesbian, 1 (7%) student identified as queer, and 1 (7%) student preferred not to state their sexual orientation (see Figure 14).

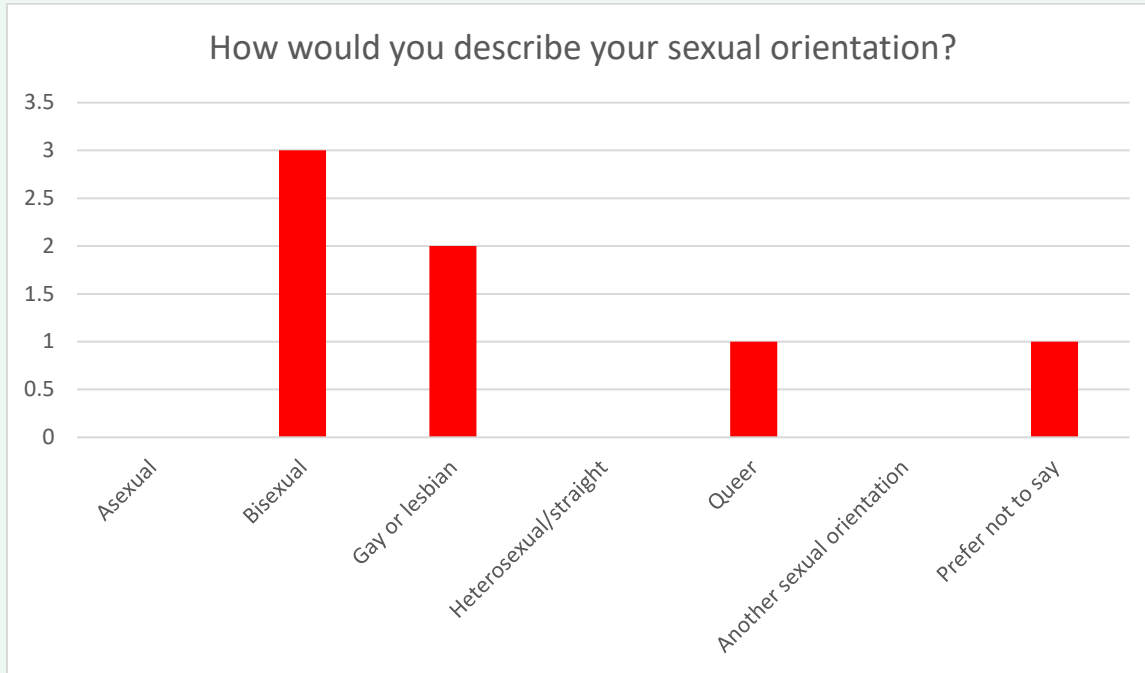


Figure 14. How would you describe your sexual orientation?

In summary, students who responded to the survey typically were in their first or third year of studies, with more respondents currently studying Film or Theatre, followed by Fine Art and combined honours degrees. In terms of gender identity, more respondents identified as female, with equal numbers identifying as non-binary, male or another gender. Concerning sexual orientation, most of the respondents identified as being part of the LGBTQ+ community.

Conclusions

This report aimed to collate the findings from a survey that was used to evaluate the impact of subject-specific ILSP policies within LICA on students. The policies were introduced at the beginning of the 2023/24 academic year and the survey was given to LICA students in May 2024.

Based on the above findings, it is clear that LICA students with ILSPs are not being contacted consistently by staff involved in teaching across the academic year. However, when students *are* contacted, the interactions are generally positive or neutral and their support needs are broadly met. Staff who are actively reaching out tend to be tutors and

Academic Advisors, although Administrative services staff also are seen as a key point of contact.

In some instances, students mentioned that staff did not know about their ILSPs. In these and other cases, students had to proactively reach out to discuss their ILSPs with staff. Particularly when students had medical conditions, they were understandably frustrated and angry about the lack of contact. Other students acknowledged that they were not very good at asking for support, so preferred having staff reach out to them.

Given these findings, there are some actions that LICA subjects could take to improve the experiences of students with ILSPs:

1. **Recording ILSP interactions.** Make a regular record of staff interactions with students who have ILSPs – include staff type and term – to ensure that students are being given the opportunity to discuss their ILSPs. For example, each subject Director of Study to make a record once a month to follow progress.
2. **Involving all relevant staff.** Consider how all staff involved with teaching can be made aware of students with ILSPs and how these staff might contact students.
3. **Making subject-specific ILSP policies available to all students.** Although not asked in this survey, it may be that LICA students do not know about the subject-specific ILSP policies and what is expected of staff involved in teaching. Providing them with digital copies of the policies in some form (e.g., emailed to students, uploaded onto subject-specific pages of the LICA Undergraduate Student Information Moodle page) would acquaint students with what staff are doing to support them.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the LICA Undergraduate students who took the time to complete the survey and offer their experiences of ILSPs with the LICA EDI Committee. Their insights should hopefully create further improvements to our ILSP policies in future.