Commuting survey analysis report – 2025

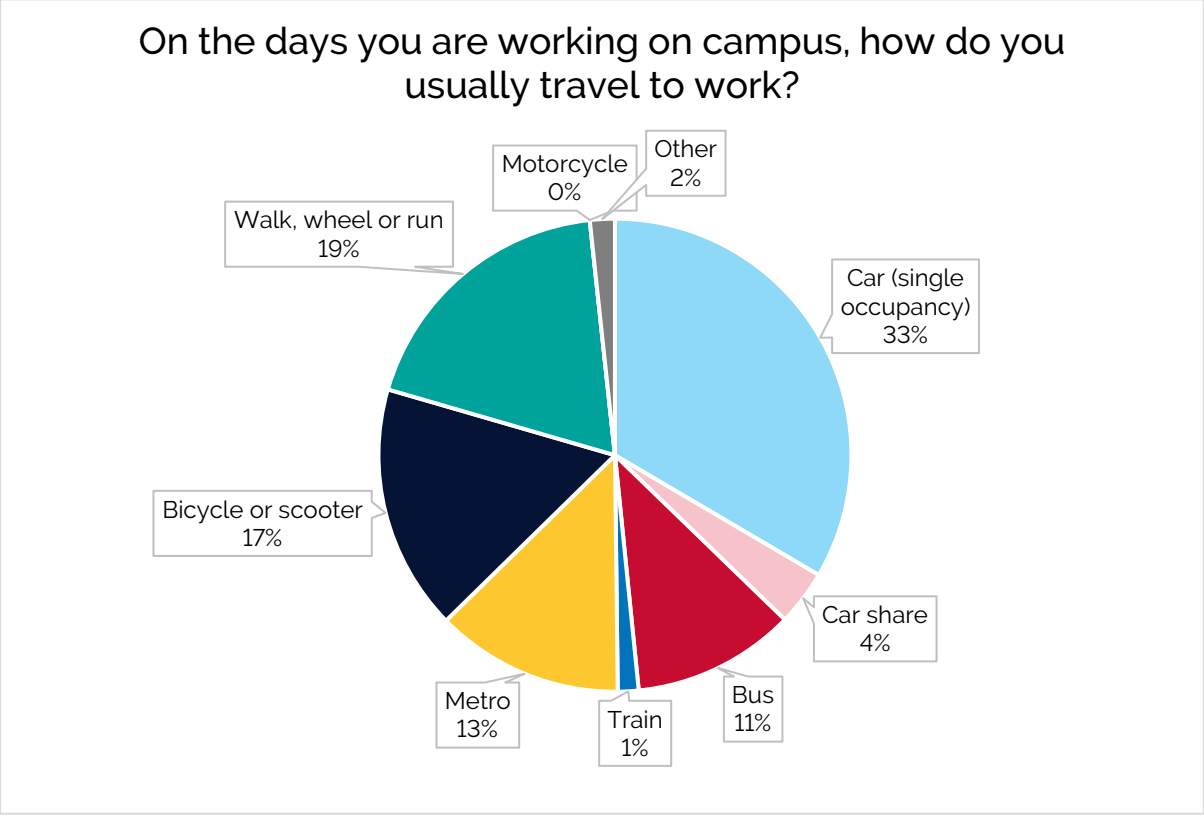
Colleagues

A colleague commuting survey was conducted in 2025 as part of a commuting project funded by the North East Combined Authority and Mobilityways. The survey was made available on the online Mobilityways platform between 7th May until 6th June.

The survey received a total of 1187 responses, which equated to a 17% response rate (this included all part-time and full-time staff based in the UK at the time of the survey). The following section summarises some of the key findings that were identified from the survey data collected.

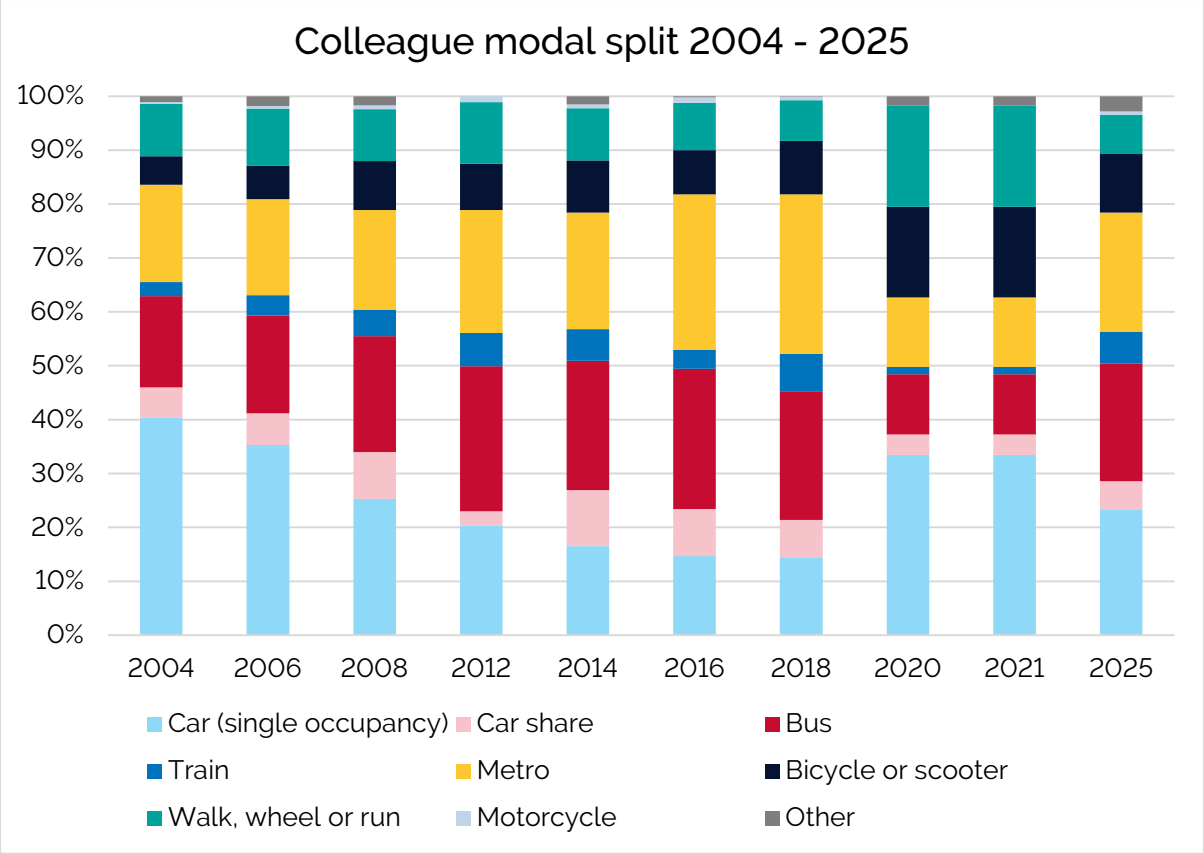
Main commuting mode

When asked 'how do you commute when you work on campus', respondents could choose between several modes of transport, including: bicycle, drive alone, car (car share), walk, wheel or run, motorbike, train, metro, and bus. The results are outlined in the pie chart below.



The chart below compares the data collected in 2025 to the data collected in previous surveys, so changes in commuting patterns could be identified.

After examining the results, it is evident that measures implemented by the University between 2004 and 2018 were effective at reducing single occupancy car drivers and increasing public transport users. However, since 2018, some of the improvements that were made have regressed across several modes.



Headline findings:

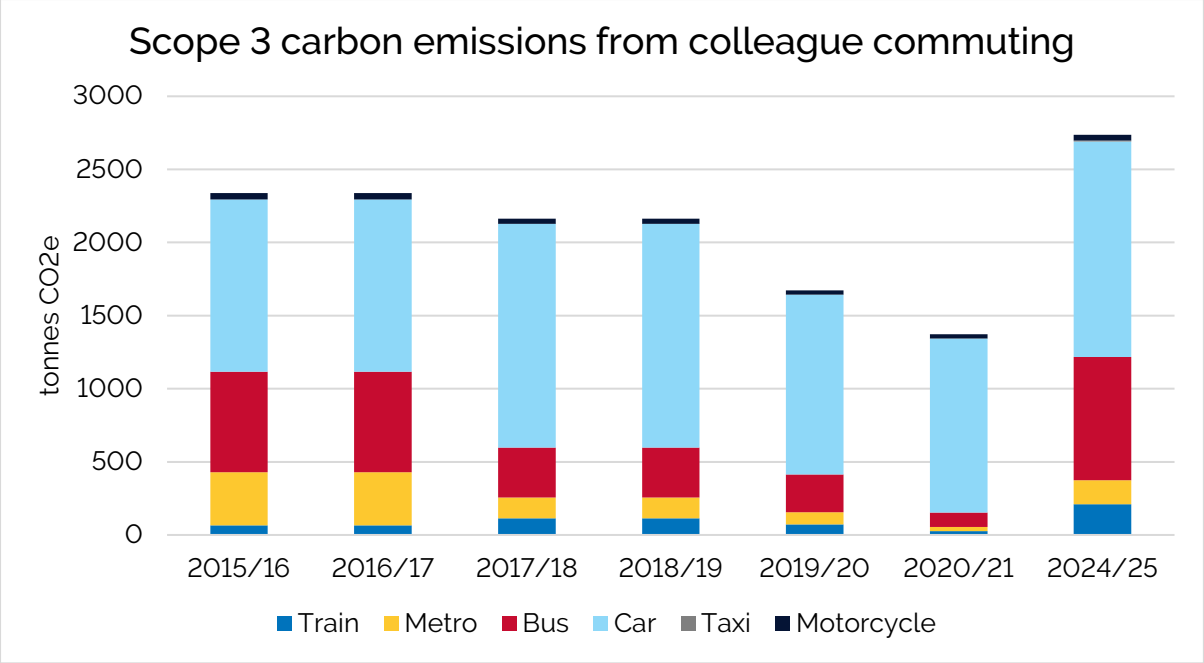
- The number of single occupancy car users decreased from 40% in 2004 to 12% in 2016. However, this has since risen to 23% in 2025.
- Public transport (train, bus and metro) users have increased from 38% in 2004 to 50% in 2025.
- The percentage of responders that utilise active travel (cycling, walking, wheeling or running) to commute has dropped post covid from 36% to 18%.

Carbon emissions generated from colleague commutes

The University's scope 3 emissions generated from our colleague and student commutes are calculated and reported annually as part of the HESA Estate Management Record (EMR) submission, along with other sources such as waste, business travel and purchased goods and services.

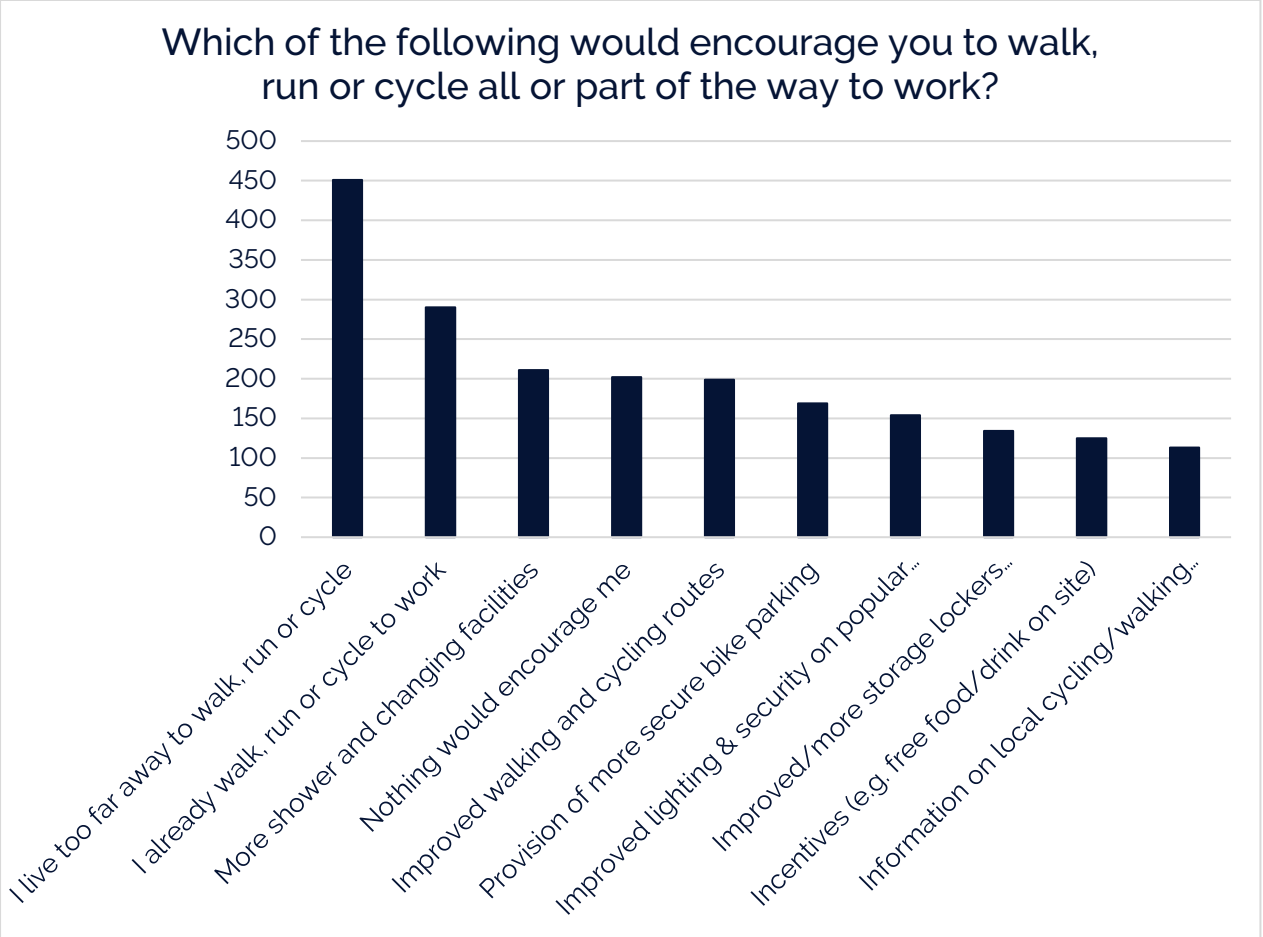
The total amount of emissions calculated for all colleague commutes to and from campus for a year (based on survey data) was estimated at 2,736.60 tC02e.

The chart below summarises the emissions produced per year by colleagues at the University who commute to campus. This is based on how far they travel, how regularly and what mode of travel they use along with the current carbon factors used for each mode.



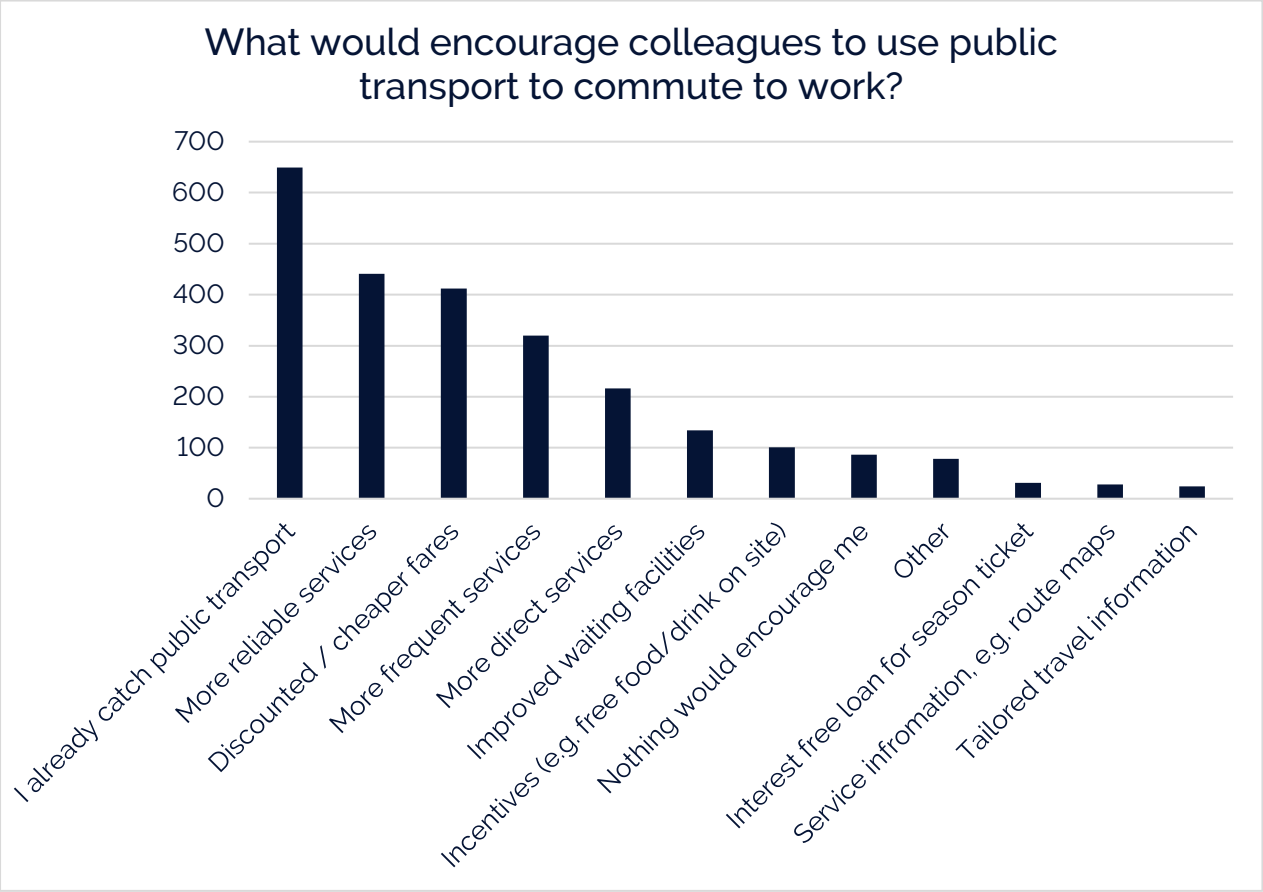
Incentives for utilising active travel modes

When asked which incentives would encourage colleagues to walk, run or cycle all or part of the way to work, the top responses were 'I live too far away' or 'I already utilise this mode'. The rest of the top responses received are outlined in the chart below.



Incentives for utilising public transport

When asked which incentives would encourage colleagues to use public transport to commute the top responses were 'I already utilise this mode' and 'more reliable services'. The rest of the top responses received are outlined in the chart below.



Working from home patterns

When asked' how often do you commute to work' responses received from colleagues indicate that:

- 22% do not work from home at all
- 20% work from home once a week
- 32% work from home twice a week
- 8% work from home three times a week

Access

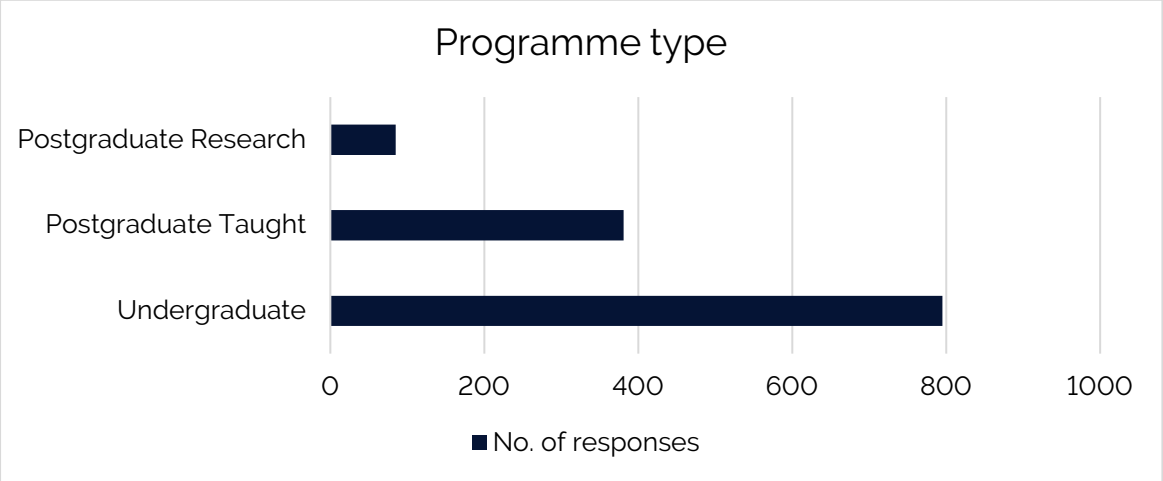
When asked' Do you have a physical or hidden disability or any additional needs that impact your commuting options?' responses included:

- 85% responded 'No'
- 10% responded 'Yes'
- 5% responded 'Prefer not to say'

Students

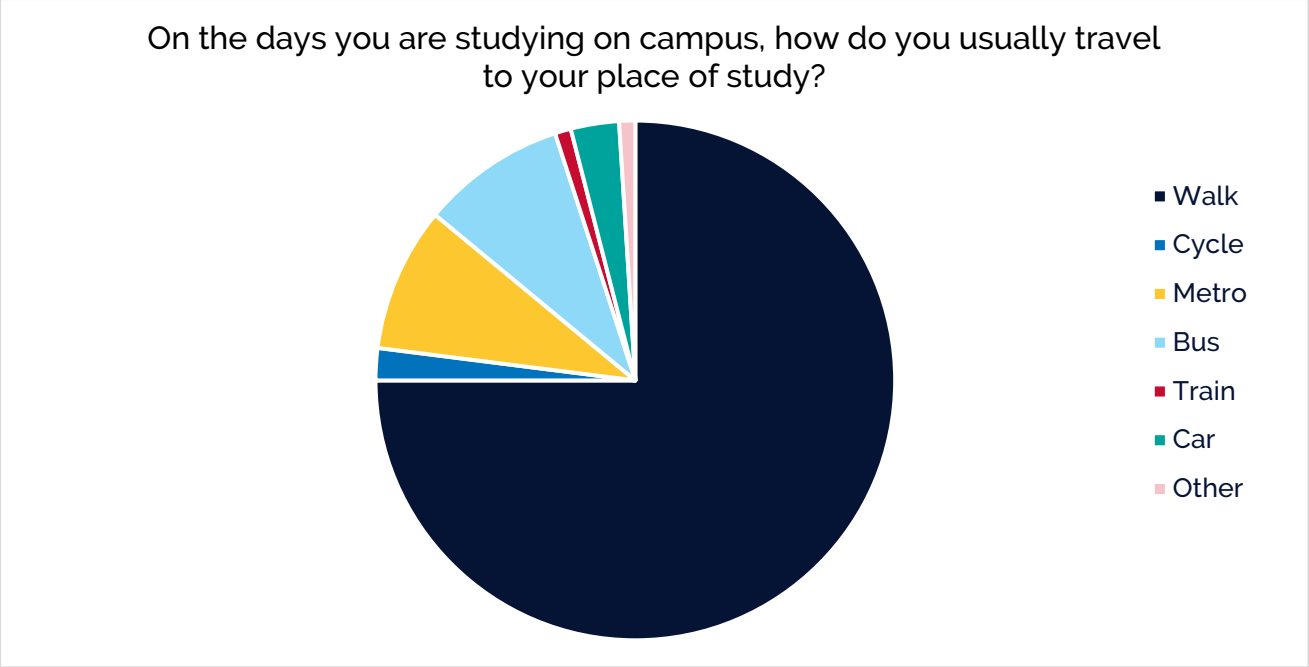
The student commuting data for 2025 was collected via the Welcome Survey, this survey received 1261 responses. As the survey questions were distributed in the Welcome Survey, only students that were new to the University (in any UG or PG programme of study) were surveyed, so the data is not likely to be representative of our entire student population.

The chart below outlines that most respondents were first year undergraduate students, who commonly live in University owned accommodation that is on or very near the periphery of campus, which will impact the commuting options they utilise. The bar chart below outlines which programme the respondents were starting.



Main commuting mode

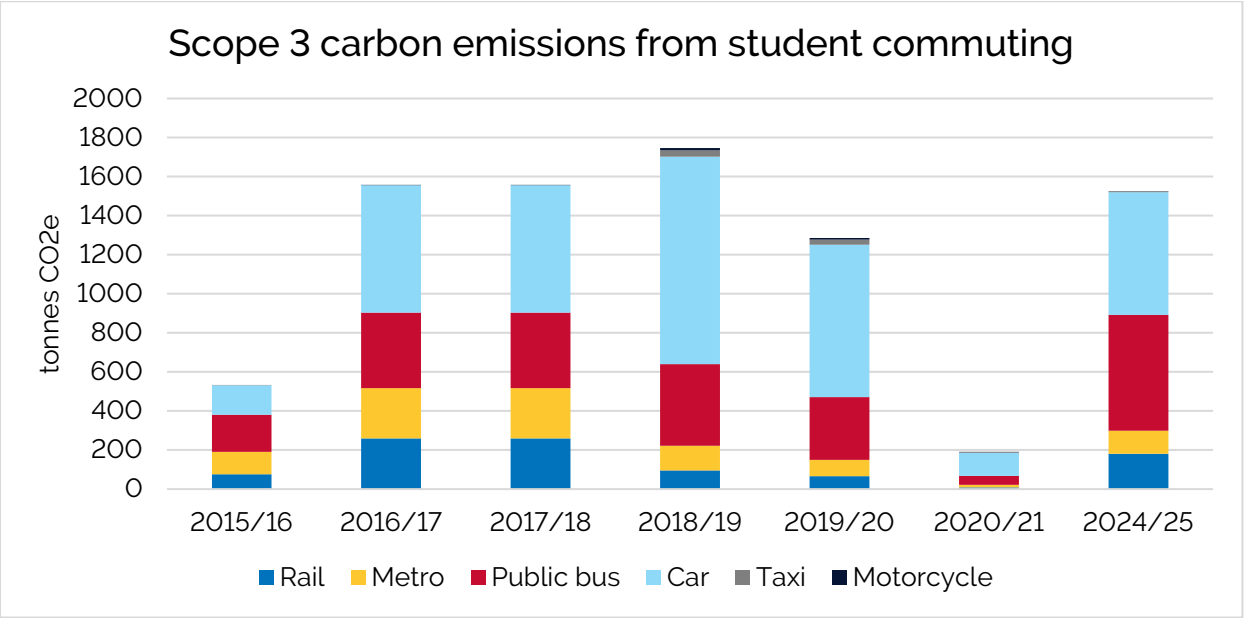
The data received in response to the question 'On the days where you are on campus, which mode of travel do you use to get here?' is outlined in the chart below. The pie chart below illustrates that 75% of the respondents responded to say that they walk as their main mode of commuting to campus alongside 3% that drive.



Carbon emissions generated from student commuting

The chart below summarises the emissions produced per year by colleagues at the University who commute to campus. This is based on how far they travel, how regularly and what mode of travel they use along with the current carbon factors used for each mode.

The total amount of emissions calculated for all student commutes to and from campus for a year (based on survey data) was estimated at 1,524.21 tC02e.

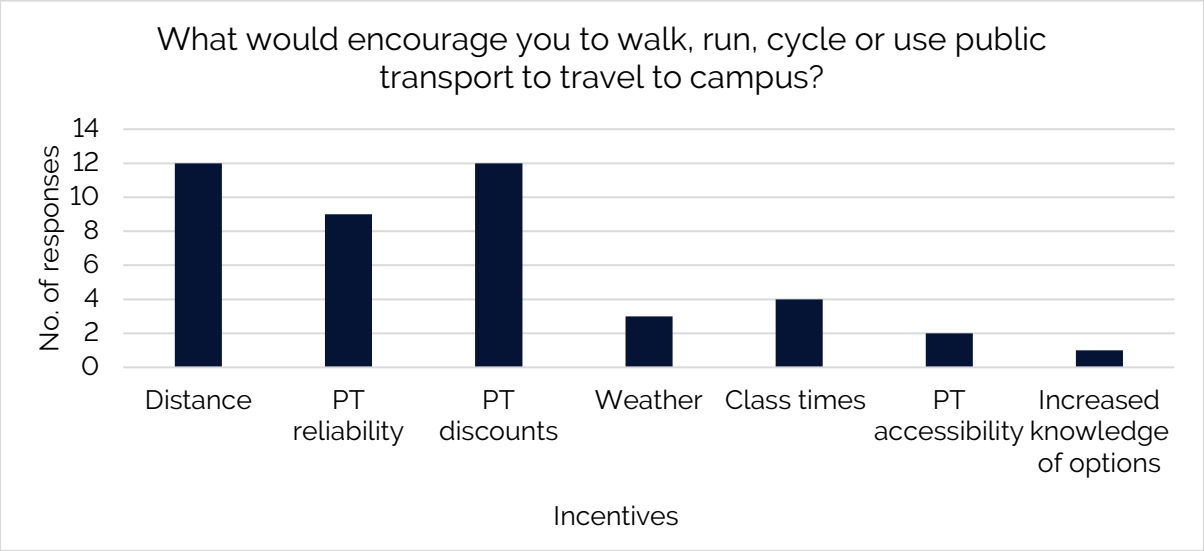


Incentives for utilising active or public transports

Students were also asked 'What would encourage you to walk, run, cycle or use public transport to travel to campus?' and the results are outlined in the bar chart below.

Headline findings:

- Twelve students responded to say that they would utilise active or public transport if they lived closer to campus
- Twelve students also said if they could access better bus, metro or train discounts that they would consider utilising public transport for their commute
- Nine students said they would utilise public transport if the bus and metro services were more frequent and reliable
- Two students outlined that public transport should be more accessible



Note: PT stands for public transport

Access

When asked' Do you have a physical or hidden disability or any additional needs that impact your commuting options?' responses included:

- 91% responded 'No'
- 4% responded 'Yes'
- 5% responded 'Prefer not to say'