

# **University Student Food Attitudes and Behaviour Survey**

**FINAL REPORT**

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Northern Ireland Social and Political Archive (ARK)

February 2006

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In November 2005, ARK undertook a food attitudes and behaviour survey among university students in Northern Ireland on behalf of the Food Standards Agency. On 21 November 2005, all students attending Queen's University and University of Ulster received an email asking them to take part in an online survey hosted on the ARK server ([www.ark.ac.uk](http://www.ark.ac.uk)).

### *Demographic characteristics*

- 3,412 responses were received from students attending all the constituent colleges and campuses of Queen's University Belfast (57%) and the University of Ulster (44%).
- 69% of respondents were female.
- The age of respondents ranged from 17 to 58 years, with a mean of 22 years.
- 28% of respondents were in the first year of their course, with similar proportions of respondents in their 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year (22% and 21% respectively). 12% of respondents were in their 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> year, and 16% were postgraduates.
- The vast majority of respondents (95%) were studying full-time, with 5% studying part time.
- 35% of students said their university fees were being paid by their Education and Library Board and 29% said their parents were paying them. 18% of students were paying their fees themselves.
- 60% of respondents had a part time job, and 6% had a full time job .
- 42% of respondents lived with other students, friends or professionals, 38% lived with their family, and 19% lived in university accommodation. Only 2% lived alone. 52% of respondents living alone were postgraduates, while 56% of those living in university accommodation were first years.

### *Food shopping and preparation*

- 71% of respondents living on their own, in university accommodation or living with friends or other students prepared and ate food individually, rather than as part of a group, especially those in university accommodation.
- 29% of respondents spent less than £20 per week on food to cook or in eating out. 3% of respondents spent £50 per week or more. Respondents who lived alone tended to spend more than other students.
- 62% of respondents identified the price of food as being one of the three most important factors they considered when buying food, followed by the quality or freshness of the food (56%) and the foods that the respondents knew how to cook or prepare (49%).
- 63% of respondents usually bought groceries about once a week, and 29% shopped for groceries every 2-3 days. Students living alone tended to shop more frequently than those in university accommodation.
- 70% of students usually bought most of their groceries in supermarkets, especially those who lived alone (84%), or those who shopped once a week (81%). Local shops (such as Spar, Mace and garage shops) were used least by respondents who lived alone.
- Three out of five respondents (62%) lived less than 1 mile, and four out of five respondents (84%) lived less than 2 miles from where they usually bought their groceries.
- Respondents who usually bought their groceries in local shops and garages were much more likely than those who usually bought their groceries in supermarkets to live less than 1 mile away (87% and 52% respectively).
- 89% of those who bought groceries every day lived less than 1 mile away from where they shop, compared with 55% of those who shopped about once a week.
- Walking was the most frequently used method of getting groceries home (58%), followed by driving (20%), and getting a lift from someone (12%).

- Respondents living less than one mile from where they bought most of their groceries walked home with their groceries (80%), compared with only 8% of those living 3-4 miles away. Dependence on buses, private cars, taxis and trains increased with distance.
- Ease of access was the main reason why respondents bought most of their groceries in a particular shop (61%), followed by value for money (54%) and a good choice of food (51%). The quality of the food was less of an issue.
- Ease of access was identified by 90% of those who bought their groceries in local shops compared with 52% of those who shopped in supermarkets. Conversely, value for money, the choice of food and the quality of the food were particularly important for those shopping in supermarkets but were much less important for those shopping in local shops.
- Regardless of where they did most of their grocery shopping, 70% of respondents rated the quality of food in local shops as good or very good, and 57% thought that local shops provided a good or very good choice of food.
- Again, regardless of where they did most of their grocery shopping, only 13% of respondents said that they really liked shopping for food.
- 45% of those living in university accommodation liked or really liked shopping for food, compared with 29% of those living alone.
- Fewer females (30%) than males (41%) disliked or really disliked shopping for food.
- 35% of respondents sometimes found that they did not have enough food to eat because they couldn't get to a grocery shop.
- 63% of respondents said that sometimes they did not have a main meal and got through the day by just having a snack or a drink.
- 46% said that they sometimes worried that food will run out due to a lack of money.

### ***Cooking***

- 70% of respondents liked or really liked cooking, while 11% disliked or really disliked cooking.
- 28% of students said that they prepared or cooked their main meal of the day from fresh or raw ingredients once a day. The greatest disparity was between students who liked/really liked cooking and those who disliked/really disliked cooking – 79% and 23% respectively.
- The main reasons identified for not cooking a main meal from fresh ingredients at least once a week were lack of time (57%) and eating pre-packed/convenience foods or meals (40%).
- More undergraduate students said they could not afford to cook a main meal every day, compared with postgraduate students.
- 86% of respondents learned to cook at home, 27% learned at school and 7% taught themselves or used a cookery book. More females (32%) than males (17%) learned to cook at school.

### ***Diet***

- 91% of males and 74% of females ate meat.
- 11% of females and 4% of males were completely or mainly vegetarian.
- Many more females (29%) than males (11%) said they were on a casual diet to lose weight.
- 85% of respondents ate dairy products two or three days a week, 69% ate fresh vegetables and salads, 68% ate meals prepared from raw fresh chicken and 65% ate fruit. Only 16% ate meals prepared from raw fresh fish two or three times a week.
- First year students were least likely to eat fresh vegetables, salads and fruit and the percentages rose steadily in line with the number of years in study.
- More first year students (35%) than those in any other year of study said they ate ready-made meals.

- Students living alone were much more likely than those living with other people to eat fresh vegetables and salads or meals prepared from raw fish, and least likely to eat ready-made or other convenience foods.
- More students who lived with their families than those who lived alone or with other people said they regularly ate food prepared from fresh chicken and other fresh meat.
- Only 7% of students said they never bought food from a take-away or fast food outlet.
- Students who lived in university accommodation were most likely to buy food regularly from a university canteen.
- 52% of respondents ate breakfast every day, while only 2% ate fried food or drank alcohol every day.
- More females (70%) than males (63%) ate breakfast at least four times a week and twice as many males as females ate fried food or drank alcohol more than four times a week.
- Students who lived with their family were least likely to drink alcohol four times a week or more.
- Two thirds of students said they consumed the same amount of dairy products, meat and bread and pasta as a year ago.
- Foods and drinks containing sugar, fat or salt were most likely to be consumed less now than a year ago.
- Approximately one third of respondents ate more vegetables, salad and fruit than a year ago.
- 40% of first year students and 24% of second year students drank more alcohol now than one year ago.
- 36% of third year students drank less than they did one year ago.
- First years were twice as likely as postgraduate students to say that they ate less fruit, vegetables or salad than one year ago.
- Respondents living in university accommodation were more likely than those living with their family to eat less fruit, less vegetables and salad, less meat and less fish than one year ago. However, the latter group were more likely to consume less alcohol than one year previously.

### ***Nutrition***

- 17% of respondents always looked at the labels with nutritional information on food, while 16% never did so. Females were much more likely than males to say they looked at these labels.
- 85% of respondents thought that 20g of sugar per 100g is a lot in a jar of salad cream,
- 44% of respondents thought that 2g of salt per 100g of cornflakes is a lot.
- 72% of respondents thought that 20g of fat per 100g of digestive biscuits is a lot.
- Respondents who always read nutritional labels were much more likely to say that the amount of sugar, salt and fat in these foods was a lot compared with those who never read nutritional labels.
- 65% of respondents correctly identified that they should eat five portions of fruit and vegetables every day.
- 59% of students living in university accommodation correctly identified the daily intake of fruit and vegetables per day, compared with 68% of students living with others.
- 40% of males compared with 26% of females underestimated the daily intake of fruit and vegetables.

### ***Lifestyle and exercise***

- 64% of respondents felt that they led a fairly healthy lifestyle. However, only 4% thought that they led a very healthy lifestyle. 29% led a 'not very healthy lifestyle', and 4% said they led an unhealthy lifestyle.
- 79% of postgraduate students said they lived a very or fairly healthy lifestyle compared with 64% of first years.
- 16% of respondents never took any exercise lasting about 30 minutes, while 6% did so every day.
- Males, first year students and those living alone were more likely than females, students in other years and those living with their families to take exercise at least 4 times per week.
- 75% of those leading a very healthy lifestyle took exercise at least 4 times a week, compared with 4% of those who led an unhealthy lifestyle.
- 43% of students used university sports centres while 24% used sport clubs or council-owned facilities. Males were more likely than females to use each facility.

### ***Knowledge of the Food Standards Agency***

- 90% of respondents had heard of the Food Standards Agency, including 94% of those living with their family compared with 80% of those living in university accommodation.

### ***Comments***

The additional comments made by 511 respondents focused on:

- Format/content of questionnaire.
- Need/desire for information and courses.
- Comments relating to accommodation and lifestyle.
- The survey acted as an impetus to start eating more healthily.
- Request for feedback/summary of results.



## **SECTION 1: BACKGROUND**

In comparison with the volume of work on the diet and nutrition of children, there has been relatively little focus on the diet of young people in the 18-25 year group. Where the health and wellbeing of students has been examined, alcohol use and mental health have been the issues receiving the greatest attention (Webb et al., 1996; Delk and Meilman, 1996; Ryan and O'Kelly, 2001; Kracen, 2003). Yet as Stewart-Brown et al. (2000) acknowledge, health-related habits formed during this period may be difficult to change later in life. While there is a dearth of work on student attitudes to food and eating, the results of a number of studies do raise some concerns. In their study of changes in dietary habits during the first year at university, Edwards and Meiselman (2003) demonstrated that when students entered university in September, reported energy intake declined significantly. This decrease in reported energy was attributed to an overall decrease in food consumption.

In Ireland, the College Lifestyle and Attitudinal National (CLAN) survey published in 2005 (Hope, et al., 2005), provides a national profile of the lifestyle habits of students in relation to a range of issues, including drugs, alcohol, smoking, mental health, sexual health and diet. In relation to dietary and exercise habits, the survey findings can provide a number of interesting points of comparison to this Northern study.

This study of university student attitudes and behaviour in relation to food provides information on factors influencing choice of food and shopping habits, food preferences, exercise habits and attitudes to cooking. It also provides some information on knowledge of food and health issues.

## **SECTION 2: METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Pilot survey**

A pilot survey was carried out in the week beginning 14 November 2005. Fifty students attending courses at Queen's University and the University of Ulster completed a draft paper questionnaire. Feedback from the students was generally very positive on the length, format and content of the questionnaire. Some minor adjustments were made to the questionnaire as a result of the comments from the students taking part in the pilot survey.

### **2.2 Fieldwork**

The fieldwork for the survey took place in the 2-week period from 21 November to 5 December 2005. All students attending Queen's University and University of Ulster received an email asking them to take part in an online survey hosted on the ARK server ([www.ark.ac.uk](http://www.ark.ac.uk)). All students received an email reminder after one week.

All respondents were invited to participate in a prize draw, with a choice of prize (a food hamper, cooking equipment or a nutritional assessment).

### **2.3 Response rate**

In total, there were 49,401 university students registered in Northern Ireland at the end of 2005 – 24,747 at Queen's University Belfast and 24,654 at the University of Ulster. There were 3,412 respondents to the survey, 57% of whom were located in campuses at Queen's University and the remainder in campuses across the University of Ulster. This represents an overall response rate of 7%<sup>1</sup>.

### **2.4 Analysis**

The data derived from the online survey were reformatted and input into SPSS for analysis. Where appropriate, Chi Square analysis was undertaken to test for statistically significant differences. Due to rounding, column percentage totals may not always add to 100.

In order to incorporate a qualitative element to the survey, respondents were asked if they wanted to add any comments relating to issues raised in the questionnaire. Many students took this opportunity. Their comments are summarised in section 3.8, and Appendix 1.4 contains the full list of responses.

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<sup>1</sup> Due to some item non-response, the tables presented within this report relate to valid responses only.

## SECTION 3: RESULTS

### 3.1 Demographic characteristics

#### *Place of study*

As Table 1 shows, 3,412 responses were received from students attending all the constituent colleges and campuses of Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ulster.

**Table 1: Place of study**

	%
Queen's University Belfast	53
Stranmillis College	3
St Mary's College	1
University of Ulster, Jordanstown	18
University of Ulster, Coleraine	14
University of Ulster, Magee	8
University of Ulster, Belfast	2
University of Ulster, Portrush	2

#### *Gender and age*

Just over two thirds of respondents were female (69%). As Table 2 shows, there was a slight under representation of males in the survey compared to the figures supplied for student registrations by Queen's University and the University of Ulster. The mean age of students taking part in the survey was 22 years and their ages ranged from 17 to 58 years<sup>2</sup>. The mean age of undergraduate students (including Level 0/Foundation Year students<sup>3</sup>) was 21 years compared with 27 years for postgraduate students.

**Table 2: Gender of respondents and of university students in Northern Ireland**

	%	
	Respondents	All university students
Male	31	39
Female	69	61

#### *Year and type of study*

Over one quarter of respondents (28%) were in the first year of their course, with similar proportions of respondents in their 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year (22% and 21% respectively). Around one in ten (12%) respondents were in their 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> year, and one in eight (16%) were postgraduates. Few respondents (1%) said they were in Level 0 or Foundation year (Table 3) and this reflects the small number of courses that offer Level 0 entry.

<sup>2</sup> Due to a technical problem with the online survey, the age of respondents was recorded for 1,565 students.

<sup>3</sup> Level 0 is offered for a number of undergraduate degree courses and is aimed at students who do not meet the relevant subject requirements at A-level (or equivalent) for entry to the first year. Foundation degrees are offered through Colleges of Further and Higher Education and are validated by universities.

**Table 3: Year of study**

	%
Level 0/Foundation <sup>4</sup>	1
First	28
Second	22
Third	21
Fourth/fifth	12
Postgraduate	16

The vast majority of respondents (95%) were studying full-time, with 5% studying part time (Table 4). The actual percentages of students studying full time and part time are 69% and 31% respectively. Therefore, part time students were under represented in the survey. While at least 95% of undergraduates were studying full time, a lower proportion of postgraduates were (85%).

**Table 4: Year of study by type of study (full-time or part time)**

	%					
	First	Second	Third	Fourth/fifth	Postgraduate	All
Full time	98	97	97	95	85	95
Part time	2	3	3	5	15	5

***Payment of fees***

Just over one third (35%) of students said that their university fees were being paid by their Education and Library Board and 29% said their parents were paying them. Almost one in five (18%) students were paying their fees themselves (Table 5). However, a wide range of 'other' responses were listed, which often consisted of a combination of sources, such as Education and Library Board and parents (1%). Thus, it is not feasible to undertake any analysis of the data based on fee source.

**Table 5: Payment of fees**

	%
Education and Library Board	35
Parents	29
Student	18
Bursary	12
DEL	1
Other	1
Home Government	1
Education and Library Board and parents	1
My company/employer	1
ESF	1
Education and Library Board and student	<1
Student and parents	<1
Erasmus	<1
Student Loan	<1
CAST	<1
DARD	<1

<sup>4</sup> Due to small numbers, respondents in the Level 0/Foundation categories will be omitted from further analysis on year of study although these respondents will be included in the 'undergraduate' category when analysis by undergraduate/postgraduate status is carried out.

### ***Employment status***

Three out of five respondents (60%) had a part time job, and 6% had a full time job (Table 6). Just over one third of respondents (34%) did not have a job. More than half of all part time students (57%) had a full time job. A small proportion of full time students (4%) said that they also had a full time job. While more than one third of full time students (35%) did not have a job, the figure for part time students was less than half this at 15%.

Second year students were most likely to have a job, while postgraduates were least likely to have a job. However, of those postgraduates who had a job, one third worked full time.

**Table 6: Employment status by year of study**

	%							
	Year of study					Type of study		All
	First	Second	Third	Fourth/fifth	Postgraduate	Full time student	Part time student	
Full time job	2	3	8	3	17	4	57	6
Part time job	68	72	62	52	33	61	30	60
No	31	25	30	45	50	35	15	34

### ***Type of accommodation***

Around two in five students lived in a private house with other students, 25% lived with their parents and 17% lived in self-catering university accommodation (Table 7). Only 1% of respondents lived in catered university accommodation.

**Table 7: Type of accommodation**

	%
With your parents	25
With your partner	7
With your partner and children	3
With your children	1
In catered university accommodation	1
In self-catering university accommodation	17
In a private house with other students	40
Other	1
On my own	2
With professionals/friends	2
With other relatives	<1
With parent(s) and child	<1

As well as the seven responses specified, many of the ‘other’ responses were reclassified into a further four categories:

- On my own.
- In private house with friends or professionals.
- With other relatives, such as grandparents, brother.
- With parent(s) and child.

These response categories have been recoded to obtain the following four-way classification of type of accommodation (Table 8):

- With parents, partner, partner and children, children, other relatives, parents(s) and child.
- Alone.
- With other students, professionals or friends.
- In university accommodation.

**Table 8: Type of accommodation (recoded)**

	%
With family	38
Alone	2
With other students/friends/professionals	42
University accommodation	19

Looking firstly at the year of study by type of accommodation, there were some variations, for example:

- Over half of respondents living alone (52%) were postgraduates.
- Over half of respondents living in university accommodation (56%) were first years.

**Table 9: Year of study by type of accommodation**

	%			
	With family	Alone	With other students/friends/professionals	University accommodation
First	29	23	16	56
Second	20	8	29	12
Third	21	11	27	10
Fourth/fifth	12	6	15	8
Postgraduate	19	52	14	14

Secondly, looking at type of accommodation by year of study, Table 10 indicates that:

- Just over one third of first years (38%) lived with their family, and a similar proportion (36%) lived in university accommodation.
- The proportion of respondents living with their family was fairly similar throughout all undergraduate years (at just over one third).
- Just over one half of second, third, fourth and fifth years lived in houses shared with other students, friends or professionals, while only one quarter (24%) of first-year students did.
- The highest proportion of respondents living with their family was among postgraduates (43%).

**Table 10: Type of accommodation by year of study**

	%				
	First	Second	Third	Fourth/fifth	Postgraduate
With family	38	34	37	36	43
Alone	2	1	1	1	6
With other students/friends/professionals	24	55	53	51	35
University accommodation	36	10	9	12	15

## 3.2 Food shopping and preparation

### *Preparation of food*

Students who lived on their own, in self catering university accommodation or in private accommodation with other students or friends were asked about buying and preparing their food<sup>5</sup>. As Table 11 shows, the majority (71%) of these respondents said they prepared and ate food individually, rather than as part of a group. In particular, four out of five (81%) respondents living in university accommodation said they prepared and ate food individually, compared with two thirds (66%) of respondents living with other students/professionals or friends.

**Table 11: Prepared and ate food by type of accommodation**

	%			
	Alone	With other students/friends/professionals	University accommodation	All
Prepared and ate as part of a group	6	34	19	29
Prepared and ate individually	94	66	81	71

The vast majority of respondents had access to all the equipment/appliances in the list presented, ranging from 97% having access to a fridge to 88% having access to a microwave (Table 12). A microwave was the item with the lowest levels of access among respondents living alone (74%) and for those living with other students/friends/professionals (89%). However, for those living in university accommodation, it was cooking equipment (78%).

**Table 12: Access to facilities by type of accommodation**

	% with access			
	Alone	With other students, friends or professionals	University accommodation	All
Fridge	97	99	98	97
Hob/cooking rings	94	98	97	96
Storage facilities	97	99	96	96
Oven	97	98	95	95
Freezer	89	95	93	93
Grill	89	94	92	91
Cooking equipment	97	98	78	90
Microwave	74	89	92	88

### *Shopping for food*

Just over one quarter of respondents (29%) said that, on average, they spent less than £20 per week on food (Table 13). This includes food that was bought to cook, as well as eating out. The modal response was £20-£29, which was identified by 42% of respondents. Very few respondents (3%) said that they spent £50 per week or more.

Respondents who lived alone tended to spend more than those living with other students, friends or professionals, or those living in university accommodation.

<sup>5</sup> Students who lived with their families or in catered university accommodation were not asked questions about buying and preparing food, as their behaviours would be influenced by different factors than students living away from home.

**Table 13: Amount spent on food by type of accommodation**

	%			
	Alone	With other students, friends or professionals	University accommodation	All
< £20 per week	13	27	36	29
£20-£29 per week	34	43	41	42
£30-£39 per week	33	21	14	19
£40-£49 per week	9	5	5	5
£50 per week or more	9	2	2	3
Don't know	2	2	2	2

As Table 14 shows, more first year students than those in any other undergraduate year said they spent less than £20 per week on food. Postgraduate students (20%) were less likely than undergraduates (31%) to spend less than £20 per week on food.

**Table 14: Amount spent on food by year of study**

	%					
	First	Second	Third	Fourth/fifth	Postgraduate	All
< £20 per week	37	31	24	25	20	29
£20-£29 per week	41	42	44	43	39	42
£30-£39 per week	14	19	21	24	25	19
£40-£49 per week	4	3	6	6	8	5
£50 per week or more	1	2	3	1	5	3
Don't know	3	4	2	1	2	2

Three out of five respondents (62%) identified the price of food as being one of the three most important factors they considered when buying food, followed by the quality or freshness of the food (56%) and the foods that the respondents knew how to cook or prepare (49%). This pattern was replicated among students living with other students, friends or professionals, or in university accommodation (Table 15). However, for respondents living alone, the most frequently identified factor was quality or freshness of the food (72%), followed by price and taste (52%). How much money the respondent has, along with convenience in preparation were considered less by respondents living alone compared with other respondents. The 'other' responses identified by respondents were categorised into groups and these responses can be found in Appendix 1.1.

**Table 15: Factors considered when buying food by type of accommodation**

	% of factors considered			
	Alone	With other students, friends or professionals	University accommodation	All
Price of the food	52	62	66	62
Quality or freshness of the food	72	57	57	56
Foods I know how to cook/prepare	42	49	54	49
Taste	52	46	42	44
How much money I have	35	42	41	40
Convenience in preparation	14	32	36	32
Habit or routine	23	25	25	24
The availability of the food in the shops I go to	25	19	15	17
Someone else decides on most of the food I eat	2	1	1	1
Other	6	3	3	3



Six out of ten respondents (63%) said that they usually bought groceries about once a week, with a further quarter (29%) saying that they shopped every 2-3 days (Table 16). Those living alone tended to buy groceries more frequently – 41% said they did this every 2-3 days, compared with only 25% of those living in university accommodation.

**Table 16: Frequency of grocery shopping by type of accommodation**

	%			
	Alone	With other students, friends or professionals	University accommodation	All
Every day	6	6	3	5
Every 2-3 days	41	30	25	29
About once a week	52	61	69	63
Once a month	2	3	2	3
Less often	0	1	1	1

Two thirds of respondents (70%) usually bought most of their groceries in supermarkets, especially those who lived alone (84%). Local shops (such as Spar, Mace and garage shops) were an important source of groceries for respondents living with other students, friends or professionals, or for those living in university accommodation (29%). However, these were not important sources for those living alone (11%). Very few respondents identified markets or the Internet as their main source of groceries (Table 17).

**Table 17: Where respondents buy groceries by type of accommodation**

	%			
	Alone	With other students, friends or professionals	University accommodation	All
On the Internet	0	<1	0	<1
Supermarkets	84	70	70	70
Local shops	11	29	29	28
Markets	3	1	1	1
Specialist shops	0	<1	1	<1
Other	2	<1	0	<1

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the vast majority of students who bought groceries about once a week did so at a supermarket (81%), while for those who shopped for groceries every day, their shopping was usually done at local convenience stores or garages (72%). There was no one definite source among respondents who shop every 2-3 days (Table 18). The ‘other’ responses identified included:

- Bought in supermarket at home, bring them to university each week.
- Health food shops.
- My parents buy most of the groceries.
- Organic delivered by small local companies.
- Butcher and greengrocers.

**Table 18: Where respondents buy groceries by how often they buy groceries**

	%			
	Every day	Every 2-3 days	About once a week	Once a month or less
On the internet	0	0	<1	<1
Supermarkets	27	54	81	75
Local shops	72	44	18	22
Markets	0	1	1	<1
Other	0	<1	<1	4
Specialist shops	1	1	<1	<1

Three out of five respondents (62%) lived less than 1 mile, and four out of five respondents (84%) lived less than 2 miles from where they usually bought their groceries.

There was a strong relationship between the types of shop respondents bought most of their groceries in and how far away it was from where they lived ( $p < 0.001$ )<sup>6</sup>. For example, as Table 19 shows, respondents who usually bought their groceries in local shops and garages were much more likely than those who usually bought their groceries in supermarkets to live less than 1 mile away (87% and 52% respectively).

**Table 19: How far respondents live from shops by where respondents buy groceries**

	%		
	Supermarkets	Local shops	All
Less than 1 mile	52	87	62
1-2 miles	26	10	22
3-4 miles	13	2	10
More than 4 miles	9	2	7
Total	100	100	100

In addition, there was a strong relationship between the frequency of shopping and the distance from where respondents lived ( $p < 0.001$ ). In particular, nine out of ten respondents who usually bought groceries every day (89%) lived less than 1 mile away from where they shopped, compared with 55% of those who shopped about once a week (Table 20).

**Table 20: How far respondents live from shops by how often they buy groceries**

	%			
	Every day	Every 2-3 days	About once a week	Once a month or less
Less than 1 mile	89	74	55	44
1-2 miles	7	18	25	18
3-4 miles	3	4	13	19
More than 4 miles	1	4	8	19

Table 21 shows that walking was the most frequently used method of getting groceries home (58%), followed by driving (20%), and getting a lift from someone (12%). Other methods were bus (5%), taxi (3%), bicycle (1%) and train (1%). Only six respondents used grocery delivery services (<1%).

<sup>6</sup> Due to small numbers, only respondents who usually buy in supermarkets or local shops are included in all further analyses using the question 'where do you buy most of your groceries?'

As might be expected, respondents living less than one mile from where they bought most of their groceries walked home with their groceries (80%), compared with only 8% of those living 3-4 miles away (Table 21). The dependence on buses, private cars, taxis and trains increased with distance. The 'other' responses identified by respondents were categorised, and are listed in Appendix 1.2.

**Table 21: How respondents get groceries home by how far they live from shops**

	%				
	Less than 1 mile	1-2 miles	3-4 miles	More than 4 miles	All
I walk	80	35	8	2	58
I drive	11	30	41	43	20
Someone gives me a lift	6	16	28	32	12
On the bus	1	9	14	14	5
Taxi	1	6	5	3	3
By bicycle	1	2	1	0	1
Train	0	1	2	3	1
Groceries are delivered	<1	1	1	0	<1
Other	<1	1	1	2	<1

As Table 22 shows, most respondents who bought their groceries in local shops said they usually brought them home on foot (80%) compared with just under half of respondents who shopped at supermarkets (49%).

**Table 22: How respondents get groceries home by where respondents buy groceries**

	%	
	Supermarkets	Local shops
I walk	49	80
I drive	25	9
Someone gives me a lift	15	5
On the bus	6	4
Taxi	3	1
Train	1	<1
Groceries are delivered	<1	<1
Other	<1	<1

Ease of access was the main reason why respondents bought most of their groceries in a particular shop (61%), followed by value for money (54%) and a good choice of food (51%). The quality of the food was less of an issue, and was identified by one third of respondents (32%). However, the importance of particular factors for people shopping in supermarkets was different to the factors identified by respondents buying in local shops (Table 23). For example, ease of access was identified by nine out of ten people who bought their groceries in local shops (90%), compared with 52% of those who shopped in supermarkets. Conversely, value for money, the choice of food and the quality of the food were particularly important for those shopping in supermarkets (70%, 64% and 40% respectively) but were much less important for those shopping in local shops (20%, 24% and 14% respectively).

**Table 23: Reason for shopping at particular shop by where respondents buy groceries**

	% identifying each factor		
	Supermarkets	Local shops	All
It is easy to get to	52	90	61
Value for money – it is cheaper to shop there	70	20	54
There is a good choice of food	64	24	51
The quality of food is good	40	14	32
Other	3	2	3

Respondents were asked to rate the shops selling groceries within 15 minutes walk of where they lived in terms of 3 criteria – the quality of the food, the choice of food and the price of food. As Table 24 indicates, the quality of food was rated fairly highly by most respondents – 14% said that it was very good, and 56% said that it was good. Only 5% said the quality of food was bad or very bad. Responses were fairly similar among respondents who did most of the shopping in supermarkets and those who shopped in local shops.

**Table 24: Rating of local shops in terms of quality of food by where respondents buy groceries**

	%		
	Supermarkets	Local shops	All
Very good	15	11	14
Good	57	55	56
Neither good nor bad	23	30	25
Bad	4	3	4
Very bad	1	<1	1

Just over one half of respondents (57%) thought that local shops provided a good or very good choice of food, which was slightly lower than the rating for quality of food. One quarter of respondents (26%) thought that the choice of food was neither good nor bad. Again, responses among those usually buying their groceries in supermarkets and those shopping in local shops were similar (Table 25).

**Table 25: Rating of local shops in terms of choice of food by where respondents buy groceries**

	%		
	Supermarkets	Local shops	All
Very good	15	11	14
Good	44	40	43
Neither good nor bad	24	31	26
Bad	16	17	16
Very bad	1	1	1

More negatively, shops within 15 minutes of where respondents lived were rated relatively badly in terms of price. Only 39% said that these shops were very good or good in terms of price, and a slightly lower proportion (33%) said that the prices were bad or very bad.

**Table 26: Rating of local shops in terms of price of food by where respondents buy groceries**

	%		
	Supermarkets	Local shops	All
Very good	10	4	8
Good	32	28	31
Neither good nor bad	26	35	29
Bad	23	25	24
Very bad	9	8	9

Attitudes towards food shopping among respondents were very mixed: 13% of respondents said that they really liked it, while 15% said that they really disliked it (Table 27). The distribution of those who usually shop in supermarkets was virtually identical to those who usually bought their groceries in local shops.

**Table 27: How much do you like food shopping by where respondents buy groceries**

	%		
	Supermarkets	Local shops	All
I really like food shopping	14	11	13
I like food shopping	24	24	24
I neither like nor dislike food shopping	30	30	30
I dislike food shopping	18	18	18
I really dislike food shopping	14	17	15

However, as Table 28 shows, there was some difference according to living situation – 45% of those living in university accommodation liked or really liked shopping for food, compared with 29% of those living alone. There was also variation by gender – while 30% of females disliked or really disliked shopping for food, 41% of males felt the same.

**Table 28: How much do you like food shopping by type of accommodation and gender**

	%				
	Type of accommodation			Gender	
	Alone	With others	University accommodation	Male	Female
I really like food shopping	10	11	17	11	14
I like food shopping	19	22	28	21	26
I neither like nor dislike food shopping	38	30	28	27	30
I dislike food shopping	19	20	17	21	17
I really dislike food shopping	14	17	12	20	13

Respondents were presented with three scenarios and asked to identify how often each of them applied to them. As Table 29 indicates, the first of these – ‘you do not have enough food to eat because you can’t get to a grocery shop’ – was not a major problem, and 65% said that it never happened to them. Respondents who said it never happened to them were significantly more likely ( $p < 0.001$ ) than other respondents to live nearer to the shops where they bought most of their groceries.

In contrast, scenario 2 – ‘you do not have a main meal and you get through the day by just having a snack or a drink when you feel like it’ – was much more prevalent with around one in four respondents (29%) saying this happens at least once a week, and only one quarter of respondents

(27%) saying that it never happens to them. The third scenario – ‘worrying that food will run out as there is not enough money to buy more’ - was an issue at least sometimes for almost half of respondents (46%), but only affects 14% of respondents every week.

**Table 29: How often do the following happen?**

	%		
	Not enough food as can't get to a grocery shop	Do not have a main meal so just have a snack or a drink	Worry that food will run out as not enough money
Every day	<1	2	3
4-6 days per week	1	5	3
1-3 days per week	6	22	8
Once every 2 weeks	12	22	11
Once a month or less	16	22	20
Never	65	27	54

Fourth/fifth year and postgraduate students were more likely than first, second and third years to say that scenario 2 and scenario 3 never happen to them (Table 30).

**Table 30: Do the following ‘never’ happen by year of study**

	% saying ‘never’				
	First	Second	Third	Fourth/fifth	Postgraduate
Not enough food as can't get to a grocery shop	69	69	60	62	60
Do not have a main meal so just have a snack or a drink	26	23	26	32	30
Worry that food will run out as not enough money	52	54	49	59	64

### 3.3 Cooking

More than two thirds of respondents (70%) said they liked, or really liked, cooking (Table 31). While one fifth (20%) neither liked nor disliked cooking, one in ten (11%) disliked or really disliked cooking. Females were slightly more likely to like/really like cooking than males (72% and 66% respectively). Students over all years of study were positive about cooking, although postgraduates were more likely than first years to say that they really liked cooking (31% and 22% respectively), which reflects the responses of those living alone (34%) compared with those in university accommodation (21%).

**Table 31: Like cooking by gender**

	%		
	Male	Female	All
I really like cooking	22	27	25
I like cooking	44	45	45
I neither like nor dislike cooking	22	19	20
I dislike cooking	9	8	8
I really dislike cooking	3	2	3

Just over one quarter of respondents (28%) said that they prepare or cook their main meal of the day from fresh or raw ingredients once a day. While a further four out of ten (40%) did so every 2-3 days, 16% did so 2-3 times per month or less. There was no difference by gender, although there was by living situation, year of study, and perhaps unsurprisingly, by how much respondents liked cooking.

Table 32 indicates that among those students who cooked a main meal from fresh or raw ingredients at least twice a week, one of the largest differences was between postgraduate students and first year undergraduates: 81% of the former cooked their main meal of the day from fresh or raw ingredients compared with 61% of students in their first year ( $p < 0.001$ ). However, the greatest disparity was between those who liked/really liked cooking and those who disliked/really disliked cooking – 79% and 23% respectively ( $p < 0.001$ ).

**Table 32: Cook main meal from fresh/raw ingredients regularly**

% cooking main meal from fresh or raw ingredients at least twice a week										
Type of accommodation			Year of study					Like/dislike cooking		
Alone	With others	Uni acc	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4/5	PG	Like/really like cooking	Dislike/really dislike cooking	All
77	70	63	61	64	70	76	81	79	23	68

All respondents who cooked their main meal from fresh or raw ingredients once a week or less were asked to identify which of a defined list of factors explained why they did not cook a main meal regularly. The most frequently identified issue was lack of time (57%), followed by 'I usually eat pre-packed/convenience foods or meals' (40%). Lack of knowledge of cooking a variety of foods was an issue for just over one quarter of respondents (27%), with money being an issue for one fifth of respondents (21%). A very small proportion of respondents (4%) said that they did not know how to cook at all (Table 33).

**Table 33: Reason for not cooking main meal from fresh/raw ingredients regularly by year of study**

	% identifying each factor					
	First	Second	Third	Fourth/fifth	Postgraduate	All
Lack of time	57	58	64	69	67	57
I usually eat pre-packed/convenience foods	46	37	43	50	34	40
I don't know how to cook a variety of foods or meals	33	26	26	26	21	27
I can't afford it	23	21	26	19	16	21
I don't enjoy cooking	22	22	18	15	16	19
I usually eat take-away food	12	18	15	15	13	14
Someone else usually cooks for me	10	14	15	19	8	12
Lack of storage facilities	8	6	7	10	2	6
Lack of cooking facilities	7	5	4	10	3	5
I don't know how to cook at all	6	6	3	2	2	4
Other (please specify)	8	6	10	5	13	8

There were some variations in responses according to the year of study:

- One third of first years (33%) said that they did not know how to cook a variety of foods or meals, compared with 21% of postgraduates.
- One in five fourth/fifth years (19%) said that someone else usually cooks for them, compared with 8% of postgraduates.
- One half of fourth/fifth years (50%) said that they usually eat pre-packed or convenience foods, compared with 34% of postgraduates.
- More undergraduate students said they can't afford to cook a main meal every day, compared with postgraduates.
- Over one half of first years (57%) highlighted a shortage of time, as did more than two thirds of fourth/fifth years (69%) and postgraduate students (67%).

This pattern of responses reflects the distribution of responses according to living situation (Table 34). For example, lack of time was a particular issue for those living alone (73%), and this group was also most likely to say that they usually ate take-away food (27%).

**Table 34: Reason for not cooking main meal from fresh/raw ingredients regularly by type of accommodation**

	% identifying each factor		
	Alone	With other students/ friends/professionals	University accommodation
Lack of time	73	63	57
I usually eat pre-packed/convenience foods	47	43	43
I don't know how to cook a variety of foods or meals	20	27	33
I can't afford it	13	24	19
I don't enjoy cooking	27	19	21
I usually eat take-away food	27	15	11
Someone else usually cooks for me	13	12	13
Lack of storage facilities	0	4	11
Lack of cooking facilities	0	4	8
I don't know how to cook at all	7	3	6
Other (please specify)	13	8	7

The 'other' reasons identified by respondents were categorised into the following headings. The full list of responses is available in Appendix 1.3.

- Time/tiredness.
- Ingredients/equipment.
- Medical/psychological reasons.
- Problems with flatmates.
- Share cooking.
- Issues relating to cooking for one person.
- Food choice.
- Eat or get food somewhere else.

As Table 35 shows, most respondents (86%) said that they learned to cook at home, with a smaller proportion having learned to cook at school (27%). Respondents could identify more than one location, and a small proportion (2%) said that they learned to cook both at school and at home. While 7% of respondents said that they taught themselves to cook or learned by using recipe books, other sources of information included friends or other people (3%), as well as TV cookery programmes or magazines (1%). Several respondents (1%) previously or currently worked in restaurants, and so had learned to cook there. While approximately one third of female respondents (32%) learned to cook at school, for male respondents the figure was just under half that proportion (17%). However, there were no differences by gender for other sources.



**Table 35: Where learned to cook by gender**

	% identifying each location		
	Male	Female	All
At home	85	88	86
At school	17	32	27
Self/recipe books	9	6	7
Friends/other people	2	3	3
TV/media/internet	1	1	1
Work	1	1	1
When I came to university/college	3	1	1
Other	3	1	2

Other responses include:

- Apply heat, there's nothing to it.
- Read the back of the packaging.
- You don't need to learn, just cook.
- Necessity.

### 3.4 Diet

As previously stated, questions relating to the buying and cooking of food were not asked of those respondents who lived with their family. However, the following sections relate to questions that were asked of all respondents.

The majority of all respondents to the survey (78%) ate meat although more males (91%) than females (74%) did (Table 36). More females than males said they were completely or mainly vegetarian (11% and 4% respectively). Nearly three times more females (29%) than males (11%) said they were on a casual diet to lose weight.

**Table 36: Dietary characteristics by gender**

	% saying 'yes'		
	Males	Females	All
Vegan	1	0	<1
Completely vegetarian	2	4	3
Mainly vegetarian	2	7	6
Eat meat	91	74	78
On a strict diet to lose weight	1	1	1
On a casual diet to lose weight	11	29	23
Special diet for medical reasons	2	2	2
Special diet due to allergies	1	2	1
Special diet for religious reasons	1	1	1

Respondents were asked about the types of food they ate regularly and this was defined as being 'at least two or three days a week'. As Table 37 indicates, the majority of respondents (85%) regularly ate dairy products. Just over two thirds ate fresh vegetables and salads (69%) or meals prepared from raw fresh chicken (68%), and a slightly lower proportion (65%) ate fruit. In contrast, only 16% said that they regularly ate meals prepared from raw fresh fish. Undergraduates in their first year of study were least likely to eat fresh vegetables, salads and fruit and the percentages rose steadily in line with the number of years in study. Postgraduate students were most likely to say

they ate fresh foods. Similarly, more first year students (35%) than those in any other year of study said they ate ready-made meals.

**Table 37: Types of food eaten regularly by year of study**

	% saying 'yes'					
	First	Second	Third	Fourth/fifth	Postgraduate	All
Fresh vegetables/salads	63	67	70	75	81	69
Fruit	61	62	64	68	76	65
Eggs	28	27	32	30	38	30
Ready-made meals	34	24	25	24	20	26
Other convenience foods	45	46	45	41	27	41
Dairy products	86	86	84	87	88	85
Meals using fresh fish	12	15	15	16	25	16
Meals using fresh chicken	68	68	71	73	67	68
Meals using other fresh meat	49	56	49	60	54	52

Students who lived alone were much more likely to say that they ate fresh vegetables and salads regularly than those who lived with other people. They were also least likely to say they ate ready-made or other convenience foods. More students who lived with their families than those who lived alone or with other people said they regularly ate food prepared from fresh chicken and other fresh meat. However, students who lived alone were most likely to say they regularly ate meals prepared from raw fresh fish (Table 38).

**Table 38: Types of food eaten regularly by type of accommodation**

	% saying 'yes'				
	With family	Alone	With other students, friends or professionals	University accommodation	All
Fresh vegetables/salads	77	82	68	59	69
Fruit	69	68	62	66	65
Eggs	35	28	28	29	30
Ready-made meals	27	19	24	31	26
Other convenience foods	44	25	42	40	41
Dairy products	85	89	66	86	85
Meals using fresh fish	22	31	13	9	16
Meals using fresh chicken	75	63	68	57	68
Meals using other fresh meat	63	62	48	42	52

Students were asked whether, and how often, they bought food from a list of food outlets. As Table 39 shows, the list included fast food outlets (such as McDonalds, fish and chip shops and Chinese takeaways), university food outlets, and pubs and sports clubs. Very few students who responded to the survey said that they bought food from any of these outlets either 'every day' or 'four to six times' a week. However, only 7% of students said they never bought food from a take-away or fast food outlet. Mobile food retailers and sports clubs were most likely to be the outlets that students 'never' bought food from.

**Table 39: How often do you buy foods from the following outlets?**

	%					
	Every day	4-6 times a week	2-3 times a week	Once a week	Less often	Never
Takeaway or fast food outlet	<1	1	11	36	44	7
University canteen	2	3	16	19	32	28
University sandwich bar	2	4	23	23	30	19
University shop	3	4	17	18	34	25
Other coffee shop	1	2	10	21	41	25
Other sandwich bar	<1	1	9	21	46	23
Pub	<1	<1	2	11	49	37
Mobile food outlet	<1	0	<1	2	29	69
Sports club	<1	0	<1	1	19	79
Ready-to-eat takeaway food	<1	2	8	15	35	40
Vending machine	1	2	10	16	39	33

Generally, the proportion of students buying foods from the list of outlets at least four times a week or more did not differ significantly according to whom the respondent lived with. However, students who lived in university accommodation were more likely than other students to buy food regularly from a university canteen and those who lived alone are most likely to buy food regularly from a university sandwich bar, followed by students who lived with their family (Table 40). There was also very little difference in relation to year of study (Table 41).

**Table 40: Regular use of food outlets by type of accommodation**

	% saying '4 times a week or more'				
	With family	Alone	With other students, friends or professionals	University accommodation	All
Takeaway or fast food outlet	1	3	2	1	1
University canteen	4	5	4	8	8
University sandwich bar	6	8	5	5	5
University shop	6	3	7	7	7
Other coffee shop	3	6	2	2	3
Other sandwich bar	1	2	2	1	2
Pub	1	0	1	<1	1
Mobile food outlet	<1	0	<1	<1	<1
Sports club	<1	0	<1	0	<1
Ready-to-eat takeaway food	1	2	2	3	2
Vending machine	3	0	3	2	3

**Table 41: Regular use of food outlets by year of study**

	% saying '4 times a week or more'					
	First	Second	Third	Fourth/fifth	Postgraduate	All
Takeaway or fast food outlet	1	2	2	1	<1	1
University canteen	5	5	5	7	3	5
University sandwich bar	6	5	6	6	4	5
University shop	9	10	6	7	2	7
Other coffee shop	3	2	3	2	2	3
Other sandwich bar	2	2	2	2	1	2
Pub	1	1	<1	<1	<1	1
Mobile food outlet	0	<1	0	0	<1	<1
Sports club	0	0	<1	0	<1	<1
Ready-to-eat takeaway food	3	1	2	1	1	2
Vending machine	3	3	2	2	2	3

Respondents were asked how often they ate breakfast and fried food and how often they drank alcohol. Just over half (52%) of all respondents ate breakfast every day while only 2% ate fried food or drank alcohol every day (Table 42).

**Table 42: Frequency of consuming breakfast, fried food and alcohol**

	%				
	Every day	4-6 times a week	2-3 times a week	Less often	Never
Eat breakfast	52	15	15	11	6
Eat fried food	2	6	28	58	7
Drink alcohol	2	8	34	42	14

The responses 'every day' and '4-6 times a week' were combined and the results showed that more females (70%) than males (63%) ate breakfast at least four times a week and twice as many males as females ate fried food or drank alcohol more than four times a week (Table 43).

**Table 43: Regular frequency of consuming breakfast, fried food and alcohol by gender**

	% saying '4 times a week or more'		
	Males	Females	All
Eat breakfast	63	70	68
Eat fried food	12	5	7
Drink alcohol	15	7	10

Table 44 shows that respondents who lived on their own (78%) were most likely to eat breakfast four times a week or more, followed by those who lived with their family (70%). Students who lived with their family were much less likely to drink alcohol four times a week or more than those who lived alone, in university accommodation or with other people.

**Table 44: Regular frequency of consuming breakfast, fried food and alcohol by type of accommodation**

	% saying '4 times a week or more'				
	With family	Alone	With other students, friends or professionals	University accommodation	All
Eat breakfast	70	78	67	65	68
Eat fried food	8	7	7	6	7
Drink alcohol	6	10	13	11	10

There were few differences in responses according to the year of study, except in relation to eating breakfast. Students in their first year of study were less likely than those in the other groups to eat breakfast four times a week or more (Table 45).

**Table 45: Regular frequency of consuming breakfast, fried food and alcohol by year of study**

	% saying '4 times a week or more'					
	First	Second	Third	Fourth/fifth	Postgraduate	All
Eat breakfast	61	65	68	74	81	68
Eat fried food	7	8	7	7	6	7
Drink alcohol	10	12	9	6	8	10

Students were given a list of foods and drinks and asked to say, for each one, which of them, if any, they ate or drank more now than they did one year ago. Approximately two thirds said that their consumption of foods such as dairy products (67%), meat (64%) and bread and pasta (61%) was the same as a year ago (Table 46). The data give some suggestion that eating habits are becoming healthier. For example, foods and drinks containing sugar, fat or salt were most likely to be consumed less now than a year ago. In addition, around a third of respondents said that they ate vegetables or salad (35%) and fruit (32%) more now than a year ago.

**Table 46: Compared to year ago, how often do you eat or drink the following?**

	%			
	More than a year ago	Same as a year ago	Less than a year ago	Never eat or drink this
Foods/drinks containing sugar	13	43	42	2
Foods containing fat	12	44	41	2
Fruit	32	49	18	1
Vegetables or salad	35	47	16	2
Bread/cereals/rice/potatoes/pasta	28	61	11	<1
Milk and dairy products	19	67	13	2
Meat	12	64	18	6
Fish	22	41	19	19
Unsalted nuts/pulses	13	41	14	32
Salt	6	43	31	19
Alcohol	24	36	28	13

Taking the response 'more than last year' and looking at this by whom the respondent lived with and their year of study provides some interesting findings – most notably in terms of alcohol consumption. More than four out of ten students (43%) who lived in university accommodation and 22% of students who lived with other students, friends or professionals said that they drink more alcohol now than they did a year ago (Table 47). Similarly, 40% of first-year students said that they drink more now than they did a year ago, followed by 24% of those in their second year (Table 48).

Conversely, as Table 49 shows, only 17% of first year students said that they drink less alcohol than one year ago, compared with 36% of third year respondents. First years were also twice as likely than postgraduate respondents to say that they ate less fruit (24% and 12% respectively) and vegetables or salad (23% and 11% respectively). In addition, they were twice as likely than fourth/fifth year students to say that they ate less meat (23% and 12% respectively).

There are also some differences according to living situation (Table 50). Respondents living in university accommodation were more likely than those living with a family to eat less fruit, less vegetables and salad, less meat and less fish than one year ago. However, the latter group were more likely to consume less alcohol than one year previously.

**Table 47: Increased consumption of food and alcohol by type of accommodation**

	% saying 'more than last year'			
	With family	Alone	With other students, friends or professionals	University accommodation
Foods/drinks containing sugar	11	11	12	17
Foods containing fat	11	11	12	17
Fruit	35	28	30	27
Vegetables or salad	38	32	35	29
Bread/cereals/rice/potatoes/pasta	26	17	29	33
Milk and dairy products	15	17	19	25
Meat	12	9	13	12
Fish	23	26	22	18
Unsalted nuts/pulses	14	22	12	12
Salt	6	8	6	7
Alcohol	17	8	22	43

**Table 48: Increased consumption of food and alcohol by year of study**

	% saying 'more than last year'				
	First	Second	Third	Fourth/fifth	Postgraduate
Foods/drinks containing sugar	15	14	12	10	9
Foods containing fat	16	14	10	9	10
Fruit	27	32	33	35	35
Vegetables or salad	30	37	40	38	34
Bread/cereals/rice/potatoes/pasta	33	33	26	22	21
Milk and dairy products	21	20	19	17	15
Meat	10	15	13	13	12
Fish	18	21	25	24	23
Unsalted nuts/pulses	10	11	14	10	20
Salt	7	8	7	6	4
Alcohol	40	24	16	11	12

**Table 49: Decreased consumption of food and alcohol by year of study**

	% saying 'less than last year'				
	First	Second	Third	Fourth/fifth	Postgraduate
Foods/drinks containing sugar	43	40	42	46	40
Foods containing fat	39	42	40	47	41
Fruit	24	20	17	12	12
Vegetables or salad	23	16	12	10	11
Bread/cereals/rice/potatoes/pasta	12	10	9	8	11
Milk and dairy products	14	15	13	9	11
Meat	23	18	14	12	20
Fish	24	16	16	18	17
Unsalted nuts/pulses	18	13	10	15	12
Salt	32	30	33	30	31
Alcohol	17	31	36	35	30

**Table 50: Decreased consumption of food and alcohol by type of accommodation**

	% saying 'less than last year'			
	With family	Alone	With other students, friends or professionals	University accommodation
Foods/drinks containing sugar	44	42	42	40
Foods containing fat	43	49	40	39
Fruit	13	17	20	27
Vegetables or salad	9	9	16	29
Bread/cereals/rice/potatoes/pasta	8	12	11	14
Milk and dairy products	12	12	12	16
Meat	13	18	17	30
Fish	11	17	19	32
Unsalted nuts/pulses	12	5	13	22
Salt	34	28	31	28
Alcohol	31	32	31	15

### 3.5 Nutrition

One in six respondents (17%) said that they always look at the labels with nutritional information on food (Table 51). Around one third (32%) said that they did this fairly often and a similar proportion (35%) said that they did so sometimes. However, one in six (16%) respondents said that they never looked at the nutritional information. Females were much more likely to look at nutritional labels than males were. Respondents living alone were twice as likely as other respondents to always look at nutritional labels. First and second years were much more likely than postgraduates to say that they never look at labels.

**Table 51: How often do you look at the labels with nutritional information on food?**

	%											
	Type of accommodation				Year of study					Gender		
	With family	Alone	With others	Uni acc	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4/5	PG	Male	Female	All
Always	17	37	17	17	14	17	16	18	22	11	20	17
Never	14	11	18	16	18	20	16	13	10	25	12	16

The following nutritional facts were presented to respondents:

- 20g of sugar per 100g of salad cream
- 2g of salt per 100g in cornflakes
- 20g of fat per 100g in digestive biscuits

Respondents were asked whether they thought the amount of sugar, salt and fat in the food was a lot, an acceptable amount, a little, or if they didn't know. While each statement was correct, the proportion of sugar, salt or fat contained within the product exceeds nutritional guidelines.

As Table 52 shows, the vast majority of respondents (85%) thought that 20g of sugar per 100g was a lot in a jar of salad cream. Approximately half this proportion (44%) thought that 2g of salt per 100g of cornflakes was a lot, while 35% said it was acceptable. Most respondents (72%) thought that 20g of fat per 100g of digestive biscuits was a lot, and 19% thought it was acceptable.

The pattern of responses by male and female students was broadly similar in relation to the level of sugar in salad cream and the level of salt in cornflakes, with female students being slightly more likely to think that the specified level was a lot. The largest discrepancy was between the proportion of males (67%) and females (75%) who thought that the level of fat in digestive biscuits was a lot.

**Table 52: Perception of nutritional content by gender**

		%		
		Male	Female	All
Salad cream - 20g of sugar	A lot	81	87	85
	An acceptable amount	7	5	6
	A little	2	1	1
	I don't know	10	7	8
Cornflakes - 2g of salt	A lot	41	45	44
	An acceptable amount	35	35	35
	A little	13	13	13
	I don't know	11	7	9
Digestive biscuits - 20g of fat	A lot	67	75	72
	An acceptable amount	22	17	19
	A little	2	2	2
	I don't know	9	6	7

Respondents who always read nutritional labels were much more likely to say that each scenario was a lot, while respondents who never read nutritional labels were more likely to say that they did not know.



**Table 53: Perception of nutritional content by how often read nutritional labels**

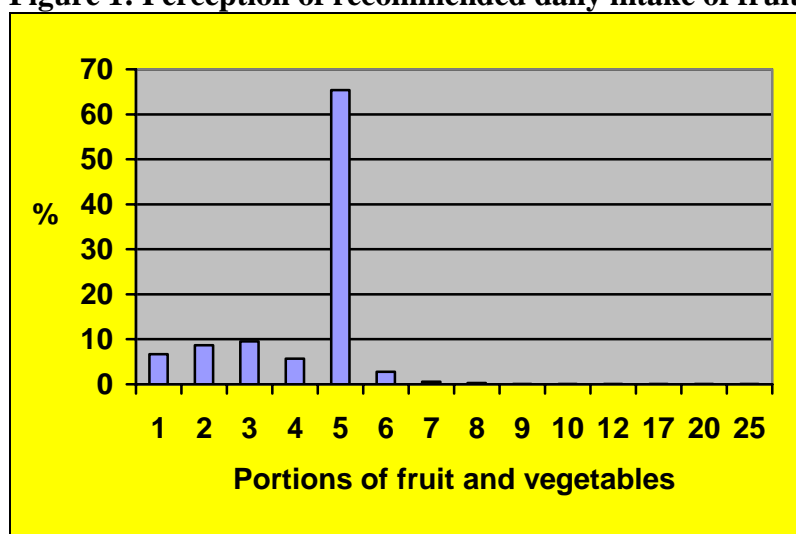
		%				
		Always	Fairly often	Sometimes	Never	All
Salad cream - 20g of sugar	A lot	91	90	84	73	85
	An acceptable amount	7	6	6	4	6
	A little	1	1	1	2	1
	I don't know	2	4	9	21	8
Cornflakes - 2g of salt	A lot	56	49	39	30	44
	An acceptable amount	33	35	36	32	35
	A little	8	10	16	19	13
	I don't know	4	5	10	18	9
Digestive biscuits - 20g of fat	A lot	81	77	70	61	73
	An acceptable amount	15	19	20	17	19
	A little	2	1	2	4	2
	I don't know	2	3	8	17	7

There was some association with changes in diet over the last year. While most respondents (85%) perceived the amount of sugar in salad cream as being a lot, the group most likely to think this were those who ate less food containing sugar than one year ago (88%), while a smaller proportion of those who never ate food containing sugar (79%) thought this was a lot.

Similarly, 47% of those who ate less salt than a year ago thought that the level of salt was a lot, compared with 34% of those who ate more salt than a year ago. Those eating more food containing fat than a year ago were more likely than those eating less food containing fat to think that the amount of fat in digestive biscuits was a lot (78% and 68% respectively). In addition, respondents who ate less or no food containing sugar or fat were less likely to say that ‘don’t know’, suggesting that they have reduced or stopped their consumption of these items on nutritional grounds.

Nearly two thirds of respondents (65%) correctly identified that they should eat five portions of fruit and vegetables every day (Figure 1). However, 31% thought that the correct number of portions was less than five, while 4% thought it was more than this, with a maximum of 25.

**Figure 1: Perception of recommended daily intake of fruit and vegetables**



There was little variation according to year of study, although there was variation according to living situation (Table 54). Only 59% of students who lived in university accommodation said that

they should eat five portions of fruit and vegetables per day, compared with 68% of students living with other students, friends or professionals. Male students were much more likely than female students to underestimate the amount of fruit and vegetables they should eat – 40% and 26% respectively – and so the proportion of males correctly identifying the correct amount was 55% compared with 70% of females.

**Table 54: Perception of recommended daily intake of fruit and vegetables**

Portions of fruit and vegetables per day	%						
	Type of accommodation				Gender		All
	With family	Alone	With others	Uni acc	Male	Female	
1-4	30	34	28	36	40	26	31
5	66	59	68	59	55	70	65
6-25	4	7	4	5	5	4	4

### 3.6 Lifestyle and exercise

Overall, respondents thought they led a healthy lifestyle (Table 55). More than six out of ten respondents (64%) felt that they led a fairly healthy lifestyle. However, only 4% thought that they led a very healthy lifestyle. More than one quarter (29%) said they led a ‘not very healthy lifestyle’, and 4% said they led an unhealthy lifestyle. There was little difference according to gender or living situation. However, variations occurred depending on the year of study. While three quarters of postgraduate students (79%) felt they led a very or fairly healthy lifestyle, a lower proportion (64%) of first years did. In addition, 37% of the latter group felt they led a ‘not very healthy lifestyle’ or an unhealthy lifestyle, compared with 22% of postgraduates.

**Table 55: Perception of lifestyle by year of study**

	%					
	First	Second	Third	Fourth/fifth	Postgraduate	All
Very healthy lifestyle	4	3	3	2	7	4
Fairly healthy lifestyle	60	61	64	73	72	64
Not very healthy lifestyle	32	33	29	23	20	29
Unhealthy lifestyle	5	4	4	3	2	4

Respondents were asked how often they exercised for more than 30 minutes. Exercise was defined as any physical activity that increases heart rate. Overall, as Table 56 shows, nearly one in six respondents (16%) never took any exercise lasting about 30 minutes. Conversely, 6% of respondents said that they took exercise every day, with a further 14% taking exercise at least four times per week. Similar proportions took exercise 2-3 times a week as took exercise less often (32% and 32% respectively).

Males were more likely than females to take exercise at least 4 times per week (26% and 17% respectively). There was variation according to the year of study – only 11% of fourth/fifth year students took exercise at least 4 times per week, compared with 23% of first year students. In addition, fewer respondents living with their family took exercise at least four times per week than those living alone – 19% and 27% respectively.

**Table 56: Frequency of exercise**

	%											
	Gender		Year of study					Type of accommodation				All
	Male	Female	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> /5 <sup>th</sup>	PG	With family	Alone	With others	Uni acc	
Every day	8	6	7	6	5	3	9	6	12	7	7	6
4-6 times pw	18	11	16	13	13	8	16	13	15	13	17	14
2-3 times pw	34	31	30	31	32	38	33	33	34	33	29	35
< twice pw	26	35	32	33	32	34	30	32	23	32	34	32
Never	14	17	16	17	18	18	12	17	15	15.8	14	16

As might be expected, those respondents who felt that they led a very healthy lifestyle were most likely to take exercise every day (32%). Three quarters of this group (75%) took exercise at least 4 times a week, compared with 23% of those who led a fairly healthy lifestyle, 9% of those who led a not very healthy lifestyle and 4% of those who led an unhealthy lifestyle (Table 57).

**Table 57: Frequency of exercise by perception of lifestyle**

	%				
	Very healthy lifestyle	Fairly healthy lifestyle	Not very healthy lifestyle	Unhealthy lifestyle	All
Every day	32	7	3	1	6
4-6 times a week	43	16	6	3	14
2-3 times a week	19	39	19	13	32
Less than twice a week	6	29	44	26	32
Never	1	9	28	57	16

Out of the five sports facilities identified, university sports centres were those most used – 43% of respondents said that they used them, compared with 24% who said that they used sports clubs or council-owned facilities (Table 58).

**Table 58: Frequency of use of sports/fitness facilities**

	%				
	University sports centre	Private gym	Sports clubs	Council-owned facilities	Gym equipment at home
Every day	<1	<1	1	<1	1
4-6 times a week	2	1	1	1	2
2-3 times a week	14	7	11	5	11
Less often	26	20	12	19	22
Never	57	72	76	76	64

Males were more likely than females to use each facility. For example, 82% of females had never used a sports club and 62% had never used the university sports centre, compared with 61% and 46% respectively for males. There was little variation in the proportion that had never used each facility based on year of study, except for sports clubs – first year students were more likely to use them than postgraduates. However, there was variation according to living situation. Less than half of those living in university accommodation (46%) said that they never used the university sports centre, compared with 73% of those living with their family, and 74% of those living alone. In contrast, those living in university accommodation were most likely never to use a private gym – 79%, compared with 68% of those living with their family (Table 59).

**Table 59: Never using sports/fitness facilities**

	% never using facility											
	Gender		Year of study					Type of accommodation				All
	Male	Female	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> /5 <sup>th</sup>	PG	With family	Alone	With others	Uni acc	
University sports centre	46	62	59	57	57	57	55	73	74	47	46	57
Private gym	71	73	73	70	71	71	76	68	75	74	79	72
Sports club	61	82	73	73	75	76	86	84	90	71	74	76
Council-owned Gym at home	67	79	77	75	73	77	76	74	79	77	82	76
	56	68	62	62	64	67	69	63	62	64	68	64

As Table 60 indicates, there was variation in the frequency of use of each facility. Of those who used the university sports centre, 62% used it less than twice a week. In contrast, a much smaller proportion of those who used sports clubs – 47% - did so less than twice a week. Thus, those who used sports clubs did so more often than those using other facilities.

**Table 60: Frequency of use of sports/fitness facilities by those using each facility**

	% of those who use facility				
	University sports centre	Private gym	Sports clubs	Council-owned facilities	Gym equipment at home
Every day	1	1	2	1	3
4-6 times a week	4	5	6	2	6
2-3 times a week	34	24	45	19	30
Less often	62	71	47	78	61

### 3.7 Knowledge of Food Standards Agency (FSA)

Most respondents (90%) had heard of the Food Standards Agency (Table 61). While 93% of second year students had heard of the FSA, a slightly lower proportion (82%) of postgraduate students had. A higher proportion of those living with their family (94%) had heard of the FSA, compared with those living in university accommodation (80%).

**Table 61: Knowledge of Food Standards Agency**

	%											
	Gender		Year of study					Type of accommodation				All
	Male	Female	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> /5 <sup>th</sup>	PG	With family	Alone	With others	Uni acc	
Yes	88	90	90	93	92	91	82	94	91	90	80	90
No	12	10	10	7	8	9	18	6	9	10	20	10

### 3.8 Comments

At the end of the questionnaire, respondents were asked if they wanted to add any other comments relating to issues raised in the questionnaire – 511 took this opportunity. Appendix 1.4 contains the full list of responses. However, several key issues arose, including:

- Format/content of questionnaire.
- Need/desire for information and courses.
- Comments relating to accommodation and lifestyle.
- The survey acted as an impetus to start eating more healthily.
- Request for feedback/summary of results.

## SECTION 4: CONCLUSIONS

This report has highlighted the attitudes and behaviours of 3,412 university students across Northern Ireland in relation to food.

The most striking points to emerge relate to cooking habits and diet. Only 28% of students said that they prepared or cooked their main meal of the day from fresh or raw ingredients every day. The main reasons for not doing so were lack of time and eating pre-packed convenience foods. In relation to diet, nearly one third of respondents did not regularly eat fresh vegetables, salads or fruit. Approximately one half of students ate breakfast every day. Overall, while two thirds of respondents thought that they led a fairly or very health lifestyle, one third thought they did not.

In terms of demographic characteristics, the largest variations relate to year of study. In particular, first year students are the group who were most likely to:

- Drink more alcohol than a year ago.
- Eat pre-packed or convenience foods.

They were also least likely to:

- Cook a main meal from fresh or raw ingredients.
- Know how to cook a variety of foods.
- Enjoy cooking.
- Eat less fresh fruit and vegetables than a year ago.
- Eat breakfast.
- Look at nutritional labels.
- Say that they lead a healthy lifestyle.

Many of the findings of this study reflect the findings of the CLAN survey carried out in the Republic of Ireland (Hope et al., 2005), especially in relation to the consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables and frequency of exercise. In particular, the CLAN study highlighted that ‘the most vulnerable students are those in first and second years’ (p. 13). The recommendations included in the CLAN report (p. 15) are also pertinent to universities in Northern Ireland.

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## **APPENDIX 1: ‘OTHER’ RESPONSES**

**Appendix 1.1: ‘Other’ responses to ‘When you are buying food, which 3 of the following factors do you consider most?’**

**Place of origin, for example:**

- Country of origin, prefer to but locally produced food
- Low food miles
- No Israeli food

**Calories, for example:**

- Calories contained in the food
- Calories, fat and sugar content
- How many weight watchers points it has

**Health considerations, for example,**

- Health, e.g. low salt content
- Healthy content of food (i.e.-saturated fats and such)
- Nutritional value of food, is it organic, are there many additives

**Vegetarian foods**

**How filling the food is**

**Weekly menu**

- What I will eat/cook in the coming period.
- Try to change meals so its not the same every week

**Religion**

- Halal food-Islamic

**Organic**

**Fairtrade, for example:**

- Ethically produced & quality

**Special offers, for example:**

- BOGOFs

**Miscellaneous**

- Kitchen not wheelchair suitable so very basic foods like toast & cereal
- What groceries my parents buy me
- What the other people I’m cooking for like

### **Appendix 1.2: ‘Other’ responses to ‘How do you usually get your groceries home?’**

- My mum buys them at the weekend and I bring them up to my house, she drives
- Pick them up before going back to university when my dad is driving
- I walk where possible and drive only for bulky consumables
- On my wheel chair
- With my parents at the weekend
- Motorbike
- Train, then walk

### **Appendix 1.3: ‘Other’ responses to ‘Why do you not cook a main meal every day?’**

#### **Time/tiredness**

- Laziness
- Because I spend all day at university and by the time i get home I couldn’t be bothered
- Can’t be bothered with the hassle that goes with it
- Sometimes I cannot be bothered cooking
- Too much hassle
- When I’m hungry I want to eat something as quick as possible and not have to go through the effort of cooking it from scratch
- Usually too tired after work
- Because I come up on a Monday morning and I don’t have time to do a big shop for food so I make do with soup and toasties and sandwiches that I make with stuff I’ve bought from the overpriced shop in the university. It’s a rip-off but what can you do?
- Not at home
- Need to stay close to libraries

#### **Ingredients/equipment**

- Don’t have ingredients
- No freezer to keep it
- Ugly kitchen

#### **Medical/psychological reasons**

- Psychological - I have an eating disorder
- Physical exhaustion from medical condition and unusable kitchen
- Poor appetite

#### **Problems with flatmates**

- Roommates taking food!!
- Other housemates leave the kitchen too dirty, so I don’t want to cook in it
- The hygiene of my fellow housemates puts me off preparing food in my kitchen
- Everyone usually doesn’t like the same food frozen foods are like by everyone
- The kitchen is too messy because of housemate

#### **Share cooking**

- We take it in turns to cook
- We each take turns - one night a week

#### **Issues relating to cooking for one person**

- Doesn’t keep very long and I only cook for me
- It can be wasteful or expensive when just cooking for one person



- It seems a waste of time cooking for one, plus I enjoy cooking but think the fun

### **Food choice**

- I prefer salads

### **Eat or get food somewhere else**

- I mostly go to my mum's - all others apply when i have to cook for myself
- I get my meals prepared in the university canteen
- I buy food at the cafe
- Eat lunch out, counts as main meal
- Eat main meal in university canteen
- Bring dinners from home (frozen)
- Have home cooked frozen meals that I defrost and reheat.

### **Miscellaneous**

- I forget
- Handy just to use tined stuff!
- Inconvenience to shops
- I detest washing dishes

### **Appendix 1.4: Comments relating to the issues raised in the questionnaire**

*Note: these comments have been edited for spelling, language and identification of individual shops.*

- A good questionnaire, but it would be nice to get feedback having completed it about the questions regarding proportions of sugar, salt and fat.
- A once a week option would be more suitable than less often for many questions
- A question relating to portion sizes may be useful.
- A well rounded questionnaire I believe.
- Aaaaagh! I need to exercise... and eat more fruit... and look at the nutritional information on the foods I eat!
- Advice would be good on how to start eating and being more healthy conveniently.
- Always have watched my diet.
- Any free food for doing this?
- As a mother of 4 children food is obviously a very important issue; exercise is also very important but something which I have very little free time for.
- As a post-grad and parent on a limited budget, I've learned through experience how to manage a budget and eat healthily. I've become more environmentally aware and therefore try to be a more eco-friendly and sustainable shopper and eater. We eat seasonal food stuffs, and always learn new recipes from friends. We are helped in this by the fact that most of our friends are from the EU- France, Spain, Italy, Switzerland and Germany.
- As a staff member and part time of Queen s University I feel the institution could run a health course, such as health works which I know runs for the NI civil service. It would be very useful to inform staff/students about health, fitness/exercise/relaxation, drink/drugs and healthy eating etc - a more holistic type course.
- As a student I feel I don't eat very healthily because it's so easy to eat convenience foods such as Chinese food and eat in restaurants.
- As a student living away from home I have found that I am eating healthier now than I did before. However at night, when coming back from a club/bar, all of us seem to snack and it is the worst time of day to be eating. Although I am walking a lot more now also.

- As a student, it is hard to adhere to all the best advice given by the Food Standards Agency. other factors seem more important. I would try to eat as best I could, but that normally goes out the window due to time, money constraints.
- As an international student being here since September, I have to say that my diet became worse, coming to the UK. It's definitely harder to shop for fresh products here and vegs/fruits are not having the taste they should have.
- As I am a nursing student, my course is very demanding, especially whilst on placement. Therefore I cannot have a part time job and am living on the bursary amount per month alone which does not give me a lot of money to spend on food
- As I currently work within a similar environment, i.e. older people and health and well being I think it would be useful in 1st year for a course to be organised for students on how to eat healthy on a budget, general food safety, and to be taught how to make healthy meals similar to the cook it programmes currently in operation
- As I studying abroad this year I have filled the questionnaire in accordingly, however, if it was based on the eating and cooking habits I had last year or the previous the answers would be different. I feel that this should be taken into consideration.
- As my halls are catered I think I get a good balanced diet. I am also a trained fitness technician so I know all about diets, exercises and the importance of a healthy lifestyle. I do however see my flat mates constantly eating junk food, takeaways etc.
- As regards exercise, I exercised 3-4 times a week up until April when I was diagnosed with Glandular Fever. It still leaves me a little weak so I tend not to go for heavy sessions of exercise in the gym and go walking for about 4 miles pretty much every night with my boyfriend instead.
- At Magee there is an \*\*\*\*\* sandwich shop recently opened. It is very overpriced especially for students! E.g. over 1 pound for a cup of tea and about 1.50 for a bun. The students union restaurant is closed over summer when some students especially nursing students attend Magee which decreases food outlet choice during breaks. Cafe in Magee library needs to tighten up on hygiene as coins from change are handled on some occasions in the staffs gloved hand used to serve sandwiches. This has even given one of my friends diarrhoea on a few occasions after consuming a sandwich there.
- At the moment we are studying nutritional values of food ,as a mother of eight children I was always aware of the importance of daily intake of fresh fruit and vegetables on the other hand I was not aware of the salt and sugar content in processed food I think if I had received this information years ago it would have enabled me to make better choices I think that the blame must also lie at the feet of those who produce these foods as it is time consuming to check labels if you have a young family whilst shopping.
- At the start it wouldn't let me click two boxes...I live with my child in self catering university accommodation.
- Because of university scheduling students cannot always eat at normal meal times.
- Before I came to university I didn't realise how expensive fresh food can be, especially meat and fruit
- Being a parent I try to have a fairly balanced diet so as my children will do the same
- Bit to long for most people
- Can I please have feedback from the questionnaire? Thank You
- Clear and structured with good variety of options. A bit long.
- Closest decent supermarket to the Elms Village is \*\*\*\*\*. The \*\*\*\*\* supermarket hasn't even a meat & deli counter
- Cooking facilities in the houses may be very hard to get fixed
- Cooking facilities should be better in student accommodation and advise on handling diet and nutrition should be provided at colleges. Cooking lessons for student living away from home for the 1st time would be a help

- Cost is such a big issue. Bursaries or vouchers to help us afford more fruit and veg would be great.
- Could you change the prizes please. i.e. substitute an ipod for the hamper, mobile phone/other useful device for cooking equipment, and say substantial book token for nut. assessment.
- Course means I don't have time to go to gym
- Don't assume that all students are alcoholics. Some of us have respect for our bodies.
- Don't believe the hype about unhealthy food and takeaways
- Don't think there is enough fresh fruit available in the shops, and if there is, it's very pricey
- Don't really think that I can afford to go out and buy a lot of different ingredients to make a more healthy meal so usually just end up eating pasta or potatoes and some kind of meat sausage etc and milk or water
- Easy to understand - and to complete.
- eat a lot of sweet food compared to living at home
- Eating facilities at UU at Belfast are poor for vegetarians.
- Eating healthy is more widely published and brought to the public's attention nowadays
- Fabulous
- Fat and salt in our foods
- Feel canteen should be more subsidised as students have little money for food.
- Food fairs, like the one at the Belfast City Hall at the moment, should be encouraged to come to Queen's. I think if the students saw what fresh food was available then they would eat more healthily. Has there been a study comparing grades with eating habits?
- Food in final year studies are very important, but time schedules do not allow for such privileges. Diet in first and second years were much healthier.
- Food in MD building is a bit tasteless and overcooked, depending on the time of day you eat at. Concerned about the use of industrial flavouring in the food. Also the amount of fat used to cook the breakfasts. Don't take the gravies/sauces as they are obviously chemical. Fish is usually in batter/breadcrumbs. Cheaper options are often in puff pastry (fattening) or pizzas (ditto) or purely vegetarian. Stir fry vegetables are often drenched in fat and overcooked. Sometimes chips seem the best option even if it's not what I want to eat. Deserts are often fattening cake and custard. I am glad the university food is not my staple diet and have concerns for young students relying on this type of food.
- Food in the university is too expensive and non gluten foods are getting a little easier to find.
- Food is nice. I like food.
- Food is very important. I eat and prepare mostly fresh products. I eat a lot of eastern foods this is also important as you are what you eat so I'm trying very hard not to be an Irish spud, but at least I'm not a frozen bit of processed meat or a takeaway in skin most of the fools I see everyday. People need to get in the kitchen more and start bloody cooking!  
Oh by the way, I LOVE COOKING!
- Food offered in the university area is usually substandard-including that offered by the university and students union in canteens/cafes
- food prices are ridiculously high for a student's income as we have other expenses to pay out eg. for course text books, accommodation and travelling costs. Due to the pressures of heavy study and juggling a part time job it is difficult to eat a balanced healthy diet.
- For a student, money, time and living conditions have a big impact on the food that we consume and the amount of exercise we do.
- For me, it highlights my need for more exercise, especially activity based
- For question 31, I like to work up a sweat by dancing a lot, even though I'm not part of any classes...it's not dancing in a nightclub either, though I do that as well!

- For the nutrition-based questions around fat, when looking at labels, I tend to focus on the type of fat contained within the food e.g. saturated or non saturated.
- Fresh fish, as well as fresh and organic fruit and vegetables need to be cheaper and more easily available to all students. I would also greatly support any advances by the food industry and government to reduce the salt content of all processed foods which sadly, at the moment, present the only practical option for most students!
- Fresh locally produced seasonal food is very important to me. However, it is impossible to obtain such produce local to the university (and difficult to get anywhere I think).
- Fridge space in student houses is usually an issue when it comes to buying fresh food, many houses only have one fridge between 5 students, which means one shelf each. This was a similar problem when I was in student accommodation (we had two fridges between ten). When you take into account people different food preferences (even with milk) more space needs to be allocated. Compared to this time last year I have started to eat a lot healthier and noticed more how easy/difficult it is to find healthy food. One place in particular is in the canteen in the Royal Victoria hospital. I find some of the foods served strangely unhealthy for a hospital canteen - almost like a more sophisticated version of the school dinners Jamie Oliver exposed as being unhealthy. (but I know they have to cater for everyone, therefore they have to consider everyone's tastes), they do provide a healthy alternative, which never really changes (baked potato and salad), however there is only a limited amount of this available and by 1.00 it's usually all gone. I know this seems more like something which should be stated on a comment card, but it's just something I thought I should mention. Another thing is that supermarkets tend to do ready meals with multiple buy offers, for example \*\*\*\* had buy 5 for £5. The salt content of these meals tends to be quite high. As for the healthy living range - the salt content is listed with the sodium content highlighted, which can be confusing as some people may therefore feel a food is low in salt, when it actually isn't - it's just that they read the sodium content as the salt content. Consistency in this area would be better.
- Fruit rocks - we need a fruit smoothie shop in Jordanstown
- Fruit + Veg should be made cheaper to buy for students as it can be quite expensive+ us students can be short on cash very often!!
- Generally foods are priced fairly. But all healthy foods are a lot more expensive, so for students, even if you want a healthy food diet. It's clearly impossible to maintain one. Students will also buy the cheaper products which will consequently lead to the possibility of obesity and totally unhealthy un-nutritious bodies.
- generally students get a bad wrap for their eating habits. However in all my years as a student and knowledge of friends that are still students this is a false idea most students do take a serious attitude to their eating habits especially girls, and also boys who are very sports orientated!
- Generally the cost of food has increased immensely. I worked in Dublin for the past year and it was expensive there but when I came back, over the year food costs had increased greater than inflation. E.g. pub grub used to be £4.95, it is now £5.95
- Generally the prices charged on campus are too expensive
- Give students money off healthier foods would be a good idea
- Good mix of questions really makes you think
- Good questionnaire!
- Good questionnaire.
- Good to get you thinking about diet, diet at university is generally poor, have to make conscious decisions to maintain and improve good diet and exercise
- Gyms are expensive and pressurised atmospheres and the University is no exception. At the end of the day people will do and eat what they want - forcing them can make things worse.

- Healthy food options should be made available in the University. I am pleased that fresh salads, sandwiches & soups are now available in the canteen, but hot food meals could be healthier (less fatty). Also vending machines should contain cereal bars & healthier options than chocolate & crisps.
  - hope you get all the responses you need! I need to exercise more and eat more fruit!
  - How to make Fruit and vegetables appealing
  - I ain't very healthy
  - I always thought that exercise that s needed is 20 mins 2-3 times per week.  
the recommended daily fruit and veg intake is 5 portions a day but this is in the ideal world. however, small things which people aren't aware of are also considered as a portion, i.e. a glass of orange juice, a small handful of veg.
  - I am a Buddhist. I feel uncomfortable to take beef.
  - I am a mature international student from the US.
  - I am a postgraduate student and as such would not be typical of a young, full time student, living away from home.
  - I am a very fussy eater and always have been hence some of my strange answers
  - I am allergic to fruit, that is why I do not eat it. I am waiting to see a specialist about it as I no this is a major problem.
  - I am an insulin dependant diabetic and have been for eleven years, I enjoy fruit, salads and veg more so than sugary foods but this is perhaps due to my health reasons leading to this habit. Referring to food I think the supply of food at university is acceptable but the prices are not student friendly and convenience seems to prevail over health..
  - I am annoyed that most of the special offers in supermarkets (BOGOF etc. ) are for unhealthy snack foods, high in sugar and fat, and not for fresh fruit, vegetables and meat.
  - I am Anorexic and I understand that I have a problem and my lifestyle is unhealthy. I am trying to change it,
  - I am Asian and being that, I normally include vegetables in cooking our meat (chicken, pork or beef) as part of the preparation. I seldom eat fresh vegetables/salad. So, I did not answer that I eat fresh vegetables/salad in the survey, but it does not mean that I don't eat vegetables, but rather I cook and eat everyday with meals with vegetables. examples fried rice with vegetables (beans, peas, sweet corn, or carrots; noodles and soup with vegetables on it; boiled meat with vegetables (potatoes, cabbage, beans, etc)...
- With regard to the frequency of using health facilities, it depend on the type of sports or exercise you are into. For example, I swim (at least 1km) every Saturday for not more than an hour, I play badminton every Tuesday (1.5 hrs), and I walk every Sunday (30 mins) to attend church service; and I walk (10 mins) everyday from home to uni. I live inside the campus.
- I am aware of the adverts run by the agency, i.e. even if you eat any salt in a day it would still be too much. The ads don't necessarily make me change my eating habits completely although they do make me think more about what I eat
  - I am currently trying to eat a lot more fresh fruit and vegetables and am feeling the benefits, in that I am more energetic and less inclined to snack on bad foods. I would recommend this to students.
  - I am doing less physical activity this semester due to the work load of my final year. normally at this time I am competing my horse, playing university hockey and swimming or going to the gym.
  - I am from Slovakia. In my country the food costs a little bit less, so there I can afford to go to eat a lunch 2-3 times a week in restaurant - here I can't. In Slovak student canteen the full lunch (soup & second) costs £0.85 (it's doted by government), for me it's too much to pay £4.00-5.00 per 1 meal in here...

- I am from the United States and have only lived here for about a year and a half. I used to exercise in council gym facilities almost daily but have taken to jogging since that's free. Also, tell Queen's fitness centre to get rid of the 10-minute time limit on their cardio machines-- 10 minutes is a disgrace!
- I am fully aware of what you need to do to lead a healthy lifestyle, however it takes a lot of dedication and energy and I fluctuate between how healthy I am in proportion to how busy/stressed I am, especially with the demands of my course.
- I am generally a big eater but I swim quite a lot to balance this out. I have tried to start eating more fresh veg and fruit but the only issue that would really concern me would be the effect of salt intake. I am not very clear on the parts of the body it damages though I think it's not good for your heart. I'm fairly well informed on health issues but this would be the one which is least well explained. I know the 6g a day rule but what is the salt actually doing to the body e.g. smoking wrecks your lungs, but what does salt actually do?
- I am going to look more closely at nutritional information on the food I eat from now on.
- I am not a native UK-resident - just here for half a year
- I am on a placement year working full time. I usually have a part time job when at university. I answered the questionnaire based on when I am normally in university.
- I am on gluten and dairy free diet, I cannot eat lots of different kind of vegetables and any citrus fruit due to multiple food allergies and I have to say that I find it sometimes quite difficult to get different products and I find myself eating most of the time the same stuff over and over again, because I know what it contains. What makes me sometimes really angry in the shop is that some of the products don't even contain the information on ingredients. And back to the question about the salt, you usually don't even know how much salt is in the product. I think that there should be a law for every food manufacturer to provide the information on ingredients with the percentage and weight of each ingredients as it is very important to know. We are what we eat and we should know what we eat!
- I am on my placement year from this course, hence why I said I am a full time student and have a full time job.
- I am starting to realise I have an unhealthy lifestyle and I need more exercise
- I am unable to exercise due to disability
- I am very aware that I don't eat very healthily nor do I get enough exercise. However, with a full-time university degree, part-time work & extra-curricular activities as well as social life, it is very difficult to find time & motivation to go the gym/do exercise. As I'm always on the go it is also difficult to eat healthily.
- I am very busy this year and do not have time to exercise to the same degree as I previously did.
- I and a lot of people eat in the various chaplaincies at Queens in Elmwood Avenue. These were not in the list of places where student eat.  
Keep up the good work!!
- I believe I have a healthy diet. I used to be very active, but over the last month or so, I have found this difficult to continue due to an increased workload at university. At the moment I have no time to exercise or play for my local football club. On top of this, I do not see this situation changing over the next year.
- I believe it to be worth while to raise issues surrounding daily food we eat, cause it's making more and more people aware to eat healthier live longer.
- I believe that it is important for people to eat good quality, organic and non processed food.
- I believe that it is vitally important that we know and understand what is in food in today's society. Due to things such as salt and sugar being added to the majority of foods and genetically modified foods I eat mainly organic food. However, I believe that it should be made cheaper and more readily available as it gives you more energy than food packed with salt and sugar.

- I can't speak for other students, but I do feel that personally I have become more aware of healthy eating issues over the last couple of years, I think this is due to the media.
- I changed my eating habits in order to avoid saturated fat after discovering that my cholesterol was very high. I have always had a love of, and awareness of, good food.
- I'd love to cook more real meals, but I like to follow recipes but they usually call for ingredients I never have on hand and would only use once if I did.
- I do exercise by walking 4 miles each day when weather permits but haven't walked in the past 1 month due to less time available because of parent in hospital
- I do not have much time in the evenings to take an hour out to just cook food, so ready made meals or easy to prepare meals are the handiest.
- I Do not often check nutritional information because the majority of food I buy does not have it i.e. fruit, fresh meat, French bread and vegetables do not have them (and if they did they would be the same across the board)  
I do very little exercise though I walk more than the recommended 10000 steps 3/4 days a week and am unsure if this is enough.
- I do not really feel that I eat enough fruit or vegetables. I think the problem is mostly because this is the first part of my life that I am having to look after myself food wise instead of having other people to cook food for me. I never really think about what food I should be eating every single day- instead it is more along the lines of just eating whatever I have in my fridge/ freezer.
- I do not really worry about what I eat or the nutritional information on things. I generally eat what I want, when I want, without following any stringent pattern or diet. This has left me in good health with no health, weight, salt or diabetic problems.
- I don't drink alcohol or smoke so feel I am quite healthy because of this but I am actually slightly underweight as I find it very difficult to put on weight so tend to eat unhealthily in an attempt to put on weight and just because it's what I like to eat and doesn't make me put on weight. I am becoming more worried about the long term effects this may be having on me though.
- I don't drink very often, maybe once a month I'll have about 4 pints. Over the last 3 years, I've lost 3 & half stone, going from a chubby 15 & half stone to a happy 12.  
So that helped me to try and be aware of what I eat, don't eat crisps but eat substitutes like snackajack and fruit, if I eat chocolate, it's only Bournville and I eat a small pick n mix at the cinema once a week!
- I don't get on with my room mates, and they always take food that I put in the fridge or freezer, so most times I would either eat a friends house (who can cook :D) or have cheese and ham toastie etc
- I don't have time anymore to do regular exercise because of the demands of my course and the fact that I have to work all through the weekend to pay for my keeping at university
- I don't take a lot of exercise but I walk to and from class everyday, it takes about 15 minutes each way.
- I don't believe people realise how much damage large amounts of salt can do to your body even with the publicity nowadays. A lot of my friends put salt in their sandwiches, soup and even on sausage rolls! I think people should be made to pay for salt the same way they are made to pay for sauce/butter... perhaps this would put more people off using it.
- I don't complain about things in my life, I do the best with what I have. If I eat fatty foods then I Burn it off just as quickly, the benefits of having a high metabolism.
- I don't eat any white meat  
which I know is a bit strange
- I don't feel that the university in Belfast has an awful lot of fruit and veg on offer!!

- I don't find a lot of time to do formal exercise as I take part in other extra curricular activities (music) and my course is very demanding but I walk from town to uni every day and use the PEC at least once a week
- I don't go to the gym etc but ride my bike to and from my placement, I count that as exercise!!
- I don't have enough money to buy really nice foods that I would like to eat and cook. I enjoy cooking from raw foods. I buy my groceries when I go home at the weekend and then bring them up to Belfast on a Sunday night
- I eat well when I can afford it.
- I eat when I have the time, usually I am very busy or my social life takes over. Although I exercise everyday but usually to de stress myself or to get rid of a hangover.
- I enjoy binge drinking for the five days I'm in Belfast per week and this makes me less hungry so most days I don't eat anything. I have all my food delivered even though I only live 20yards from the chippy
- I enjoy cooking, but usually when I get home at the end of the day I m too impatient or tired to want to cook. I know this is silly because a lot of things don't take very long.
- I enjoyed this questionnaire thank you
- I feel this questionnaire is a very worthwhile project. The issue of nutrition amongst students has been somewhat neglected in the past and I feel that more emphasis should be placed on the eating and drinking habits of university students as I myself feel I could lead a healthier lifestyle and could maintain a healthier diet. However, like other students, perhaps a little encouragement is needed!
- I feel healthy food should be sold for less, for example you can buy chips, chicken nuggets etc in the Mace for a couple of pounds and there are always offers on. Vegetables, salads, stir fry vegetables and various fruits are expensive too buy. That is just my opinion. I eat fresh food as I am sick of the taste of convenience foods fro example paste n sauce I read the nutritional label one day as I was curious and it was full of fat and salt. Since this I prefer to boil plain pasta and stir in steamed vegetables which only take 4 minutes in the microwave.
- I feel I am lucky as a student because most of the food I eat is bought by my brother or mum, which means I can eat healthily without worrying about money. Most students are not this lucky and struggle to eat a healthy diet.
- I feel I know more about food and nutrients than others due to the course I am studying, however, I feel that others would have difficulty in choosing between food and particular brands of food according to nutritional information.
- I feel I lack knowledge in nutritional values etc would feel a lot happier if I understood what all the stuff means on the back of food packaging etc so that I would be more conscious of what I m eating. Thankyou
- I feel local shops (eg Spar etc) that are based in student areas are over priced. Their prices should reflect the communities' budget.
- I feel more awareness should be displayed on how to achieve a healthy and balanced diet/ lifestyle.
- I feel schools in general should have more fruit available for breaks and a wider selection of healthier meals for lunch.
- I feel sometimes that with my part time work and studying I don't get to do as much exercise as I like. However, when it is vacation time I do tend to get more exercise.
- I feel that a lot of students will use the convenience of fast food, take away and convenience foods because their cooking skills are not extensive and also because of the cost involved in buying ingredients and preparing meals.  
I use cooking as a way to take a break from studying, a reward.



Students are away from the watchful eye of their parents who would possibly ensure they ate more healthily.

- I feel that I have good knowledge and intentions to eat well but my busy uni/work life means these aren't always fulfilled!  
I drink more than the recommended amount of alcohol a week
- I feel that if I could afford a pleasant flat in the actual town where I could cook in a clean environment, I would spend more money on healthy food but as we only have half a shelf in the fridge in Jordanstown and no room in the freezers we tend to buy ready meal foods that day. Sharing a kitchen between 18 students is difficult and not very pleasant.
- I feel that left to my own devices, I don't live healthily and am not getting a balanced diet.
- I feel that since University, because my lunches are no longer prepared for me (!) I am less inclined to eat fruit for lunch. I eat more meat as my father is able to get discount quality meat from an abattoir... Contrary to expectations, I drink less than I did in first year and even the last year of school, as I no longer go out EVERY Friday night to binge drink as I used to.

I feel that I could, all things considered, lead a much healthier lifestyle. I especially regret giving up regular attendance at the gym, however I am not exaggerating in saying that it is hard to find time for this in busy, crucial Second Year.

- I feel that students have the awareness of the health issues related to what they eat but because of time and laziness they opt for convenience foods...
- I feel that supermarkets should make it easier for people to make the right choices by lowering prices. I often find that the healthier options are much more expensive, for example whole wheat pasta, fresh, unprocessed meats, etc. Also labelling is still not clear enough, for example, salt levels are not always stated and fat is not always broken down into the types of fat contained. Trans fats are almost never stated because most people have never heard of them, I think more should be done to make the public aware of such things.
- I feel that there are many students that would like to be healthier. In my case, although I eat well and walk everywhere because I don't drive, I rarely or never do any extra exercise due to lack of time and tiredness. When not working or studying etc I like to relax with friends or go to see a gig or something.  
I feel it is very important to prepare fresh meals as a student because not only is it better for you, it's cheaper than eating convenience foods (that are usually horrible anyway).  
I don't think there's really a lot that can be done to change student mentality towards food. I think it has to come from home (my love of cooking came from my mum). I know a lot of students who enjoy cooking and eating nice homemade meals themselves, but I also know a lot of them who would prefer a convenience meal.
- I feel the questionnaire is well prepared and the questions get a real depth to participants habits however as a lazy-ish male I believe a collective response would be a waste, the only difference is to tackle each person's habits on an individual basis, for example having a questionnaire with a computer generated response either a criticism or appraisal, highlighting possible areas of improvement. For example I know eating take away isn't a healthy option but I haven't got the will power to stop, maybe if the true damage is highlighted who knows.
- I feel this was more aimed at the typical stereotype of a student, eats pot noodle and pizza etc, as a person who strives to buy ethical food as much as possible I don't feel the questionnaire took such people into account
- I felt other vital sources of exercise were omitted in exercise questions such as walking or running.
- I find it confusing knowing what food is good for you and what food isn't as there is so much contradictory information. I also think it would be beneficial to know about how much i.e. the portions of food you should be eating.

- I find it difficult to exercise this year as it s my final year and I have so much work to do I hardly ever leave the house. However I do try to eat healthily and I never eat convenience foods. I think this is related to my upbringing as I come from a country family and was always taught to use fresh ingredients. Personally I think people who don't are lazy! It s not difficult!
- I find it extremely hard to eat healthily whilst on a tight budget as fresh ingredients are so expensive
- I find it hard cooking for myself at college simply because I'm only cooking for one. I eat fairly healthily, I think I drink too much tea but I suppose its better than alcohol. I'm glad I know about cooking as I probably would have put on weight otherwise. I think I spend little on food as I buy packets of pasta, loaves of bread etc. I'm happy with my eating habits while away from home.
- I find that I eat more healthy during the week, rather than at weekends because my part time job does not give me the time to prepare food. I think time is a big factor for people s style of eating habits, this may be something you could go into more detail about.
- I find the selection of hot food available in uni too repetitive to eat often
- I get fed at work 2-3 days a week, in the student canteen. I feel that this question should have been asked in the survey.
- I go home at the weekends and buy my food there and then bring it down to Belfast with me
- I gotta have some sort of outlet
- I have a good understanding of what a balanced diet consists of however I choose to eat unhealthy foods e.g more chocolate and biscuits than I should when they are in the house
- I have a poor diet in terms of eating pre made convenience foods eg. frozen pizza, oven chips. On the other hand I exercise regularly up to 4 or 5 times a week.
- I have become very conscious of the fact I need to eat more fruit and veg. But it is easier and cheaper to eat unhealthily than it is to eat well.
- I have filled in the questionnaire although I don't think I am typical
- I have never had problems with my weight until last few years, never overweight but was starting to put weight on so joined weight watchers and am eating quite healthily again although difficult at times!
- I have no comments. Thanks.
- I have no other questions!
- I have studied obesity as part of my course and it is good to see an example of research into one of the problems that causes this to be an increasing problem.
- I hope I can buy the fresh vegetables everyday
- I hope it will be useful for you. For me was very long...
- I hope this is un traceable
- I hope you'll have success changing anything. It always depends on the individual.
- I just realised how much \*\*\*\*\* I eat and am going to try and cut down from now on. More fruit and less \*\*\*\*\*!
- I know a good bit about nutrition in relation to health. However when you are on a budget, you don't have the money to buy fresh foods, just what you think will fill you.
- I know I lot of people that don't have good diets so it would be good if they were made more aware of it.
- I know my diet is a lot worse than last year- I ate very well last year i.e. balanced diet. this year I don't know why but I don't bother to cook- I think it s because I find it hard to get the time to go to a supermarket to shop- prices here are lower there's a much larger choice of foods, so I find myself going to local shops where I m relentless to pay the higher prices so I end up getting basic stuff. I live on bread- I know this is really bad. I don't necessarily have a bad diet by eating so much rubbish - I just don't eat enough good stuff.  
Can we be informed of the results of this survey- I m interested to know!

- I know my diet leaves room for considerable improvement but, as I m young, generally healthy and swamped with work I have more important things to worry about. Besides, I won t get decent pension anyway so I'll be saved an old age of poverty.
- I know that I do not eat a lot of vegetables. I find that if I buy vegetables from a supermarket they are off before I use them. The supermarket is not near me and the corner shop does not have many fresh produce.
- I know what answers I should be making, and I know what I should be eating, but I do not buy fresh fish, meat or vegetables because of the price. I buy frozen vegetables. Also snack a lot when in the university for long time
- I like cake!
- I like food.
- I like the design. it s easy to follow.
- I live with my parents and was asked to ignore all questions related to buying food, although I do shop for food, therefore this is not a complete picture of my habits
- I m actually on a Leave of absence from university this year
- I m an international student and cannot afford to pay to use the gym, so I run outside.
- I m an international student, eating changed a lot after coming here. But will turn back after I back to homeland.
- I m an international student. My eating habits are different since coming to the U.K. I think I eat better in the United States due to the fact that I own a car there and can drive to larger food stores. Furthermore, I do much more exercise at home then here, mainly because the weather is much nicer at home. For example, I run 2-4 miles just about everyday at home where here I do it 1-2 times a week.
- I m far from being an expert but generally I find that a lot of people are unaware of the good or bad effect food may have on their health. Lack of nutritional education is a problem for the general public, and medical practitioners, whom I've found in general to be lacking in knowledge especially re food intolerances etc.
- I'm French, and here food is very expensive for me and not really good.  
You should give daily time to each meal, like this people eat less snack food.
- I m hungry now, and I was taking educated guesses on the acceptable amounts of salt sugar and fat. It s something I don't know enough about.
- I'm Italian and I find it very difficult to maintain my eating habits shopping here
- I'm not fussy about food and will pretty much eat anything going...
- I m well aware that I should eat more fruit and have recently started cooking more vegetables. However I think I need to learn a few new recipes. I think it s difficult for people with no experience of cooking to be expected to eat well. I m lucky in that my parents always cooked a healthy dinner everyday.
- I need the gift please (draw)
- I need to work for money as loan never covers food and just about enough for rent, due to this my eating habits are irregular but when I can I do eat and cook fresh food, but with the amount of work I have for final year this is even reduce more
- I often find that where I shop is badly managed to the extent that there is no vegetables or fruit in stock. Preferably I would do one shop per week but am made to return for essentials again as required!
- I only ever cook for myself so I wouldn't make an effort with the food that I eat. I have no motivation to exercise. Will u be emailing results back to us?
- I prepare food which obeys the 20 minute rule: Stick it in the oven for 20 minutes and eat.
- I realise that fresh food and vegetables is what I should be eating on a daily basis but when you are juggling university and a job it can be very difficult.

- I realise the benefit of the right foods and try to eat healthily and drink plenty of water but I would have crisps or chocolate or biscuits about 5 times a week and alcohol maybe once or twice a week. I try to walk for 30mins a few times a week but am often very tired.
- I realised a while ago my lifestyle has been getting worse, I just cant find the time to improve it at the minute, It would be interesting to see the results of this survey.
- I row for the University, training between 10-12 times weekly, currently trying to lose weight to compete for NI at this years commonwealths as a lightweight.
- I sprained my Achilles tendon last week (relating to question 30) so I couldn't do any physical exercise last week.  
I take a lot of food from my parents' house and bring it to Belfast with me so it cuts my food bill.
- I studied Home Economics for A-Level and am very interested in nutrition. I generally eat a healthy balanced diet. Since coming to university I try to make quick and healthy meals, such as baked potatoes, fish and vegetables. However, many of my student friends do not eat well: they eat processed foods such as Pot Noodles and microwave meals every day.
- I take three modules this semester. Each module has two hour lectures. Two of these classes have lectures that run during the normal lunch hour. ie. 11-1 AND 12-2pm. this causes most of our class to eat sugary snacks during our five minute breaks. I would like classes to be banned during lunch hours. It upsets everyone s eating routines. Sometimes lecturers don't give breaks and this makes it even worse. No healthy snacks sold nearby to keep you going.
- I take too much salt and will read labelling to ensure products I buy have little or no salt (or sodium). Simpler labelling would be beneficial.
- I think the health promotion campaigns informing the public of hidden salt content within food is a great idea, although it would be better if the manufacturers would enlarge the type font as it can be hard to read sometimes. The 5 portions of fruit and veg per day are completely idealised, my children prefer not to bring fruit to school because of the sticky juice involved and the discolouration after exposure to the fresh air. Might be better if schools who enforce healthy eating policies would help implement them.
- I think food labels should show salt content as opposed to sodium. This would make it easier to calculate how much salt we eat.
- I think friends influence how much exercise you do too, because if they were into exercising I think it would encourage you to join them, whereas if they aren't you don't really want to go to the gym etc by yourself.
- I think I might need to watch a little more of what I eat
- I think it is important for students to realize that they can afford to eat healthily while at University and it is important for them to do so. This questionnaire will hopefully raise some awareness of this issue.
- I think it is important that there is more education at high school level for young people to learn how to cook. I do not know how to cook, but would love to be able to.
- I think it is important to raise awareness about nutritional values in food of the present day. It is also important to highlight the dangers of high salt intake and sugar intake. My sister is a diabetic and I know the implications of sugar intake for her. I feel that young people around me do not realise the severity of implications that ingredients contained in their food can cause. They may find out in later life when it is too late to counteract them.
- I think it is so important that people get used to examining food labels as they think all healthy ranges etc are automatically better, & sometimes you have to search very hard for products in our supermarkets with the best nutritional ingredients. I think we need to get back to shopping for food in markets like the rest of Europe!
- I think it s a good idea to raise these concerns regarding the food that students eat/don't eat at university, as I certainly don't eat the same quantity or quality of food that I have eaten last year when I was living at home.

- I think it's sometimes hard to live as a self sustaining student and eat healthily all the time.
- I think it should be made aware to everyone how much salt and fat is acceptable per person, male and female and how to judge the fat, sugar and salt content per 100g of foods. Most people I know have no clue how much fat or salt per 100g in foods is acceptable, nor are they aware what foods allow you to intake the daily amount without going overboard. A simple chart explaining the appropriate amount of fat, sugar and salt per 100g would be a great help.
- I think it would be a good idea to give cooking classes, especially for first year students. To enable students to eat better, from among my own friends I am aware that many have little knowledge about how to prepare fresh food etc.
- I think its great that research is being done on young peoples food intake and resources,
- I think more information should be encouraged at students to help with the lifestyle
- I think more should be done to ban unhealthy foods as they are literally killing people.
- I think my shopping habits look rather bad in your section on where I shop. Whenever possible I shop at a large supermarket, if I can get a lift there and back. Frequently I do buy from smaller shops, which does affect my diet as quite often the selection of food is dreadful. I am aware of this bad habit however!
- I think people are to focused on what food is healthy and what food s not, personally I think that as long as you don't over indulge on fatty foods and if you do a regularly amount of exercise you shouldn't need to worry about your weight
- I think people should make informed choices about the food they buy. Meals should be both healthy and convenient to prepare for students.
- I think some of the questions will create false information. For instance the question on exercise gives the impression that if you do 30 minutes of exercise a day for say 3 days you could be considered in this survey to be more fit than someone who doesn't exercise for the allotted time. There are other ways to stay healthy besides joining a gym. People should be made more aware of the simple things one can do to stay healthy.
- I think student unions should give away recipe cards as many students don't know how to cook fresh meat/vegetables or else don't know how to put them together to create a good meal. I also think it is disappointing how few greengrocers and butchers there are, they sell the best produce and it s often much cheaper than the supermarkets!
- I think students have been given a terrible stereotype as people who can't cook, don't eat properly and drink far too much... we aren't all like that!!
- I think that I exercise greatly at work and in my daily life. As a waitress I can walk up to 20miles in a shift which is why I do not feel the need to go tot he gym. I also walk everywhere as I live so centrally to the city. To go to the gym would be to achieve cosmetic results. I believe I exercise enough to keep my body healthy and functional!
- I think that it is important to keep food to a high standard, with plenty of variety. It should be fresh, BUT the price must remain as low as possible.
- I think that it is very expensive to buy the proper foods you want and need to eat. The shops do not have many promotions on and they do not realise how skint the students are
- I think that it would be really great if universities could hold classes at night teaching pupils how to cook proper meals.
- I think that students should be made more aware about what is healthy and what they are supposed to be eating. Too many students fall into the trap of eating frozen readymade meals and processed meats.
- I think that the food standards agency does a fairly good job on informing people as to the pitfalls of food matters.
- I think that the standard of food in the university area is rubbish. Over priced junk food is freely available but no effort is made to cater for people who eat healthy of have special eating needs. For example, no availability of soya milk, gluten free foods, sugar free foods,

quality and selection of fresh fruit and vegetables is poor. The chapter cafe is queens has plenty of white bread mayo filled sandwiches and chocolate bars on sale, but very little in the way of health bars, unsalted nuts, just a few soft apples and mouldy bananas.

- I think that this was a good questionnaire and it made me think about the foods that I eat more than I normally do. I need to do a bit more exercise lol.
- I think that universities should provide some basic cooking classes. Judging by myself and my housemates, relatively few people really know how to cook. Even basic cookery classes could improve the nutrition of many students.
- I think the categories are too broad, i.e less often could be once a week or once a month.
- I think the food labelling traffic light concept is a good idea but may be a little misleading in that it will code individual foods regardless of what they are eaten with or how they are cooked.
- I think the media are making more aware the importance of a healthy lifestyle and this is always encouraging. There should be practical advice for people on a low income to be able to adopt a healthier lifestyle.
- I think the uni should take an active interest in the health of their students and they should make a conscious effort to make fresh fruit and vegetables and healthy alternatives to ready made meals available to students at a reasonable price. I think it is ridiculous that the university cafes cost as much if not more than some high street cafes!
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- I think the university should have some cooking classes to enable students who have not cooked before to learn how to cook.
- I think there are too many chemicals in foods today, especially processed foods. They say that tub butter is healthier than the real butter since it contains less saturated fats, however would it not be true that the spreadable (tub) butter contains a lot more chemical additives that may have an even more detrimental effect than saturated fats.  
Also I often wonder what makes diet coke taste sweet if it has no sugar.  
Also, how are sausages made? There is a big difference between Butchers sausages and Denny sausages. What are Denny sausages made from?
- I think there is a complete disconnection nowadays between where food comes from and how we end up eating it. People don't think about cooking from fresh so much as so many products in supermarkets are pre-made e.g. mashed potatoes. People should be made more aware of how their choice of diet will affect them in later life.
- I think there should be money available to students or reduced rates for students on healthy food in uni- free fruit.
- I think there should be more provision of on-campus canteens which have a wider selection of healthier, fresh food options and not packaged salads or sandwiches
- I think there should be wider, healthier and better quality of food on Magee campus
- I think a lot of students know how to cook and would prefer to eat healthy and more nutritional meals but that they can become lazy when they live away from their parents and instead eat things that are easier to prepare even though they are usually more expensive.
- I think this is a really good survey to raise the issue of healthy eating in the 21st century. A healthy body leads to a healthy mind which all students should acquire. I do eat too many fatty foods myself, but I have been trying to reduce this recently, and this survey shall hopefully help me to eat better and get back on the training field.
- I think this is a very good questionnaire. I have always been well informed about diet and lifestyle but I think more people need to be made aware of such issues.

- I think this is a very good survey to get people aware of what food they are actually eating. I would be interested on seeing the results when completed
- I think this questionnaire is well balanced, helping to make me reflect on my amount of exercise in particular. It has also hammered home to me the inkling I had that I don't eat as healthily as last year. I know that this may not be your area of expertise, but as a smoker (of both legal and not strictly legal substances) I feel it would probably be helpful to bring in some questions on it when attempting to get students to think more about their health and lifestyle/diet.
- I think transport to shops is an issue. If you have a car you can drive to a large shop like \*\*\*\*\* where there is more variety and it is cheaper. You don't need to worry about how you would carry heavy items home. All of these are problems if you walk/get the bus so you are more likely to shop locally where there is limited choice and it is more expensive.
- I think you should be asking people to specify if they have medical conditions or allergies relating to their diets. I have Crohn's disease, which affects my appetite and restricts my diet in ways more specific than those above; certain very specific foodstuffs, certain vegetables, vitamin supplements, do not agree with me.
- I thought questions 26/27 were misleading as I only look at fat/salt content per biscuit/serving, not per 100g.
- I try to eat healthily but I do not take enough exercise
- I try to eat organic food whenever I can afford it.  
My diet suffers around the exam period, when I spend most of the day in the library at Queen s. There are few healthy options, if any, in the university and local snack bars - salads are covered in mayo and sandwiches are nearly always made with white bread and processed meat. Time is also a factor when the workload is heavy as you do not want to spend an hour making dinner, so I tend to eat more ready-made meals and fast food at these times.
- I try to use local butchers and fruit and veg stores although it works out expensive. I stopped eating convenience foods over the last year with the exception of an occasional take away. I do not eat economy food and prefer freshly cooked meals.
- I understand that I should try and eat less convenience foods, whilst I'm at uni during the day
- I use shops such as the Spar/Mace/Centra to buy my lunch more than university shops
- I used to go to gym 3-4 times a week but I have an injury now so less often
- I've only lived in Belfast for two months; prior to this I was a semi-vegetarian living in Los Angeles, so my habits have changed substantially in the recent past -- vegetarian food is slightly more expensive in the UK, as is soya, so I have taken on eating meat again and drinking cows milk periodically as well.
- I want a free course to teach students how to make healthy western food.
- I was cycling to and from University every day but am now at a placement that I feel is too far for me to cycle to in the winter. This has drastically decreased the exercise I am getting which has made me aware of how beneficial regular exercise is. I feel a lot better when I get some exercise every day and cycling is the best way of making the time in a very busy schedule!
- I wish I could be a lot more healthier and fitter if only I could find the time!!!!
- I wish I had time to do more exercise. My course is very demanding and takes up all of my free time. I used to play lots of sports before university and I would love to play more.
- I work full time during the holidays. I was unsure how to fill in this answer.
- I worked for the FSA two years ago!
- I would appreciate some advice re weight loss with the facilities I HAVE AVAILABLE
- I would eat most of my meals from uni and find the selection very bland.

- I would like healthier food to be on hand as much as junk food...and that maybe selling less junk food around university would help a lot of younger people to be healthier. I do believe in people having a right to choose what they eat but giving examples of healthy eating in schools to children as young as three and four could have a major impact as I feel it would have encouraged me to be healthier, after all a diet is a habit that will be learned from a young age. I also feel that cost can be a big factor of eating healthy whilst on the move. It is much cheaper for me to buy a plate of chips than a much healthier sandwich and as a student I know that many people will choose the cheaper option.
- I would like to eat more healthily but don't know where to find the time to prepare meals etc. facilities at the uni such as microwaves/toasters etc would stop me buying so much fast food as well.
- I would like to have better quality food with more varieties and better prices.
- I would like to point out that the University of Ulster Magee campus has little or no sports facilities. I would be a very sporty person but I find myself limited to playing Gaelic football without a proper training pitch or football/ soccer pitch of our own!! I think that this is a absolute joke and I believe this problem should be rectified for students who attend this university in the future so as to attend to their sporting need which mine have not. Thank you and I hope you please listen to what I have said and pass the word on to the proper authorities. Thank you
- I would like to see better food labelling, e.g. something might say it is low in fat but really it is much higher in sugar to compensate for lower fat levels but this is not mentioned on the label. More information for consumers regarding what is healthy and what's not.
- I would like to see healthier options available at my university canteen. Currently I feel that the salads and health options are not as fresh and as pleasing as they could be. Also as I am on teaching practice at the minute I am witnessing the effects of sugary, fatty lunches in class after lunch. My students are unable to concentrate and settle. I would like to see a compulsory change made in terms of school food.
- I would like to be made aware of how much sugar/salt is acceptable in a certain product.
- I would love to see a farmer s market set up somewhere accessible to students, or receive information about when markets take place and how best to access them.
- I would often check calories and fat content in food but I would never check salt content despite recent advertisements on TV warning us to regulate our salt intake.
- I would use sport facilities if I would have enough money. I have got a low scholarship and to much work to get a part-time job.
- Ideally I would like to buy nothing but organic food, I find myself however buying instead what I can afford.
- If I had the time and more money I would eat more fresh vegetable and spend more time exercising.
- I'm almost sure than most students here eat meals that are processed with lots of added sugar, salt and other chemicals simply for convenience, and maybe because they just don't know how to cook! Some don't understand that it is cheaper to buy fresh ingredients and prepare your own meals that you know exactly what you are adding to it! They would feel much better if they did this!
- I'm living in Germany at the minute so all my answers are based on my lifestyle here.
- In regard to working I have 3 part-time jobs
- In relation to salt I feel this issue has been addressed recently but however there still is confusion over the term of salt and sodium and further emphasises of the effects salt is having on our body could be highlighted further.
- In relation to the cost of food it is much cheaper to buy frozen foods rather than fresh ingredients. Also shopping for one can be frustrating as package sizes of products such as bread or meats are much to big for one individual and often expire their best before date



before it can all be used, a waste, especially as most students have only basic freezer facilities and so very limited space. A waste of money and food.

- In would like to cook from scratch every day, however, I find it quite difficult to get access to fresh meat, fish and vegetables in the convenience shops on the way home from University
- Interesting survey would have liked to get feedback on my answers
- It can be really frustrating trying to buy fresh fruit & veg from supermarkets as it tends not to keep very well & there aren't any greengrocers near to me (I don't drive)
- It does make you think a bit more about what living healthily, however I think some of the questions are a bit vague - it looks like I never exercise but my weekly dancing class doesn't really fit the categories! I think it s important that the university perhaps promotes more healthy eating - a lot of the hot food on offer is fairly unhealthy but it s good to have something warm during the day especially in Winter!
- It does not really ask how much junk food you eat, for example, some people would eat more sweets and crisps in a day than others, but this questionnaire does not ask about any of this.
- It has made me realise that I need to eat more fruit and exercise more. I just find it hard to get time to do a more substantial shop where I can get fresh food and exercise as my course is quite demanding.
- It has made me realise that I need to sort out my food habits, I would have a take away out of laziness and not wanting to cook.
- It is a good questionnaire, I would say. I think there should be a question relating to fibre intake, and a question relating to iron and protein intake. Because I am a vegetarian, I sometimes worry that I am not getting enough of this stuff in my diet. I am not sure what the acceptable levels of it are.  
Anyway, good luck with compiling stats- I hope they will prove useful to people (especially in dampening people s appetite for meat, with any luck. NB I am not a vegetarian for health reasons).
- It is difficult for someone, especially a student, on a low budget to be able to afford to have a proper fitness regime with membership of a gym or sports centre.
- It is difficult to maintain a filling, healthy diet between 2 sites (uni and home) due to lack of time and variety
- It is hard to eat healthy when being a student.
- It is not that I don't know what is healthy/unhealthy it is that I do not have the time/money/motivation to buy fresh fruit and veg every three days and it doesn't last much longer. In addition, cool storage is limited to half a shelf of refrigerator.
- It is too expensive to eat healthy, take-aways are cheaper than fruit, veg, proper meals etc
- It is very difficult as a student to eat healthily. At university there is a very small range of healthy options to choose from, in the shops and canteens. I would also love to be able to eat more organic foods, however even in large supermarkets these products are expensive and there is often not much choice. Being a student I really have to budget my money and that sometimes means choosing a less healthy option for the sake of saving money, which I feel is unfair.
- It is very difficult buying fresh food snack wise etc for just one person, I easily become deterred for buying fresh due to spoilage when it is not used within a certain time. If I lived beside a green groceries, I could buy fresh every day. But it is not practical where I live. I feel guilty cuz I should eat well considering its final yr.  
I find junk food addictive. This is detrimental.
- It is very difficult to find really healthy and tasty food here without any artificial additives.
- It reminded me that I need to start eating more healthily
- It's a pile of \*\*\*\*\*.

- It's good to remind myself that whether I live a healthy life or not. Thanks!
- It's hard to cook healthy food when you've got so much going on in uni. My course is quite difficult and takes up a hell of a lot of time, I would love to still be eating like I did when I lived at home, but its hard to do when your living in a student house and nobody does the damn dishes! Sorry :s
- It's morning time. I feel sick. I haven t had any breakfast. No matter how much I sleep I always feel tired. I m hungry. I feel sad a lot of the time. Sometime I just feel that I need a nice warm home made dinner like mum makes it or a big HUG. both would be good.
- It seems that most of the students I know don't eat healthily simply because they can't afford to. Maybe the universities should think about this and find a way to help students out - after all, a healthy diet increases ability to learn!
- It sounds to be a very interesting research. I hope the result would help the young people to have a more healthy diet. Good luck
- It was a really good, well thought out questionnaire.
- It was good, made me think about exactly what I eat and how much exercise I do.
- It was interesting to complete
- It would be good if students could be given money specifically for food. Loans have to cover books, fees, rent, bills and sometimes food has to come last. This isn't a good situation because some students would like to be healthy and don't like chippies/beans everyday.
- It would be great t see an increase in the variety of fresh foods sold in Derry particularly Japanese and other Asian foods.
- It would be interesting to find out the results of the survey, when it is complete.
- It's making me hungry
- I've noticed billboards about salt levels in food recently which has made me consider my salt intake, cos I don't fancy getting a heart attack just yet! lol and I try and think about the foods I eat before training and matches to increase my energy levels etc, but only for these reasons I probably wouldn't care much about my diet at all.
- Just because people live at their parents home doesn't mean they necessarily don't cook for themselves, ask everyone how they prepare food etc
- Just to ask for halal food for Muslims in QUB at a reasonable price
- Last year I feel I did not eat very healthily, this year I am trying to change this. I make a conscious effort to buy more fruit and vegetables, buy organic products were possible and steer clear of too many additives and pre-packed food.
- Last year I would have exercised a lot more but I have found that the pressures of final year means I don't get as much time to go to the gym and pool. Also, I moved home this year having previously lived in rented student accommodation and have found that it is much easier to have a healthy diet.
- Levels of exercise and foods that I eat quite often depend greatly on project and assignment deadlines. If I have an assignment due in, it means I have less time to go to the gym and cook decent meals, whereas when I have the time I prefer to cook decent healthy meals and will go to the gym 4-5 times a week.
- Living in a house with all my mates we really wouldn't cook for each other but if it were a mixed sex house I know I would cook alot more.
- Made me realise how little I actually know about what I eat everyday!
- Made me realise how unhealthy my lifestyle is at the minute.
- Made me realise I have awful eating patterns!!!
- Made me think a bit more about just how I eat and how it may be having a detrimental effect on my body, especially the frequent occasions that I consume alcohol, sometimes excessive amounts. I now realise that I should do more with my lifestyle now to help my body in

future years to come.

I enjoyed filling in the questionnaire and felt it worthwhile.

- Main reason for not cooking is lack of time then when I do cook it usually burns
- Many students don't eat as they spend it on drink instead!!!
- Maximum of 6g of salt a day!
- Maybe a question rating the level of nutrition in the home (parents awareness etc.) could help indicate present (subjective) opinion of the person answering the survey?
- Missed questions about organic stuff... very important!
- More about healthy diets and exercise needs to be taught to children at a younger age.
- More fresh fruit available on campus, possibly a smoothie bar. It's a cool way to get younger people to take more fruit. Might also stop the intake of alcohol at least a little bit.
- More information I feel needs to be addressed to the public about the contents of ready-made foods from supermarkets as well as convenience foods bought for children as lunches. Parents need to be aware of the lack of nutritional content and amount of salt, fat and sugar.
- More information on what is actually in your food with easy to read labels. The traffic light system is a good idea for me.
- More questions should be asked about exercise in student life, possibly extended from only in the last week.
- More time should be spent at secondary school teaching basic cooking skills so as to allow students to prepare their own meals at university.
- Most knowledge of food comes from home and Home Economics. It should be an essential subject for all students at primary and secondary until GCSE.
- Most of my exercise comes from walking to and from university, going to shops, up and down stairs etc rather than in the gym.
- My course is too time consuming to take the time out to prepare fresh food for dinner, if I had more time I would prefer to do it.
- My diet changes constantly, so its hard to reflect this in a survey
- My eating habits are much the same now as last year, but much better than two years ago, when I led a very unhealthy lifestyle, I don't have much money now and have split from my partner.
- My eating habits have changed a lot in the past year as I found out I was pregnant last January so started eating anything I wanted and didn't worry about my weight, although I did try to have plenty of fruit and vegetables for the baby's sake. I eat slightly less healthily now than I did last year but drink a lot less alcohol.
- My exercise this year is far less than last year simply because I am in my final year of study and unlike previous years I am travelling from Ballymena to Belfast for Uni - therefore I have far less time to be attending classes such as aerobics as I have done previously.
- My family struggles with weight loss, but I try to maintain an average level neither going too light or too heavy because the former often leads to the latter.if it helps, I am 5ft0 and 8 stone.
- My food patterns change a lot from week to week some weeks I will prepare meals from scratch but most of the time I don't have time with studying- course is heavy
- My girlfriend got very bored and left me during my completion of this form
- My lack of exercise and eating convenience food is mostly due to lack of time. I m always tired or have work I should be doing.
- My lifestyle in Belfast depends on that I am international student. I am going to study here for six months. I get money each month from the student exchange organisation (Erasmus). It is not big amount of money. I spend almost all this amount of money for accommodation therefore I have to scrape on food.
- My lifestyle in terms of health has greatly deteriorated as a student, it would be great if there was a moderately priced health take-away in the student area, like there are in some bigger

cities of the UK; where you can buy food similar to take-aways but they don't fry the food, they have salads etc, frozen yoghurt instead of ice-cream etc.

- My lifestyle, regarding the foods I eat, is a healthy one. But, the benefits of this are undone by the fact that I don't take regular exercise (and, I also smoke).
- My mum buys most of my food in Supermarkets at weekend when doing the family shop so I simply bring up what I need after the weekend. I only buy food from shops in emergency or if I want some sweets!
- My poor diet is really because the nearest supermarket to my house is well over two miles away. The food provided by the University in the canteen in the students union is expensive and the portions are small. There are a number of outlets which provide greater portions for a smaller price. The University does not provide drinking fountains so there is the extra expense of buying bottles of water. If drinking fountains were provided less people would be drinking Coke with their meals!
- Need more awareness on appropriate levels of fat, sugar, salt etc levels in food
- Need to have more options relating to chicken/turkey. I don't eat any red meat but I eat white.
- No category for- follow diet for sport, eg hi carbs or hi protein.
- No issues, although I m not sure if my form should be included as I am a mature and have been lucky enough to work with some fabulous chefs therefore I have a lot of food information that a lot of people do not have access too
- No issues, but it made me hungry :0)
- No mention of eating disorders-foolish as they are extremely prevalent especially in the age group 18-22. Would have been useful to determine the frequency of male sufferers as this is a confidential survey and little is known about numbers of male sufferers as they are too proud to admit to having an eating disorder.
- No time to eat due to postgrad work and part time work, and gym. Is difficult to eat a balanced diet when spending a majority of the day in uni, only offers chips, or sandwiches, get bored with that and would miss meals as a result...need more options for salads etc
- None- all v. good
- None questionnaire very broad
- Not enough students know how to cook fresh vegetables so that they are still tasty. Also from my experience in halls, students don't know how to cook without frying everything unless it's a ready meal. A free booklet on QUICK and EASY to make healthy meals should be made available to 1st year students. It should be of good quality so that they can use it through the rest of their university lives and they do not just chuck it out when they are moving.
- Not sure how representative of student I am, being a lone adult, but there you go.
- Nothing on the cleaning of kitchens, shops and supermarkets, which are pretty dirty over here.

The FSA should be more focused on hygiene than on the actual intake of food i.e. the advertising over uncooked burgers over the bbq was ridiculous: I have been eating steak tartare since I have teeth and never got sick simply because my Mum's kitchen is spotless, unlike the butchers in Northern Ireland and don't get me started with the quality of fish: langoustine are sold DEAD over here when they should be sold alive...

The FSA should close all these dangerous places and focus on improving the general hygiene. Nothing to do with being a vegan or not. For example, a good thing would be to close \*\*\*\*\*, I don't know which kind of rats they use for their kebabs, but pretty sure, it is not free range (a good kebab, should be made with mildly cooked spiced leg of lamb). Close, the chippy where they fry chips and fish in the same dark vegetable oil, close the Mace with their disgusting freezers and fridges, close the butchers where the personnel use gloves to protect themselves from touching the meat and the coins and so on.

- Now that I am in final year I find I cannot go out drinking as much and have really cut down. Also at the end of every semester I often run completely out of money and eat very little.
  - Nutritional content information on food labels can be very deceiving and hard to understand
  - Nutritional labels should be easier to understand by the public and the hidden ingredients such as Flavourings and additives should be explained more thoroughly.
  - One of the reasons I do not use my University s canteen more often is the fact that the prices are simply too dear. As I live about 5 minutes away it is more cost effective to eat at home at lunch time. However, if prices were lower and acceptable I feel I would go there more often.
  - Only knew about salt intake due to the 6g a day billboards. Feel there is too much emphasis on salt intake recently, would be useful to know how much sugar etc is acceptable too.
  - Organic produce should be one of the stated options for why people choose a certain food item in the shop
  - Our generation has become so lazy. Very few people bother to eat properly or exercise regularly. Growing up now is very stressful and there are so many expectations on us compared to past generations. Therefore most people can't be bothered preparing meals from scratch or just don't have the time.
  - Overall very good an insight to me.
  - People including myself don't have time and enough knowledge to look at the nutritional information on the packaging of such food products, I believe that if the person has enough common sense, they should know what the food contains and the levels of these and whether or not it is bad for them.
  - People need more education on food with regards to healthier options and what to look for on nutritional information labels.
  - People should be taught to cook and encouraged to cook. This country has a culture of ready-made food and as far as I can see most women cannot make even simple dishes, moreover they reject cooking. People should use more seasoning (I don't mean salt): British food is completely tasteless. No wonder kids prefer ready made and fast food, because those at least tasty.
  - Perhaps questions could have been asked to assess whether young people are aware of the health risks associated with a diet high in fat, sugar and salt. This should indicate the level of advertisement required to educate people into how their eating patterns can affect their health.
  - Places to eat around student areas, especially in the union are not of good quality and over priced
  - Prior to attending university my diet, eating habits and lifestyle in general was exceptionally healthy. It is only since moving out of my parents' house that these things have deteriorated. Whilst I am always ensured of healthy meals prepared from fresh ingredients when I come home to my parents house, I only manage to visit every couple of weeks and for a mere 2 days.  
Furthermore, I do not partake in any sports-orientated activities, and when at university during the week my exercise is comprised solely of walking everywhere as I do not take public transport and cannot drive. (In addition, having a blast on the dancefloor for several hours could somewhat be considered here!)
- Finally, despite my lack of exercise and my appallingly inadequate diet I am by no means over-weight, nor does my weight fluctuate. I am also very well-educated about the issues addressed in this questionnaire.
- Provide some both inexpensive, fast, delicious and health recipes for our students.
  - Purchasing, cooking and eating good healthy and environmentally sound food is an important pastime and a lot of importance is placed on shopping for ethical goods. We always choose organic, fair trade and free range food produced locally and in season and

shop locally to support local businesses. Although we do shop in supermarkets we try to keep this to a minimum and it's usually for the quality and cheap wines!

Organic standards are not as important to me as knowing the food is produced locally and with respect for the environment/workers. Why fly plastic wrapped organic peas across the world, it doesn't make any sense.

- Q25-27. Depending on which way you interpret the question - I realise these foods would contain approximately these values but I believe they are a lot. Not that I believe these values are high for the said products.
- Question 31 failed to acknowledge those people that would do private exercises like stretches, push-ups, sit-ups, etc. You don't necessarily need equipment to exercise.
- Questionnaire made me think about what I actually did buy and make!!
- Questions asked about nutrition would have made the questionnaire much better in my opinion.
- Quick and easy
- Raising some interesting points especially regarding salt content in food as many people are unaware including myself as to what is acceptable or unacceptable when it comes to salt consumption. We take food that we do not add salt to as without salt when often they are not.
- Ready made or convenience foods are quicker to make and cook than preparing a meal from raw ingredients and therefore are more appealing although going home at the weekend for a proper dinner is great!
- Really made me think about my eating / drinking habits!
- Recently our house has got into a habit of eating pizza s from \*\*\*\*\* due to their convenience i.e. just cook in oven for ten minutes. We know this is very unhealthy especially when eaten on a regular basis, but it's often difficult to find time to cook properly especially if you end up just cooking for yourself. The other common food we eat would be pasta with mince and garlic bread.
- Regarding exercise I don't use the gym or other facilities but I walk briskly for at least one hour each day.
- Regarding getting fresh fruit and vegetables in the stores near me I usually find what I am looking for after a while of looking but the prices are so expensive I cannot afford them and so have to make do without them sometimes. The amount of money I have has a great bearing on what I can afford and sometimes it is difficult to eat healthy although I do eat around 8-9 portions of fresh fruit and veg daily.
- Regardless what it says on a food packet it makes no sense to the everyday folk not au-fait with such.
- Routine tends to bring healthier eating/living about; because every day of the week varies on lecture times etc it s really hard to get into a routine in order to eg eat breakfast. I eat dinner with my partner every night -> We eat healthy , good food made from raw ingredients and with salad every night because that is our routine that my Uni work doesn't interfere with. Education is unhealthy! :-)
- Send me free food
- Should include a part that asking the eating habit of snacks or junk food.
- Shows me it might be good to go more often to the gym- and eat more meat and fish.
- Since I am new for NI feeding habit, some questions are difficult even to choice. So in your questionnaire please where are you from? and some food related questions.
- Some interesting questions
- Some of my answers are not quite right due to the fact that I am physically disabled & a fulltime electric wheelchair user. Sadly still fighting for assistance from Social Services - no family support available.
- Some of the multiple choice answers have too much of a leap from one to the other!!!

- Some of the questions were aimed undergraduate students or students sharing accommodation at university. I own my own home and the meals I cook are for my partner and myself; some of the questions were not directed at me. It would have been good to know what the questionnaire was actually for.
- Some of your questions didn't provide appropriate answers eg which of the following describes your diet. Didn't question energy or carbohydrate levels on food labels or the presence of additives or preservatives.
- Some options to answer questions very general.
- Sometimes I am really shocked by the number of people I know at university who can't cook a proper healthy meal. I was always taught at home by helping out with the cooking, but I guess a lot of young people don't have this opportunity.
- Sometimes it is hard to take the time to cook a proper meal and to sit down and enjoy it, due to academic and other work commitments.
- Sport - I don't go to the gym, but cycle to and from work every day.
- Sports facilities are expensive and the university suite (although cheaper) is not big enough
- Students are not generally aware of the amount of salt in the ready-made meals!
- Students are oblivious to the ill effects of snacking on 2 packets of crisps a day, cans of coke, the sugar content in so called fruit juices etc. They are unaware of the benefits of eating healthily and moderate fresh air and exercise. It is shocking also the number of students who don't know how to cook or even know the various types of food available!!
- Students cannot afford to eat and don't have the time to prepare meals.
- Students need more information in the form of pamphlets etc that tell us step by step how to cook a quick meal from scratch, which involves ingredients that are simple and easy to obtain eg stir fry etc.
- Students should be encouraged to cook more because it is cheaper and healthier than eating processed meals
- Thank you
- Thank you for this questionnaire
- That one about comparing to last year was difficult to answer accurately.
- The amount of exercise and quality of my diet have varied considerably from year to year according to workload, with my year out on placement being the healthiest as I had most free time. I'm fairly hopeful then about improving my health and lifestyle when I finish university. Recently I've become interested in where food comes from, so that's the label I look at in the supermarket
- The assessment of a fairly healthy lifestyle is a balance between the factors mentioned previously in the survey.
- The canteens in the university serve extremely greasy, even unhealthy to look at meals- this is worrying.
- The crucial factor for myself for my lack of healthy diet is due to the fact that my student loan does not provide me with enough to pay rent and fees and then eat. I do not drink alcohol at uni and the accommodation I live in is university provided. Therefore until there is some way to alleviate this situation I cannot afford to buy anything but basic carbohydrate foods as fruit and veg is so expensive. Meat is a luxury I cannot afford. I apologise for this rant however it's nearly December and having run out of money two weeks ago I am getting rather hungry having lost 1/2 a stone in two weeks. I am rather concerned by the whole mentality behind being forced to live a lifestyle I know is damaging my health. I have been raised well and am perfectly competent and enjoy cooking however at this stage it just isn't possible.  
Hope this has been of some help.
- The fact that the university canteen doesn't serve a wide variety of food or very healthy food is an important factor in what many students eat.

- The facts about healthy eating are known by most people but they mostly eat convenience foods as there are not enough time in the day.
- The food at university is a rip off. It's much too expensive to eat in uni. It's mad - we are only students after all!!
- The food in college canteen is \*\*\*\*!
- The food served in the QUB canteen is not very healthy - very greasy. The chaplaincies provide cheap food but it is very unhealthy - once at the \*\*\*\*\* the only vegetables on offer were peas! There should be a nicer place to eat at QUB for students who bring packed lunches - the only places are the little rooms in the library and they have no atmosphere. There aren't many shops in Belfast that sell decent cooking equipment at reasonable prices - it's either cheap junk at supermarkets, or pricey specialty shops.
- The food served in university canteens is not varied enough - it's all soup and sandwiches - if you want a proper meal that isn't fast food you have to pay bar prices which can be a bit expensive in Belfast. I travelled for a year and lived off fast food but since I've been in Spain for my year out I've been eating a lot more healthily
- The food that is bad for always tastes so good but more importantly it is much cheaper for me to buy a bag of chips than a sandwich, which could be twice the price and not satisfy my appetite.
- The healthiest foods aren't always the cheapest
- The issues related in this questionnaire made me realise how unhealthy I actually am, going to try to be more healthy
- The price of food in Belfast is too high in comparison to at home (Mid-Ulster), especially with the basics foods such as milk, bread (although usually on offer), cheese and fruit.
- The questions about percentage of salt and sugar tricky how do you answer that when you still don't get the point of weight per 100gm pre-prepared food is never as healthy as home cooked there is always more than you would put in for your own taste more salt or sugar some biscuits have a lot of bicard not necessary
- The reason I think my diet is so unhealthy is mostly because I am always busy and don't have time to prepare meals. Also I prefer to spend my money on other things rather than food therefore I go through the cupboards at home for food for the week.
- The reason most students don't eat healthily is because they just cannot afford to. If they get a job they are not going to spend the money on buying fresh food to prepare because they do not have enough time after studying and working all day. So they are more likely to eat from a take-away. We should receive grants from the government so we can concentrate on our studying fully.
- the stress involved in final year study has a significant, detrimental effect on self care when combined with the responsibilities of caring for a family.
- The university does not provide enough free gym sessions per year for students.
- There are no proper facilities to eat around the Stranmillis area in QUB where many students study. Cafes are very expensive and there are no proper areas to sit within the University if you bring your own lunch. I consider this very poor as every other University/educational establishment I have studied in has always had an abundance of subsidised eateries/areas to eat your own packed lunch. Means that I often spend more than I wish on coffee breaks/lunches.
- There are not enough healthy alternative for people in Belfast in general
- There is a lack of fresh fruit, meat and vegetables available in the university area. Any shops which sell these items are poor quality and expensive.
- There is a lack of good fresh food available in the university at a reasonable price. But \*\*\*\*\* is 10 minutes from Holyland.
- There is a very little variety of vegetables.



- There is little access around the university area for fresh fish. That is the main reason why I have cut down my fish intake.
- There is not enough healthy food offered on the campus of my University - Magee. Much of the food hot provided in the canteen is unhealthy, and the variety is not always good. The only really healthy option is cold salad which isn't great in Winter! I think there should be healthier foods put into vending machines too, so the option is available to students, and they are confronted with a choice when they pick a snack which they would normally eat thoughtlessly.
- There isn't a wide selection of healthy food available in the university canteen
- There needs to be more healthy options available in vending machines, snack bars and other food outlets within the Uni!
- There should be more better value for money shops in the student areas!!
- There should be more control over what goes into our food and the public should be made more aware of what goes into it.
- There should be student discount on healthy food!
- There were a few questions where the most accurate answer I could give was not an option and there was no other section. I know it s hard to design questionnaires but there you go, that s my comment.  
I may be interested in taking part in further studies but can't guarantee being around to participate.
- Think there is a lack of information designed and promoted for students - independent living!
- This is an important area of student welfare. It is presumed that young people arriving at university have all the basic skills and knowledge to cook and feed themselves. I wonder...with the increase in two working parents, single working parent or low income family...who passes on the skills of family cooking . It is economic to prepare meals daily using fresh ingredients but I would suspect cooking ready-made meals is the order of the day. High/sugar/fat/salt and low skills & nutrition.
- This questionnaire has made me think about the way I eat and how I need to improve my lifestyle.
- This survey is a good idea. Don't know too many people at uni who eat as healthily as they really should. I don't have a microwave at my parental home and never have done so I wouldn't ever use the one available in my student house. Raw vegetables taste just as good as cooked one and id eat them a lot. If you want student to eat more healthily perhaps you should make eating plans, ideas for preparing cheap, healthy meals more readily available.
- This was a very interesting questionnaire by answering the questions I realise that I have a very unhealthy diet and that I have no time to cook a healthy meal or fit exercise into my daily regime.
- This was quite a good survey as it covered a wide range of issues including social knowledge that should be known but may not be.
- Time is a major factor in what I eat - usually resulting in lots of ready meals, tinned soups etc. If I make a sandwich, it'll be made from pre-packaged chicken and pre-packaged stuffing, for example.
- Time to prepare food is a big factor of what we eat. Usually sandwiches are handy to grab at lunch time which are quite healthy but ready made meals should not substitute our main meals.
- Timetables, from both school and work, cost and general lifestyle all make it hard to eat proper meals at regular times. Also, butchers and fresh fruit/veg shops are not very common in student areas in Belfast.
- To raise awareness about healthy eating, a Get Cooking Campaign could help, giving out free advice and leaflets, maybe even cookbooks. A housemate signed up to a new bank

account recently and received a free cookbook, which has led to more fights over kitchen space and less time in the chippy

- Too long
- Too many personal questions for a study on eating habits!
- Too many questions
- U should ask if people ever had a eating disorder
- University campus doesn't supply enough veg. sandwich s
- Until very recently I was a full vegetarian, that is obviously why I eat more meat now than I did before and I would use the university gym if it wasn't so expensive
- Up until I started my university course, I would have walked on average 5 miles per day, and would not have the same access to confectionary shops. I have found that because this course is full time I have no time for exercise other than that which happens as a consequence of where I park the car. I am a mother of three, so try to cook proper meals, only using convenience meals when I am home late in the day and time is pressing. I have gained about 2 stone since starting uni and am constantly on a diet which restarts each day. I feel under pressure all the time and I think this adds to overeating. I don't particularly like fresh fruit, but find there is too much sugar to fruit juice. I could write a book about healthy lifestyles and yet find it impossible to maintain one myself. My youngest child is also overweight, something he is becoming more aware of as he progresses through school. He also has a low will-power level when it comes to chocolate.
- Useful as makes you think about what you eat.
- Usually I tend 2 eat quite well, but since starting uni I shop mainly for foods that wont go out of date within a week or so. Therefore I don't eat much fruit or vegetables.
- V good
- Very detailed questionnaire can't wait to see the results!
- Very interesting should be more of these done as it has shown me how little exercise I do.
- Very interesting
- Very useful.
- Very worthwhile.
- We should be making a bigger issue of health eating habits by providing public service announcements and educational information. As well, we could benefit from more choice of healthy low fat low cholesterol alternatives in the supermarkets as well as some sort of standardisation of what low-fat and reduced fat mean on labels
- Well, think it s a good idea to have such a survey. Hope you have lots of responses. Hope universities (and possibly food regulators) could give students more simple and practical advice (or recipes), because from my experience a lot of us are clearly not eating healthily. Maybe organise a fun cooking course or something would people s appetite for healthy living? Also, another topical issue is the university should promote healthier food in its own canteens – they've got fairtrade coffee, so that s a start I suppose...
- Were there none about food?
- What is the relevance of asking what course I do or if I have a job or not?
- What will this be used for?
- When I first became a student, I didn't spend much time preparing meals for myself, however over the last few years I've become more accustomed to cooking for myself and generally put a lot of consideration into what I eat and how healthy it is - yet as a student I sometimes don't have the luxury of purchasing healthier food as it is always more expensive than convenience food.
- When I think of the eating habits of most people, and especially children, I get depressed. The onus is on the individual to make healthy decisions, yet walk into any supermarket or shop and it sells mostly highly-processed foods: sweets, crisps, soft drinks, ready meals, and lots and lots of meat. Even vegetables are stripped off their nutritional content by being

washed, ready peeled, sliced, diced, chopped, etc.

This already huge problem is made worse by the wide scale wastage of food, and of course, the effects on the environment with the many, many plastic bags used (shoppers could take a rucksack or two, like I do) and the largely unnecessary packaging of everything.

Corporations and the supermarkets need to take responsibility...

- When I was an undergraduate student my eating habits were very different- at one point I only had Two pounds to last me for 10 days worth of food and had to live on plain rice & pasta! I also would have eaten convenience and take-away food several times a week while at uni.
- When I'm feeling sad I eat Mr Kipling's lemon slices
- When studying full-time and working part time I find it difficult to shop for fresh produce that I would use before it goes rotten. It is also difficult to find the energy to exercise regularly.
- When you are studying, working and looking after a family it is almost impossible to eat healthily, do exercise and refrain from having a drink to either give you a lift or relax you, anyway everything you eat nowadays is bad for you just wait until we get bird flu our house will starve to death as chicken is our staple diet bye
- Where can I get like a guide on what s good to eat and what s not. And how to cook this on the cheap?
- Which shops have the best offer for healthier foods?
- Why are you doing it? You know students heat unhealthily
- Why do the British export so much \*\*\*\*\* into Ireland when we have loads of nice potatoes and peas here?
- Why do you think students read nutritional labels? Also, why is there no option on the alcohol intake for once a week? Not every student binges.
- Why isn't the food we eat more regulated? There s too many added chemicals like E numbers, salt, and other nasty ingredients like hydrogenated vegetable oils or fats. Are food does not require these, and could be the cause of diseases like cancer.
- Will We Receive Some Results And/Or Feedback From The Questionnaire?
- With studying part time and working full time I am usually going to the university directly from work and on those days it is convenience food that matters i.e. sausage rolls etc because by the time I get home its too late to cook a meal and this happen about two nights of the week.
- Working with younger people, I find that few have learnt home economics at school or home. It helped me to manage when first living alone - in cooking and budgeting. It also pays to be adventurous with food.
- Would be helpful if the questionnaire contained other sports activities as I am a member of a privately run sports club that is not a gym. And I would be curious if yoga would be considered within the exercise column as it is designed not to raise heart rate etc as it is a form of meditation
- Would be nice if there were more healthy options ready made at an affordable price. Usually the healthier the food, the more expensive it is, and with lack of time as a single parent student, its too tempting to just go for the more convenient food at a lower cost!
- Would it be possible to view the results of the questionnaires when they have been analysed
- Would there be any chance of getting feedback from the questionnaire as to how healthy /unhealthy our lifestyles are
- You could ask about soya related product which have a lot of health benefits and are a good substitute for dairy products for those who can't eat them.
- You could have included questions about organic produce.
- You did not mention anything about smoking

- You do not take into consideration those who have lived in Belfast for some of the time they were studying and at home for some of the time. This may reflect eating habits.
- You have to ask some questions regarding the religious background and cultural issues contributing to the diet. And other factors such as stress, studying, watching TV ...etc. to explore the effect either on quantity or quality of the food being eaten.
- You looked at most aspects of food and life style, i.e. fat, salt and sugar in food and the amount of exercise done. Areas of actual cooking i.e. frying, boiling, grill etc and types of drinks i.e. fizzy drinks and different types of alcohol were only dealt with lightly.
- You need to have a section for students on placement, which I am.

## APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE

### Student Food Survey

The Food Standards Agency is interested in talking to students about a number of issues related to food. We need your co-operation and would be grateful if you would answer the questions below. Thank you for your support and please be assured that all the information you provide is confidential.

All the questions relate to where you usually live during term time.

*Firstly, we'd like to ask you about where you live and your responsibility for food shopping.*

**Q1: Do you live ...**

With your parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	
With your partner	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	
With your partner and children	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<b>Go to Q19</b>
With your children	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	
In catered university accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	
In self-catering university accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	6	
In a private house with other students	<input type="checkbox"/>	7	
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	8	

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**Q2: Do you usually prepare and eat food with a group of people, or do you prepare and eat food individually?**

Prepare and eat food as part of a group  1      Prepare and eat food individually  2

**Q3: Which of the following do you have access to in your accommodation?  
Please tick all that apply.**

Hob/Cooking rings	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Oven	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Grill	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Fridge	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Freezer	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Microwave	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Storage facilities (eg food cupboards)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Cooking equipment (eg saucepans, knives)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1

*Now we'd like to ask you some questions about shopping for food.*

**Q4: On average, how much would you spend on food per week? This includes food that you buy to cook as well as eating out.**

Less than £20 per week	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
£20-29 per week	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
£30-£39 per week	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
£40-£49 per week	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
£50 per week or more	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
I don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>	6

**Q5: When you are buying food, which 3 of the following factors do you consider most? Please tick 3 factors only**

Quality or freshness of the food	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Habit or routine	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Price of the food	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
How much money I have	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
The availability of the food in the shops I go to	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Taste	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Convenience in preparation	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Foods I know how to cook/prepare	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Someone else decides on most of the food I eat	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1

---

**Q6: How often do you usually buy groceries?**

Every day	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Every 2-3 days	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
About once a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Once a month	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Less often	<input type="checkbox"/>	5

**Q7: Where do you buy most of your groceries?**

On the internet	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<b>Go to Q10</b>
Supermarkets	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	
Local shops (eg Spar, Mace, garages)	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	
Markets	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	

---

**Thinking about where you buy most of your groceries ...**

**Q8: How far is it from where you live?**

Less than 1 mile	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
1-2 miles	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
3-4 miles	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
More than 4 miles	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

---

**Q9: How do you usually get your groceries home?**

- On the bus  1
  - By bicycle  2
  - I drive  3
  - Someone else gives me a lift  4
  - I walk  5
  - The groceries are delivered  6
  - Other (please specify)  7
- 

**Q10: Do you shop there for any of these reasons? Please tick all that apply.**

- It's easy to get to  1
  - Value for money – it's cheaper to shop there  1
  - There is a good choice of food  1
  - The quality of the food is good  1
  - Other (please specify)  1
- 

**Q11: How many shops selling a variety of groceries could you walk to in less than 15 minutes from where you live?**

If none, please go to Q13

**Q12: How do you rate the shops selling groceries within 15 minutes walk of where you live, in terms of ...**

**Please tick one box in each row.**

	Very good	Good	Neither good nor bad	Bad	Very bad
Quality of food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choice of food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Price of food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q13: In general, how much do you usually like or dislike shopping for food?**

- I really like food shopping  1
- I like food shopping  2
- I neither like nor dislike food shopping  3
- I dislike food shopping  4
- I really dislike food shopping  5

**Q14: Please indicate how often the following happens to you.**

**Please tick one box in each row.**

	Every day	4-6 days per week	1-3 days per week	Once every 2 weeks	One a month or less	Never
You do not have enough food to eat because you can't get to a grocery shop?						
You do not have a main meal and you get through the day by just having a snack or a drink when you feel like it?						
You worry that your food will run out because you do not have enough money to buy more?						

**The next section looks at cooking.**

**Q15: How much do you like or dislike cooking?**

- I really like cooking  1
- I like cooking  2
- I neither like nor dislike cooking  3
- I dislike cooking  4
- I really dislike cooking  5

**Q16: On average, how often do you prepare or cook your main meal of the day from fresh or raw ingredients?**

- Once a day  1 **Go to Q18**
- 2-3 times per week  2
- About once per week  3
- 2-3 times per month  4 **Go to Q17**
- About once a month  5
- Less often  6

**Q17: Why do you not cook a main meal every day?**

**Please tick all that apply.**

- I don't know how to cook at all  1 **Go to Q19**
- I don't know how to cook a variety of foods or meals  1
- Someone else usually cooks for me  1
- I don't enjoy cooking  1
- I usually eat pre-packed/convenience foods  1
- I can't afford it  1
- Lack of cooking facilities  1 **Go to Q18**
- Lack of storage facilities  1
- I usually eat take-away food  1
- Lack of time  1
- Other (please specify)  1



**Q18: Where did you learn to cook?**

**Please tick all that apply.**

- |                        |                          |   |
|------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| At school              | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| At home                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Other (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
- 

**Q19: Which of the following describes you?**

**Please tick all that apply.**

- |                                                                                     |                          |   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| I am a vegan (I don't eat meat, fish, dairy or other products derived from animals) | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| I am completely vegetarian                                                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| I am mainly vegetarian – I eat fish but not meat                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| I eat meat                                                                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| I am following a strict diet to lose weight                                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| I am on a casual diet to lose weight                                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| I am on a special diet for medical reasons                                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| I am on a special diet due to allergies                                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| I am on a special diet for religious reasons                                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |

**Q20: Which of the following types of food do you eat regularly (at least 2 or 3 days per week)?**

**Please tick all that apply.**

- |                                                           |                          |   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Fresh vegetables/salads                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Fruit                                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Eggs                                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Ready-made meals (heated in the oven/microwave)           | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Other convenience foods (eg fish fingers, burgers, chips) | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Dairy products (milk, cheese, yoghurt)                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Meals prepared from raw fresh fish                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Meals prepared from raw fresh chicken                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Meals prepared from other raw fresh meat                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |

**Q21: How often do you buy food from the following outlets?**

**Please tick one box in each row.**

	Every day	4-6 times a week	2-3 times a week	Once a week	Less often	Never
Takeaway or fast food outlet (eg fish and chip shops, Chinese takeaway, McDonalds)	1	2	3	4	5	6
University canteen or refectory (hot food)	1	2	3	4	5	6
University sandwich/coffee/snack bar	1	2	3	4	5	6
University shop	1	2	3	4	5	6
Other coffee shop	1	2	3	4	5	6
Other takeaway sandwich outlet	1	2	3	4	5	6
Pub	1	2	3	4	5	6
Mobile food outlet	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sports club	1	2	3	4	5	6
Ready to eat takeaway food from supermarkets	1	2	3	4	5	6
Vending machine	1	2	3	4	5	6

**Q22: How often do you ...?**

**Please tick one box in each row.**

	Every day	4-6 times a week	2-3 times a week	Less often	Never
Eat breakfast					
Eat fried food					
Drink alcohol					

**Q23: Compared to a year ago, how often do you eat or drink the following?**

**Please tick one box in each row.**

	More than a year ago	Same as a year ago	Less than a year ago	I never eat or drink this
Foods or drinks containing sugar (eg sweets, cakes, soft drinks)				
Foods containing fat (eg fried food, crisps)				
Fruit				
Vegetables or salad				
Bread, cereals, rice, pasta, potatoes				
Milk and dairy products				
Meat (all types: red, white and processed)				
Fish				
Unsalted nuts, beans, chickpeas, lentils				
Salt in your food				
Alcohol				

**Q24: How often do you look at the labels with nutritional information on food?**

- |              |                          |   |
|--------------|--------------------------|---|
| Always       | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Fairly often | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Sometimes    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| Never        | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |

**Q25: If you were looking at the nutritional information on a jar of salad cream and it said the product contained 20g of sugar per 100g, would you think this is a lot or a little?**

- |                      |                          |   |
|----------------------|--------------------------|---|
| A lot                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| An acceptable amount | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| A little             | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| I don't know         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |

**Q26: If you were looking at the nutritional information on a box of cornflakes and it said the product contained 2g of salt per 100g, would you think this is a lot or a little?**

- |                      |                          |   |
|----------------------|--------------------------|---|
| A lot                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| An acceptable amount | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| A little             | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| I don't know         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |

**Q27: If you were looking at the nutritional information on a packet of digestive biscuits and it said the product contained 20g of fat per 100g, would you think this is a lot or a little?**

- |                      |                          |   |
|----------------------|--------------------------|---|
| A lot                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| An acceptable amount | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| A little             | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| I don't know         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |

**Q28: How many portions of fruit and vegetables should you eat every day?**

portions per day

**Now we would like to ask some questions about your lifestyle.**

**Q29: Do you feel you lead a ...**

- Very healthy lifestyle  1
- Fairly healthy lifestyle  2
- Not very healthy lifestyle  3
- Unhealthy lifestyle  4

**Q30: Thinking about the last week how many times did you take exercise lasting about 30 minutes? By exercise, we mean any physical activity that increases your heart rate.**

- Every day  1
- 4-5 times a week  2
- 2-3 times a week  3
- Less than twice a week  4
- Never  5

**Q31: How often do you use the sports/fitness facilities in each of the following? Please tick one box in each row.**

	Every day	4-6 times a week	2-3 times a week	Less often	Never
University sports centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Private gym	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sports club eg GAA, rugby, tennis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Council-owned facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gym equipment at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Finally could you please give us, confidentially of course, a few background details about yourself?**

**Q32: I am ...**

Male  1

Female  2

**Q33: I am ...**

years old

**Q34: What year of study are you in?**

- Level 0/Foundation  1
- First  2
- Second  3
- Third  4
- Fourth/Fifth  5
- Postgraduate  6

**Q35: Are you studying full time or part time?**

Full time  1

Part time  2

**Q36: Are your fees for university paid by ...**

- |                                        |                          |   |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| You                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Your parents                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Education and Library Board            | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| A bursary (eg from DHSSPS or industry) | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |
| Other (please specify)                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 |
- 

**Q37: Do you have a job?**

- |                              |                          |   |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Yes – I have a full time job | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Yes – I have a part time job | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| No                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |

**Q38: Which university or college do you attend?**

- |                                   |                          |   |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Queen's University                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| St Mary's College                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Stranmillis College               | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| University of Ulster, Jordanstown | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |
| University of Ulster, Belfast     | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 |
| University of Ulster, Magee       | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 |
| University of Ulster, Coleraine   | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7 |
| University of Ulster, Portrush    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8 |

**Q39: Which subject are you studying?**

**Q40: Have you ever heard of the Food Standards Agency?**

- |     |                          |   |
|-----|--------------------------|---|
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| No  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |

**Finally, please use this box tell us about any other comments you would like to make relating to the issues raised in this questionnaire.**

**We are planning to organise other research projects among students in the next few months. If you would be interested in taking part, please tick this box,  and fill in your contact details below.**

**All completed surveys can be entered into a prize draw. If you would like to take part, please indicate which prize you would prefer, and fill in your contact details below.**

A food hamper	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Cooking equipment essentials	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
A nutritional assessment (what you eat and what you <i>should</i> eat)	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

**Name**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Email address**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your help.**

**For more information on the Food Standards Agency, look at  
[www.food.gov.uk](http://www.food.gov.uk)**

**For more information on eating well, look at [www.eatwell.gov.uk](http://www.eatwell.gov.uk)**

**For more information about ARK, look at [www.ark.ac.uk](http://www.ark.ac.uk)**