



Produced May 2021

THE **IMPACT** OF BUGS ACTIVE

2018-2021

AN OVERVIEW

BUCS Active is an initiative delivered by British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS) to target students within higher education in England across three key interventions:

1 TACKLING
INACTIVITY IN
FEMALE STUDENTS

2 USING PHYSICAL
ACTIVITY TO TACKLE
MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

3 INACTIVE STUDENTS
FROM LOW SOCIO-ECO-
NOMIC BACKGROUNDS

This report aims to highlight the success of the first three phases of BUCS Active projects between April 2018 and February 2021. Sport England funding has been used to invest in 38 universities to deliver 52 projects across these interventions.

UNIQUE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

A total of 17,411 participants have taken part in BUCS Active projects between 2018 - 2021.

Collectively 51,026 engagements have been recorded throughout BUCS Active projects.

BUCS ACTIVE 1

5,398

TARGET 4,000

BUCS ACTIVE 2

5,062

TARGET 5,000

BUCS ACTIVE 3

6,951

TARGET 5,000

TOTAL WORKFORCE TRAINED

815
BUCS ACTIVE 1

102
BUCS ACTIVE 2

507
BUCS ACTIVE 3

TOTAL
1,424

BUCS Active programmes have allowed 1,424 university staff and students to engage in workforce development opportunities.

Opportunities included training in mental health awareness, understanding young people from disadvantaged communities, and leadership development.

PARTICIPANTS BY INTERVENTION

BUCS ACTIVE 1

MENTAL HEALTH

3,473

TARGET 2,500

INACTIVE FEMALES

1,925

TARGET 1,500

BUCS ACTIVE 2

MENTAL HEALTH

3,964

TARGET 3,500

INACTIVE FEMALES

1,098

TARGET 1,500

BUCS ACTIVE 3*

MENTAL HEALTH

1,952

TARGET 1,500

LOW SEG

2,801

TARGET 500

INACTIVE FEMALES

2,198**

TARGET 3,000

*BUCS Active 3 was impacted by COVID-19, resulting in all activity being stopped for several months and delivery models being changed to comply with physical activity and exercise guidelines.

**The total number of females across all 3 interventions equalled 4,502

A SUMMARY OF BUGS ACTIVE

2018-2021

NUMBER OF UNIVERSITY
PROJECTS FUNDED

12 BUGS ACTIVE 1 **20** BUGS ACTIVE 2 **19** BUGS ACTIVE 3

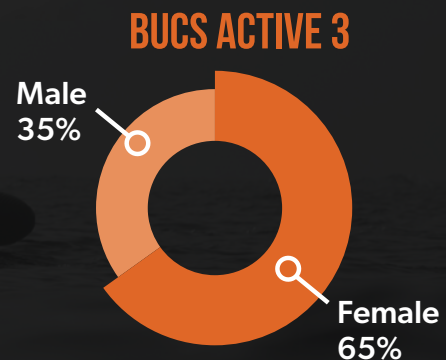
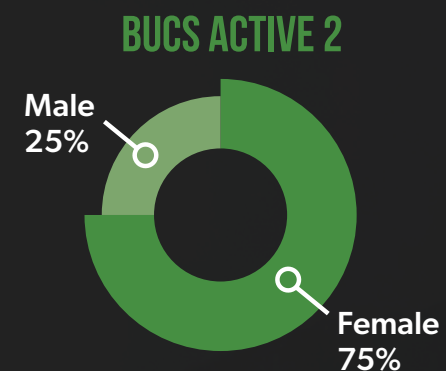
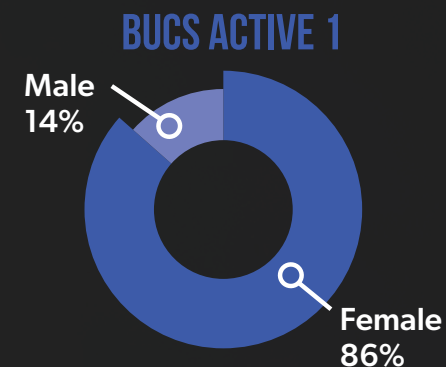
MENTAL WELLBEING SWEMWBS* AVERAGE SCORE

BEFORE		AFTER
23.8	----->	25.1
22	----->	25
25.5	----->	27.6

TOTAL STUDENT ATTENDANCE

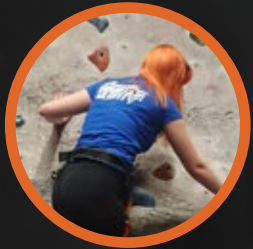
13,571
15,974
21,481

PARTICIPANT BREAKDOWN



*The Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale is used to measure mental wellbeing by asking the level of agreement with positively worded statements. The maximum score is 35 and a higher score represents higher mental wellbeing.

CASE STUDIES



JESSIE

University of Warwick

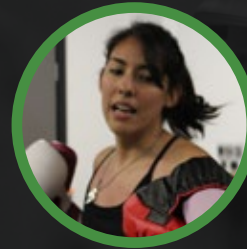
Activity: Climbing

"I have always suffered a little bit from anxiety, but it never got too bad until I first started university. I studied really hard and didn't give myself any breaks, and it got quite bad.

I found climbing really changed my levels of anxiety, I enjoyed the exercise part of it and I had to force myself to come as you have to go with other people.

// It's nice to have a place where you can go which is different to your course, where you can talk about things you maybe wouldn't talk to your course or housemates about. //

When you're on the wall you can't think about anything else because if you do, you're going to fall off, so you have to concentrate. I also like it as it involves a lot of problem solving."



DARIA

Manchester Metropolitan University

Activity: MMU Fit

"For me there are two aspects — physical and psychological. First one, you lose weight, you tone up, you get stronger. As for the other one, it's a confidence boost to start. Before I started attending MMU fit, I had never lifted a dumbbell in my life. I've never been to the gym before.

// Now, not only do I know how to use the equipment, I also have the confidence to just go and do it. //

You also get that sense of achievement as you learn how to reach your personal goals. Classes are often hard and you think you can't do it, but then you discover that you can! You're not by yourself and everyone is struggling as much as you do. Together it's easier to get through it!

Finally, it's an instant mood booster. I always leave the class in a better mood! A supportive and funny coach definitely helps!"

RESEARCH

The BUCS Active funding helped to deliver the British Active Student Survey and research surrounding students from low socio-economic groups. Both pieces of research provided insight to develop each phase of BUCS Active, in order to reach new participants.

RESEARCH AREA 1: BRITISH ACTIVE STUDENT SURVEY (2019)

The British Active Student Survey aimed to understand the relationship between students activity levels and their wellbeing, inclusion and perceptions of employability and attainment. The survey was undertaken in partnership with AoC and ukactive. The full report is available here via the [BUCS website](#).

ATTAINMENT

ACTIVE

89%

INACTIVE

85%

Active students were more likely to expect a higher degree level (1st or a 2.1) compared to inactive students

EMPLOYABILITY

ACTIVE

61%

INACTIVE

51%

Active students were more confident of finding a job six months after graduating than inactive students

PERSONAL WELLBEING

Active students had higher wellbeing scores linked to feelings of worthwhile, life satisfaction, level of happiness and lower levels of anxiety.

SOCIAL WELLBEING

Active students were less likely to feel left out and isolated from others, compared to inactive students.

MENTAL WELLBEING (AVERAGE SWEMWBS)

Active students (21.8) had a higher mental wellbeing score compared to inactive students (20.6).

RESEARCH AREA 2: UNDERSTANDING SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY HABITS OF STUDENTS FROM LOW SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS (SEG)

This research explored the habits and behaviours of students in relation to sport and physical activity. The aim was to provide an evidence base to enable BUCS and institutions to plan more effective interventions and experiences targeting students from low SEG backgrounds.

KEY FINDINGS



62% of low SEG respondents* had a physical or mental health condition(s) or illnesses which had a 'substantial effect on their ability to do normal daily activities' compared with **49%** the remaining population of students.



Students from low-SEG backgrounds were less active than the remaining population and were less likely to be members of a university sport/fitness club as a participant or volunteer.



45% of low SEG students were commuter students compared with only **16%** of the remaining population.

*For the purpose of this research and identifying the 'low SEG' group, the list of LSOAs¹ in England is placed in order and divided into equal parts called percentiles. The bottom 20% are the most deprived areas and are identified as the 'low SEG' group and for the purpose of this research the remaining 80% SEG are defined as the 'remaining population'.



CONTACT DETAILS

British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS)
20 – 24 King's Bench Street
London SE1 0QX
info@bucs.org.uk