

Our Guide on responding to the survey:

1. The first page is compulsory yes/no questions, so just answer these questions as appropriate.
2. The second page pt.1 in finances are also all compulsory yes/no questions, but don't feel obliged to go through your finances to fill in the boxes. College have records on how much hardship funding they give out, it shouldn't be our job to produce these statistics for them
3. The living expenses section of the survey is deeply problematic, and we encourage you to answer these questions N/A. College have absolutely no right to ask us how much we spend on cosmetics, leisure or phone-bills- not to mention that these things would be virtually impossible to calculate. [This section of the survey reeks of a 'deserving/undeserving poor' attitude, something we know to have been an issue for students accessing financial support from college in the past, who have been pressured to justify spending habits or told how they should be spending their money. Our spending habits bears no relevance on whether or not we are entitled to affordable housing.] We encourage you to copy and paste the above highlighted section of this post into the comments section here, or write something in your own words with a similar message.
4. In the comments section of the 'current state of your accommodation' section, remind college that [Diverting the conversation about extortionate rents to being one about the quality of accommodation is not productive. The fact that students have reported vermin, are forced to cook in dingy windowless kitchens with 16 people to a hob, and have been forced to live in bunker bins are all thoroughly disturbing. But, even if we solved these problems, the rent is *still* too high. The nicest rooms in the world would not justify the financial strain that rent, as it stands, puts on students. We have no choice but to live here, and deserve to be able to affordably.] Or again, write something similar in your own words.
5. Please put cost of high importance in the next set of questions, where you are asked to rate how important certain aspects of housing are to you.
6. We encourage you to put n/a in the question 'list three things you value in your current accommodation'. We don't need to give college any more reason to justify overcharging us for housing.
7. In the section, 'describe three things you'd like to change about your current accommodation', we encourage you to put the following demands:
 - a. 30% cuts to pearl house accommodation
 - b. $\frac{1}{3}$ of rooms to be cut to £110/week (20% of these should be 39 week leases, so people with difficult situations at home are not forced to move back in the holidays)
 - c. The remaining $\frac{2}{3}$ of housing to see a 15% cut, distributed gradually with bigger cuts seen to cheaper rooms.
8. In the section for 'any further comments', we encourage you to copy and paste the testimony we were given permission to share from our own research. A link to this testimony can be found here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gvGsUvZuM1aAWCfqSqvj3jfGQBXJQyQP7yzokaWrE/edit?usp=sharing>

9. [edit: added later] The final page of the survey asks for opinions on first year accommodation. We encourage you add in the comments sections that 'access to affordable housing for first years should be the priority', whether you answer 'yes' or 'no' to any of the compulsory questions. In the final comments section, we encourage you to list 'Cut the rent' as your key demand for improvements to accommodation.

Running Commentary

- It is not appropriate for College to ask us to rate the importance of medical requirements, where we are asked to rate how important certain aspects of housing are to us. It is a legal requirement for them to provide these, and not a luxury we should feel "grateful" for. Some people have medical requirements that include the other options- if your medical requirement is an ensuite, how can you choose which one ranks higher? Also, it is ableist to ask those who do not have medical requirements to rate their importance.
- The 'living expenses' section of the survey is narrow, unhelpful and patronising. Aside from asking invasive questions that, as we've said, raise the 'deserving/undeserving poor' argument, they do not account for other essential and unavoidable expenses students can encounter: travel to and from university (which can be over £100, and much more for international students), bike costs, medical prescriptions, student visas, etc.
- The tone of the survey is gendered and misogynistic: it assumes all we spend our money on are clothes and makeup. Why highlight "cosmetics" as an expense instead of travel/sports/art?