

Creating Confidence International Student Safety Survey Report 2015–16

Executive Summary

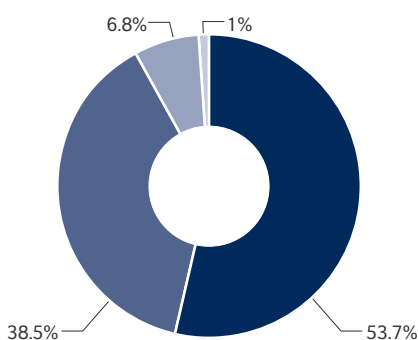
Over one million international students come to the UK every year, making a significant contribution to the UK's economy. As personal safety is a major influence on choice of country for international students, it is vital that there is greater awareness of the factors which contribute to a student's feelings of security and safety in a host country.

The British Council completes regular surveys on the safety of international students in the UK. This year's survey follows those in 2007 and 2010 and was conducted through an online questionnaire completed by 2,043 students from 125 countries. The survey contains information which is important to students, police, the British Council, and every educational institution interested in catering for international students. The main findings are summarised below.

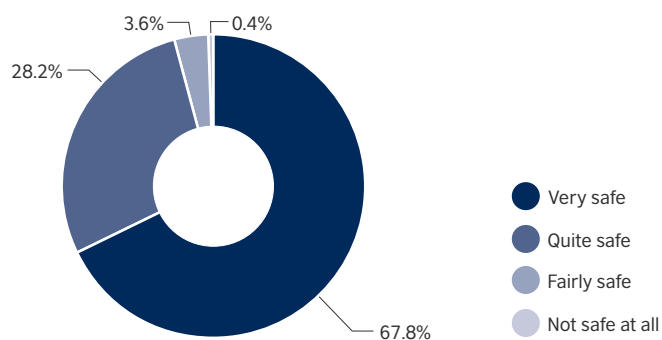
- Nearly two thirds of the students were in the UK for less than six months. Of the remainder, half held Tier 4 student visas, 26 per cent were in the UK on student visas and 20 per cent on visitor visas. For the first time there was a clear split in the gender ratio, with more women than men completing the survey (60:40).

- One quarter of students had to register with the police and nearly all of them (96.5 per cent) found the process easy or acceptable. This was an increase on the previous surveys.
- The series of surveys show a progressive reduction in the proportion of students living in accommodation provided by, or administered by, their institution. Compared with previous years, this year there was an increase in the percentage of students who reported feeling safe or very safe in their accommodation and encouragingly, there were fewer complaints about landlords of privately owned student accommodation.
- A higher proportion of students reported feeling very safe at their institution or workplace. Overall, 96 per cent said they felt very safe or quite safe, a similar proportion to the previous survey.

Do you feel safe in your accommodation?

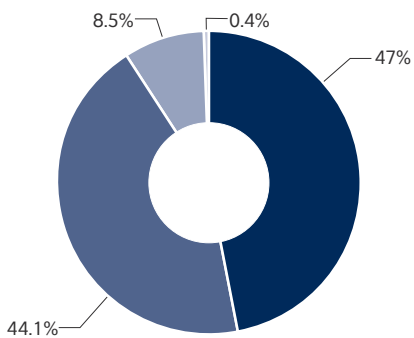


Do you feel safe at your institution or place of work?

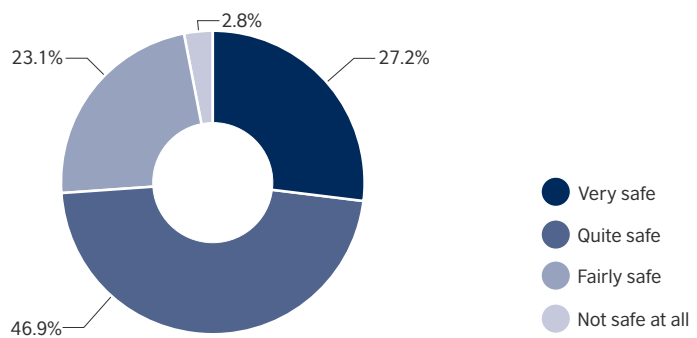




Generally, how safe do you feel while in the town/city around your institution during the day?



Generally, how safe do you feel while in the town/city around your institution after dark?



- Over 90 per cent of students felt safe where they are living during the day, a similar proportion to previous surveys. However, there was an increase in those who did not feel safe after dark (27.2 per cent). This is not surprising as fewer students now live on campus. Main concerns were over crime and drunkenness, but there were several concerns about a lack of street lighting which influenced how safe students felt.
- A very small number of students had experienced crime (less than five per cent); this was nearly half of those reported in 2010 and one third compared with 2007, representing a significant reduction over the period of the surveys. Somewhat worryingly, only 57 per cent of those who experienced crime reported the incident to the police.

- Briefings on personal safety while in the UK are offered both before arrival and during the stay. As with the previous surveys, less than half of the respondents said that they had attended a briefing. British Council administered students were more likely to have attended a briefing before coming to the UK.
- The British Council publishes two booklets on safety for international students in the UK. Disappointingly, less than one third of students managed by the British Council and only ten per cent of other students had seen them. The previous surveys had seen similar results, suggesting more could be done to raise awareness of these valuable resources.

The full survey *Creating confidence: International student safety survey 2015–16* is available online at: www.britishcouncil.org/education/ihe/what-we-do/preparation-study-work-uk

Contact: helen.clews@britishcouncil.org