

Sustainable Business Travel

2021 UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE CONSULTATION
WITH STAFF AND STUDENTS ON A DRAFT
SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS TRAVEL POLICY

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Executive Summary

Context

National and international business travel can play a key part in achieving academic, research and education objectives at the University of Cambridge. However, in 2018/19, carbon emissions from business travel were estimated to be at least 16,000 tonnes CO_{2e}, approximately 95% of which comes from air travel.

The University has a target to reduce emissions from business travel flights by 25% by 2024/25 relative to 2014/15 (although this is due to be reviewed during the development of the new Sustainability Strategy in 2022). To achieve this a Sustainable Business Travel Policy was needed, to provide guidance on when travel is essential versus when virtual alternatives or low-carbon transport modes should be used over carbon-intensive, and difficult-to-decarbonise transport modes such as flying. Remaining unavoidable emissions will be offset through schemes approved by the University's Carbon Offsetting Working Group.

This report details the results of a consultation with staff and students, and University Committees to understand attitudes to business travel, and gather feedback on a draft sustainable business travel policy.

The consultation

Between August and November 2021, the Sustainability Team carried out a consultation with staff and students on a draft sustainable business travel policy, developed under the oversight of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy Committee.

Key findings and recommendations

There was broad support for the University taking steps to reduce emissions from business travel: 59% of the 657 respondents to the consultation questionnaire strongly agreed that the University should introduce measures aimed at reducing emissions from business travel (section 3.2.1).

- **Initially introduce travel rules as expectations, and implement pilots for mandatory travel rules to provide proof-of-concept for an approvals process.** The proscriptive nature of the initial draft policy was a divisive issue. Supporters of the travel rules said that these were needed to ensure the emissions reductions targets were reached, whilst those against the rules cited the additional administrative burden and bureaucracy, as well as the lack of autonomy over research funds. Strongly proscriptive travel rules were also not supported by School Councils and the Research Policy Committee. However the Environmental Sustainability Strategy Committee was strongly of the view that the policy should contain some proscriptive elements. The final recommendation following consultation is that travel rules be initially framed as travel guidelines or 'expectations', but that pilot schemes should be run in various University

institutions through Lent and Easter Term 2022. Further details are in section 3.2.3.

- **Required subsidies and incentives should be evaluated as part of the pilot scheme results.** Due to differences in working patterns and cultures across the University, there is unlikely to be one incentive or subsidy that fits all. Pilot schemes will allow further evidence-gathering to understand what subsidies are needed, which may include financial support for choosing low-carbon transport modes, or for offsetting costs in due course.
- **Reporting.** The University has committed to reporting total business travel emissions, as part of their scope 3 emissions reporting. Consultation discussions indicated that individuals would like to receive a report of their business travel emissions, and departments also showed enthusiasm for seeing total anonymised department emissions. Departmental data can be reported from now onwards. However, more detailed reporting at individual level, at higher frequency (e.g. quarterly), and with additional associated data such as the purpose of travel, will be developed alongside improvements made to expenses systems and to Key Travel bookings.
- **Consolidation of travel policies and recommendation for working group.** The ongoing changes to various travel-related policies (i.e. risk, finance, insurance, global mobility, procurement etc.) have shared goals, e.g. improvements to travel data collected. These changes need to be clearly communicated and coordinated; this might be aided by the establishment of a travel working group. Since travel choices must be considered on the basis of multiple factors in parallel, including sustainability, safety, cost, and personal considerations, the University should consider consolidating the various travel policies into one holistic travel policy.
- **Student travel.** As a first step, the University should endeavour to find out what emissions related to student travel to and from the University are. This should include both travel to/from the University throughout the year, and other travel induced by the University, such as admissions interviews and open days.
- **Advocating for similar practices with funding bodies and other HEIs.** Travel is strongly engrained in academic and research culture and an aligned approach across academia is needed. The University should advocate for the adoption of similar practices with other HEIs, and particularly with funding bodies. Unsustainable practices in grant applications and administration should be strongly discouraged.
- **The policy should be carefully reviewed annually and constituent institutions of the University should be supported to go further.** The results of the pilot schemes should be carefully evaluated for both the efficiency of the schemes, and any emerging equality and diversity concerns. Where departments wish to go further than the policy, they should be supported to do so, and the performance of additional measures should be reviewed for potential implementation across the University. The performance of policies at other HEIs should also be carefully monitored for any lessons of best practice that could be drawn.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Why should we reduce emissions from business travel?

Business travel includes all domestic and international travel outside the University Estate for research, education, or business purposes related to the University. This includes overseas assignments. It does not include travel between different parts of the University Estate or commuting to/from home (the University has a [Transport strategy](#) which covers local travel initiatives). It also does not include student travel to/from the University at the start/end of term.

National and international business travel can play a part in achieving research, education and business objectives at the University of Cambridge. However, in 2018/19, carbon emissions from business travel were estimated to be at least 16,000 tonnes CO₂e, which is roughly equivalent to emissions from gas used for space and water heating across the University Estate.

1.1.1 A focus on air travel – why?

The focus on emissions from flying in this policy is motivated by the following reasons:

- **Emissions from air travel account for around 95% of business travel CO₂e emissions at the University** (Figure 1). Flying is a very carbon-intensive activity. One return flight from London Heathrow to New York JFK emits around 2700 kg CO₂e, which is equivalent to approximately half the average annual per capita emissions in the UK¹.

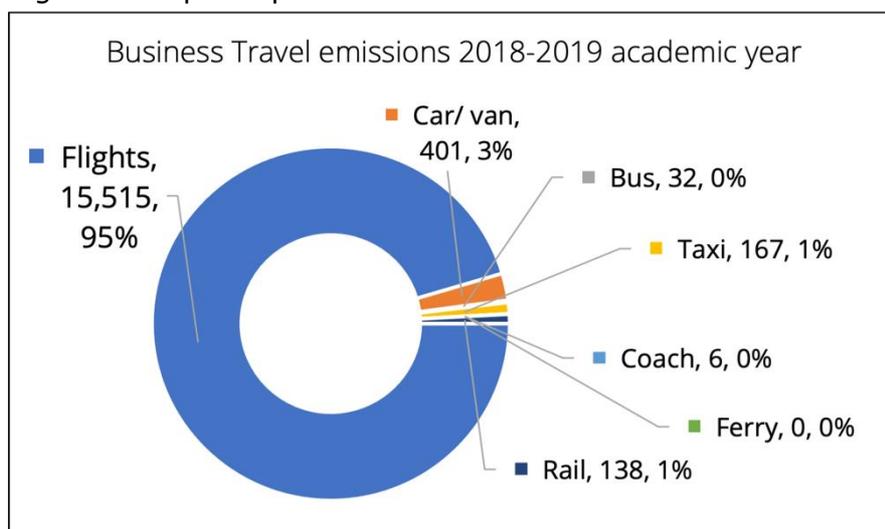


Figure 1. Greenhouse gas emissions (tonnes CO₂e) from business travel in the 2018–19 academic year, by transport mode used. Data are obtained from the University’s financial systems (travel bookings through the University preferred travel provider, expenses claims etc.). Legend keys are as follows: transport mode, tonnes CO₂e, percentage of total emissions associated with this transport mode.

¹ Average airline emissions, according to: <https://www.atmosfair.de/en/offset/flight/> (calculated in November 2021). UK per capita emissions in 2018 (5.7 tonnes CO₂e), from [World Bank](#).

- **Rates of flying are unevenly distributed across society.** It has been estimated that only 1% of the global population causes 50% of CO₂ emissions from commercial aviation². University data indicates that travel is also unevenly distributed amongst University members – between 2017–2019 approximately 50% of those who did travel took only one trip, and most University members did not travel at all.
- **Aviation is a hard-to-decarbonise sector.** Air travel (international and domestic) makes up 8% (2019) of UK greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and 2-3% of global GHG emissions. Currently, there are no airborne low-carbon alternatives to fossil-fuelled flight. Low- or zero-carbon flights (powered by e.g. batteries, hydrogen or 100% sustainable aviation fuels) are unlikely to be widely available for even short-haul flights before 2050. Industry and UK Government net-zero plans do not currently include a demand-management framework³, and will rely heavily on carbon sequestration and offsetting to 2050. Due to the challenges associated with decarbonising aviation, the sector is predicted to account for as much as 25% of UK GHG emissions by 2050⁴.

The specific emissions associated with an individual passenger travelling via different transport modes depends on several factors, including load factors (i.e. how full the plane/train/car is) and class of travel.

Non-CO₂ warming from aviation emissions

Alongside emissions of water vapour and CO₂, aviation is associated with a range of short-lived climate forcers (SLCFs) caused by emissions of nitrous oxides (NO_x) and aerosol particles at high altitude in the atmosphere. The largest SLCF effects are associated with the formation of condensation trails and NO_x emissions which affect atmospheric cloudiness and composition, respectively. Uncertainties related to aviation non-CO₂ warming effects are greater than those for CO₂ warming, and estimates aviation non-CO₂ warming effects are [typically not included in carbon budgets](#), leading to a potential underestimation of aviation’s contribution to climate change.

The latest [IPCC AR6 report](#) indicates that SLCF-related effects account for **66%** of total warming associated with emissions from aviation, i.e. **they double the warming effect.**

² Gössling, S., & Humpe, A. (2020). [The global scale, distribution and growth of aviation: Implications for climate change](#). *Global Environmental Change*, 65, 102194.

³ This is despite the Climate Change Committee recommending the introduction of demand-side measures as a priority for aviation in its [2021 Progress Report to Parliament](#). The UK Citizens’ Assembly on Climate Change also suggested that there was support for demand management measures, such as a frequent flier levy.

⁴ [Letter: International aviation and shipping and net zero](#), September 2019, The Climate Change Committee.

1.2 What is the University of Cambridge doing?

The University's [Carbon Reduction Strategy \(2020 Update\)](#) has a target to reduce per-capita (i.e. per person) emissions from flights by 25% against 2014/15 levels by 2024/25. This is equivalent to a reduction of ~40% on 2018/19 levels by 2024/25. This target will be updated in the near future as the University updates its Environmental Sustainability Strategy.

Between 2014/15 and 2018/19, per-capita emissions from flights increased by around 30% ([Environmental Sustainability Report 2019](#)). Emissions from flights were 27% lower in 2019/20 than in 2014/15 due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and reduced by around 95% in 2020/21⁵.

The University also plans to offset remaining unavoidable business travel emissions to achieve net-zero carbon emissions. The University has set up a [Carbon Offsetting Working Group](#) to identify the most trustworthy carbon offsets to use.

Case study: Department of Geography, University of Cambridge

The Department of Geography has laid out its own [travel policy](#) aimed at reducing the environmental impact of the department's activities. In addition to the stipulations of the University's proposed policy, they also plan to include justification for travel in travel risk assessments.

Recommendation: individual constituent institutions of the University should be supported to go further than the University policy where there is a desire and a mandate within the institution to do so. The University should also monitor the performance of any additional measures and assess whether these should be implemented across the University.

1.3 Context from other HEIs

As part of the consultation engagement, we engaged with sustainability teams at other UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), including Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Oxford, and Bristol. UK HEIs are at various stages of progress in developing sustainable business travel policies, as summarised in Table 1.1. The University of Edinburgh is currently one of the most advanced UK HEIs in its implementation of action relating to reducing emissions from business travel.

⁵ Assurance of 2020/21 emissions data by PwC is pending.

Table 1.1. Summary of progress on Sustainable Business Travel policies from a selection of HEIs. Approximately ordered with the most advanced plans towards the top of the table. The information below corresponds to that available online, rather than information conveyed in consultation discussions.

HEI	Policy/guidance?	Offsetting strategy?	Target for business travel emissions reduction?	Useful links and resources
University of Edinburgh	Sustainable travel policy (in force late 2021). ALL international travel must be approved by HoD. Must book through preferred provider (with a few exceptions). No domestic air travel except for journeys outwith mainland Britain, connecting flights, disability and health, caring responsibilities. First class not acceptable for any air journey. First class for trains when >2.5 hours.	"Plans to take responsibility for unavoidable carbon emissions by direct sequestration rather than participating in carbon offsetting schemes."	No specific business travel emissions reduction target but overall net zero target by 2040.	-Significant online resources: general website -Sustainable Travel Policy 2021 - link
University of Glasgow	Guidance only, no enforceable rules.	General stance: "We propose that the University focuses on reducing its carbon footprint as much as possible between now and 2035; we may, during this period, make use of carbon offsetting if we fail to meet the interim targets we set ourselves. After 2035, we propose to use offsetting on a larger scale to achieve a net zero position."	"To reduce emissions from Business Travel from 13,194 ton CO _{2e} in 2018-19 to 5597 ton CO _{2e} in 2029-30."	-Guidance For Sustainable Business Travel For Staff And Postgraduate Researchers 2021 - link -Climate Change Strategy Consultation - link
University of Oxford	Plans are in place to: "Develop and implement a Travel Policy which incorporates a Travel Hierarchy for all domestic and international travel for staff and students as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid travel; 	Plans to "fly when there are no alternatives and offset these emissions through the Oxford Sustainability Fund" and "Offset emissions from all business and international student flights,	Currently no specific target to reduce flights but an aspiration to set one is stated	Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021 - link

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce travel demand to and from the University; • travel without flying; • fly when there are no alternatives and offset these emissions through the Oxford Sustainability Fund. <p>Guidance is provided through a Business Travel Toolkit.</p>	starting from the 2034/35 financial year."		
University of Bristol	No policy/formal guidance yet. Aim to develop a business travel plan.	"The University is developing its policy on offsetting as part of its broader carbon reduction plan . This will seek to ensure that any chosen offsetting schemes are procured compliantly and that their emissions savings are both verifiable and additional to those required to meet global climate goals."	No specific business travel emissions reduction target.	Business Travel Plans - link Resources for making sustainable business travel choices - link

2 The Sustainable Business Travel Policy Consultation 2021

The sustainable business travel policy consultation, led by the Sustainability Team, ran from 10 August 2021 to 1 November 2021. The consultation goals were as follows:

1. The primary aim of the consultation was to seek feedback on the proposed provisions of the draft policy (Annex A).
2. A secondary aim was to establish whether there are any significant differences in opinion between different groups of staff and students.

The consultation employed three main approaches to gather feedback from the general University community:

- A consultation questionnaire (section 2.1)
- Focus groups (section 2.2)
- 1-to-1 interviews (section 2.3)

During the consultation, the draft policy was also presented to several University committees and sub-committees, including:

- Procurement Strategy Group
- Research Policy Committee
- Environmental Sustainability Strategy Committee
 - Carbon Offsetting Working Group
- Council of the School of Technology
- Council of the School of Physical Sciences
- Council of the School of Clinical Medicine
- Council of the School of Biological Sciences
- Council of the School of Arts and Humanities
- Council of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences

The consultation also included active engagement with key members of relevant divisions including: HR, Insurance, the Safety Office, Finance, Global Mobility, Procurement, Occupational Health, the Disability Resource Centre, and Education. Cambridge Press and Assessment were also consulted as part of the consultation.

An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out alongside the consultation.

2.1 Consultation questionnaire

The consultation questionnaire was designed and accessed through [Qualtrics](#), and consisted of 37 questions (some of which were only shown if respondents gave a particular answer to a question). The questionnaire consisted of a series of Likert scale questions (e.g. strongly agree to strongly disagree) to assess attitudes to business travel and virtual alternatives, and to gauge the level of support for the draft policy. Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide written answers to elaborate on and explain their views. See Annex C for the consultation questions.

In the questionnaire, respondents were asked if they wished to participate in further discussions – those who said yes were contacted during the consultation and given the option of attending either a focus group or 1-to-1 interview, as summarised in the following sections. This was the primary means by which participants for discussions were found.

There were 657 responses to the consultation questionnaire, spread across all staff and student groups (Table 2.1). Over 80 different University institutions were represented in the responses to the questionnaire.

Table 2.1. Summary of consultation questionnaire respondents, by self-declared staff and student groupings.

Staff/student group	Number of respondents	Percentage of total
Academic staff	175	28.5%
Research staff	107	17.4%
Academic-related staff	136	22.1%
Assistant staff	62	10.1%
Student	135 (Postgraduate: 100; Undergraduate: 26; Other: 2)	22.0% (Postgraduate: 17.4%; Undergraduate: 4%; Other: 0.6%)
Did not respond	42	Not included in percentages
Total	657	-

2.2 Focus groups

Focus groups were held on Microsoft Teams. Dates and participant numbers are given in Table 2.2. Interactive online boards ([Miro](#)) were shared with participants and annotated during the focus groups as a record of the session (template for focus group discussions is given in Annex D). The discussion template allowed facilitators to guide the discussions in a timely manner through the key questions we wanted to answer. Participants were also asked to declare any specific subjects they wanted to cover at the start of each session to make sure these could be raised at an appropriate point in the discussion.

Table 2.2. Summary of consultation focus groups.

Number	Date	Participants
1	30/09/2021	6 (two breakout rooms); academic staff, academic-related staff, assistant staff and PhD students
2	01/10/2021	3; academic staff only
3	28/10/2021	6 (two breakout rooms); academic -related staff, research staff and PhD students
4	03/11/2021	5; research staff and PhD students

2.3 1-to-1 interviews

A total of 21 one-to-one interviews were carried out as part of the consultation, including with 12 members of academic and research staff, 3 PhD students, 2

undergraduate students, and 4 members of academic-related staff. Interviews typically lasted between 30 and 45 minutes (full range was from 20 minutes to 1 hour). Interviews were semi-structured: after an introductory question interviewees were asked if there were topics that they most wanted to discuss so that these could be prioritised in the time available. Follow-up questions were then asked to add more detail or fill in the gaps on topics not raised by the interviewee.

2.4 Analysis methods

Quantitative analysis of consultation results was carried out in the Stats iQ module [Qualtrics](#) software which can be used to generate relationships between different questions in the questionnaire, and assess the statistical significance of the relationship (or lack thereof) between them. This was primarily used to assess the differences in opinion between different staff and student groups (as demonstrated throughout section 3).

Qualitative results, including written or verbal responses (written questionnaire responses, focus group notes and interview transcripts) were analysed using an inductive approach⁶. Responses were tagged in Excel for emerging themes, which were added to as further responses were analysed. Themes were then grouped and responses within each theme were counted to assess the prevalence of different viewpoints.

2.5 Business travel data

Alongside the consultation, University travel data was analysed to provide a fuller understanding of how University members travelled in pre-COVID19 pandemic years.

Data relating to business travel is available from two different sources:

1. Expenses data

- a. Data available:* departmental breakdown of expenses, expenses can be converted to emissions data. More or less data is available depending on the booking method (the most detailed data is available for Key Travel bookings).
- b. Limitations:* coverage of this data is not known as data may be missing due to limited information declared during expenses claims, or due to unclaimed expenses.

2. University travel insurance policy data: international business travel

- a. Data available:* Destination country, transport mode (i.e. air/rail/car etc.), self-declared purpose of travel), title of traveller (which gives a broad idea of seniority), status (i.e. employee or student etc.).
- b. Limitations:* coverage of this data is not known, i.e. it is not known for what percentage of trips University members take out an insurance policy.

⁶Thomas DR. A General Inductive Approach for Analyzing Qualitative Evaluation Data. American Journal of Evaluation. 2006;27(2):237-246. doi:10.1177/1098214005283748

As University insurance is intended to cover international travel only, domestic travel information is not available.

3 Results and recommendations

3.1 Business travel at Cambridge: who, where, why and how?

Based on insurance policies taken out through the University's insurance provider, in the 2017–18 and 2018–19 academic years an average of approximately 4800 individuals travelled internationally for business annually. When domestic business travel is included, this value is expected to be significantly higher.

3.1.1 How does travel vary between different staff and student groups?

Business travel frequency varies significantly between staff and student groups (Figure 2; p -value = $4.7E-53$). Assistant staff are the least frequent travellers (mode = no trips per year), and academic staff are the most frequent travellers. This is also reflected in data from travel insurance policies which shows, using self-declared titles in insurance applications, that more senior staff tend to be the more frequent travellers (Figure 3). Note that this data does not capture the seniority of non-academic staff, who may not have academic titles such as Dr or Professor.

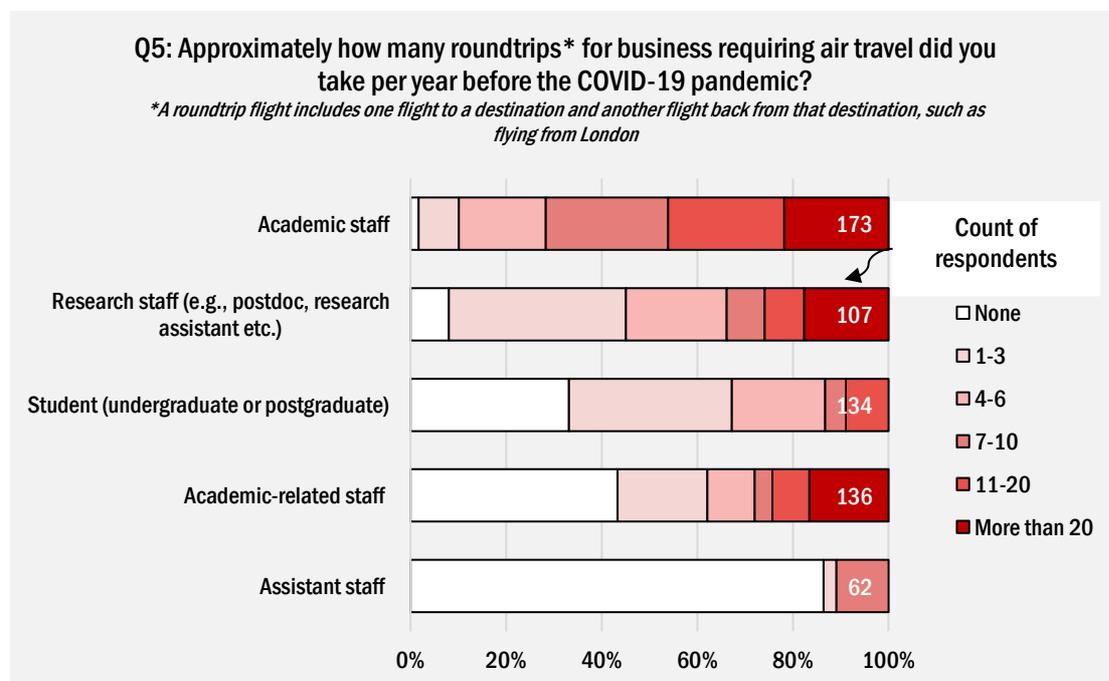


Figure 2. Results of Q5 of the consultation questionnaire, categorised by self-declared staff/student groupings. There is a strong statistically significant (p -value = $4.7E-53$) relationship between responses to Q5 and self-declared staff/student groupings.

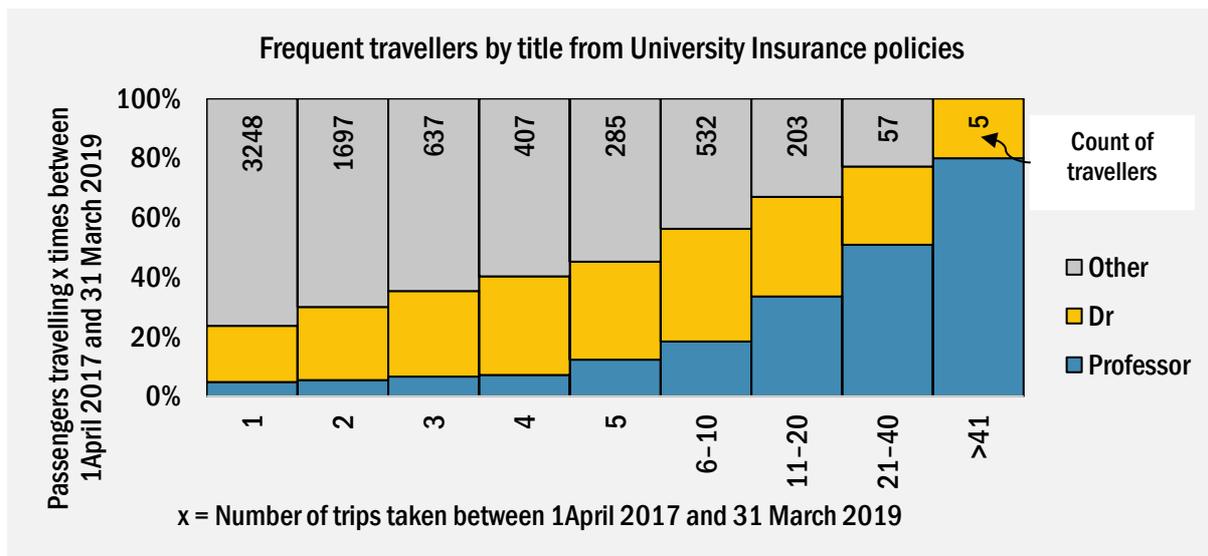


Figure 3. Frequency of travel, categorised by self-declared title in University Travel Insurance applications. Note that this data only covers international travel and is not a true reflection of staff seniority as these titles do not necessarily capture senior non-academic staff.

3.1.2 Destinations, transport modes and purposes of travel

University Travel Insurance policies (2017–2019) can also be used to assess the most common destinations, transport modes and purposes for international business travel (Figure 4). Around 50% of all international business travel is to destinations in Europe, followed by 23% to North America and 13% to Asia. 92% of all overseas trips are made using air travel, and overseas travel purposes are dominated by attendance at conferences and meetings (70%), as opposed to other travel for research and fieldwork (23%). There is significant scope to reduce emissions from international travel via replacement of some in-person attendance at conferences and meetings by virtual alternatives.

The proposed sustainable business travel policy (Annex B) includes a travel expectation that where the Eurostar is available for destinations in Europe, staff and students should not use air travel (unless they have a valid reason to do so). Travel insurance policies can be used to assess modes of transport used to reach different countries (Figure 5). These data indicate that travel to Belgium is predominantly (>75%) by rail, while travel to France is 50% by rail. For Belgium, the final destination of most travellers is likely to be Brussels, while in France, there are likely to be a number of destinations not served directly by the Eurostar (i.e. not Paris) that University members travel to. The direct link between London and Amsterdam was introduced in Spring 2020, i.e. after the time period covered by the data in Figure 5. However, uptake of this train option as rates of travel increase following the COVID-19 pandemic should be monitored.

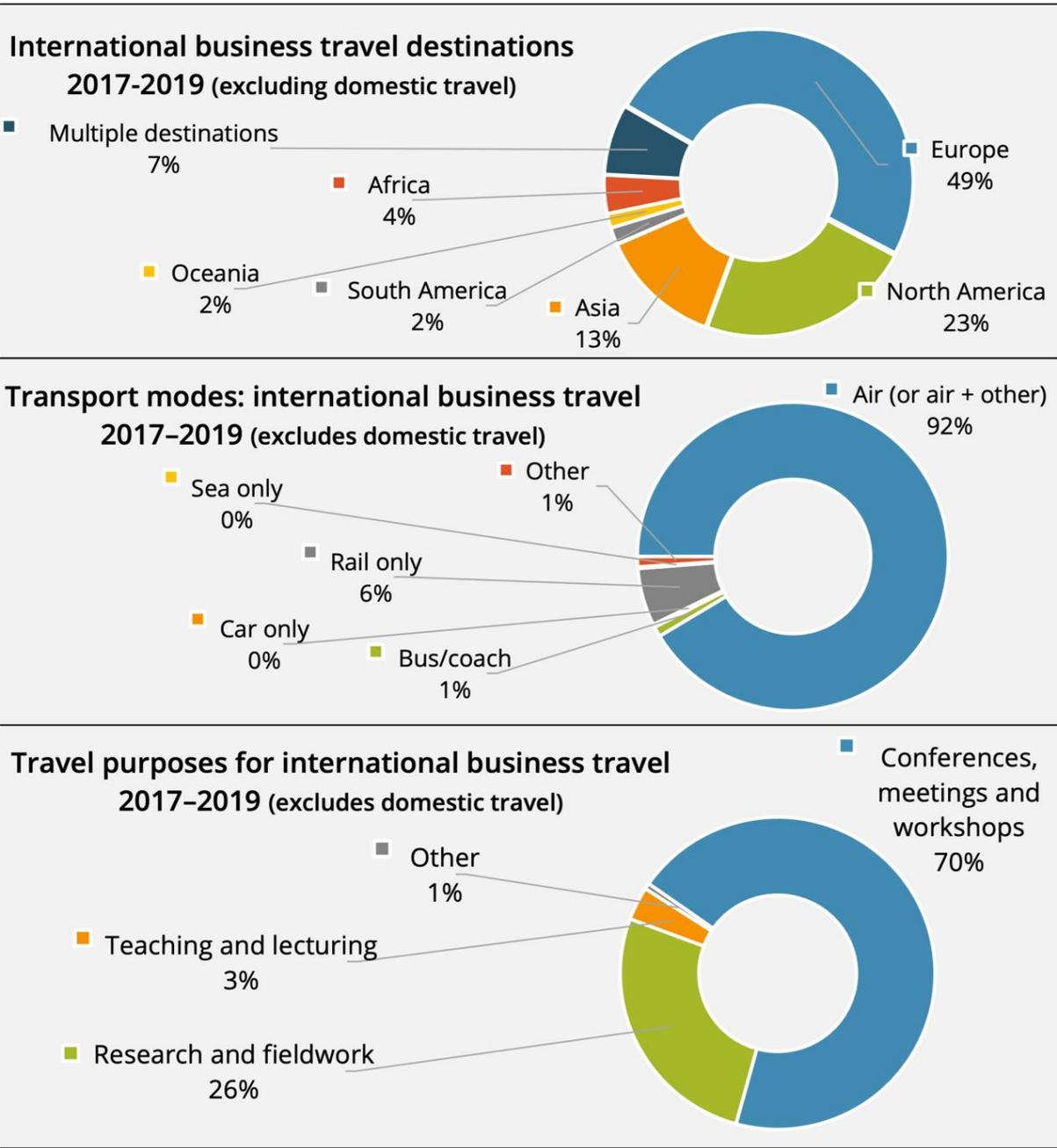


Figure 4. Travel data from University international business travel insurance policies from 01/04/2017 to 31/03/2019 inclusive (pre-pandemic travel). Top: breakdown of business travel destination by continent. Middle: breakdown of business travel by transport mode. Bottom: breakdown of business travel by purpose, as declared in travel insurance applications.

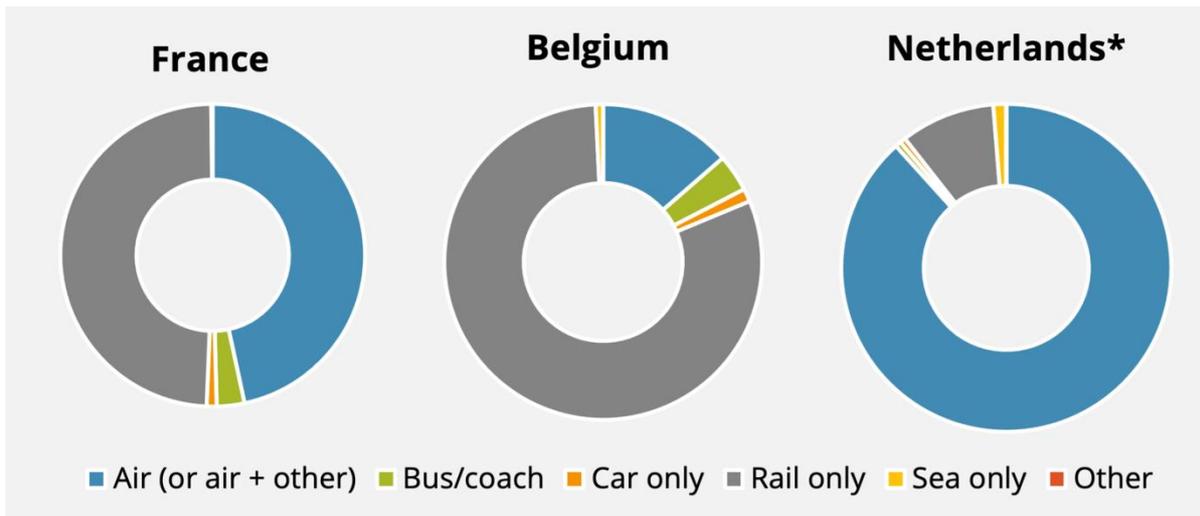


Figure 5. Transport modes for destinations served by the Eurostar, according to University insurance policies from 01/04/2017 to 31/03/2019 inclusive. *Note that the direct Eurostar link to Amsterdam was introduced in early 2020, after the period covered by this data.

3.2 Consultation results

3.2.1 Attitudes towards reducing emissions from business travel

Around 80% of respondents somewhat or strongly agree that “The University should introduce measures aimed at reducing emissions from business travel” (Figure 6). Levels of agreement differ within different staff and student groups (academic staff: 68%; research staff: 77%; assistant staff: 86%; academic-related staff: 89%; students: 91%).

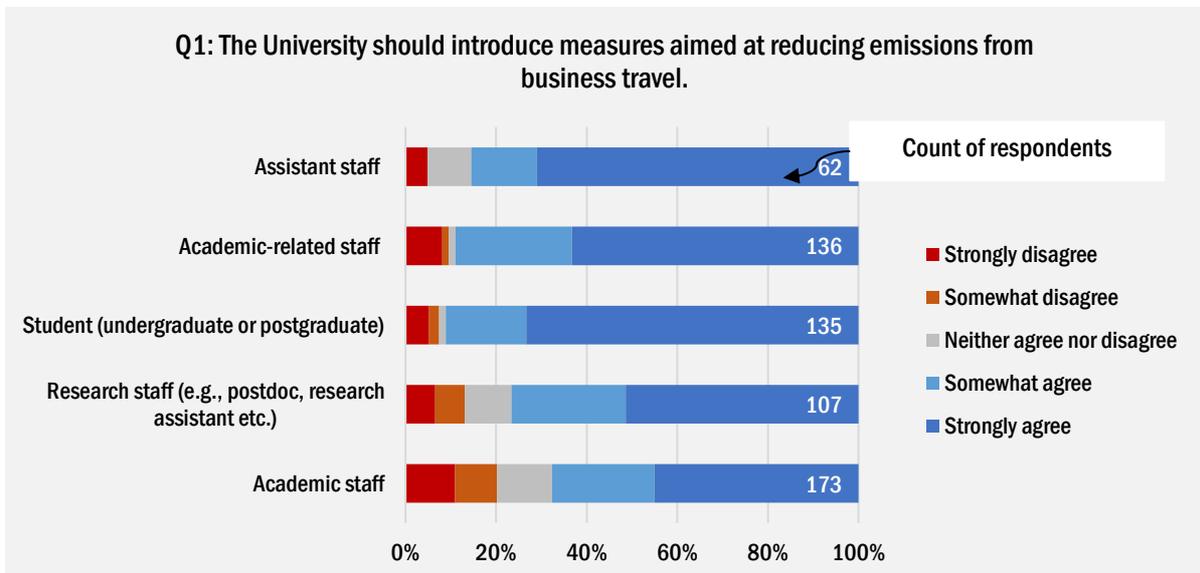


Figure 6. Results of Q1, categorised by self-declared staff/student groupings. There is a statistically significant ($p\text{-value} = 6.6\text{E-}07$) relationship between responses to Q1 and self-declared staff/student groupings.

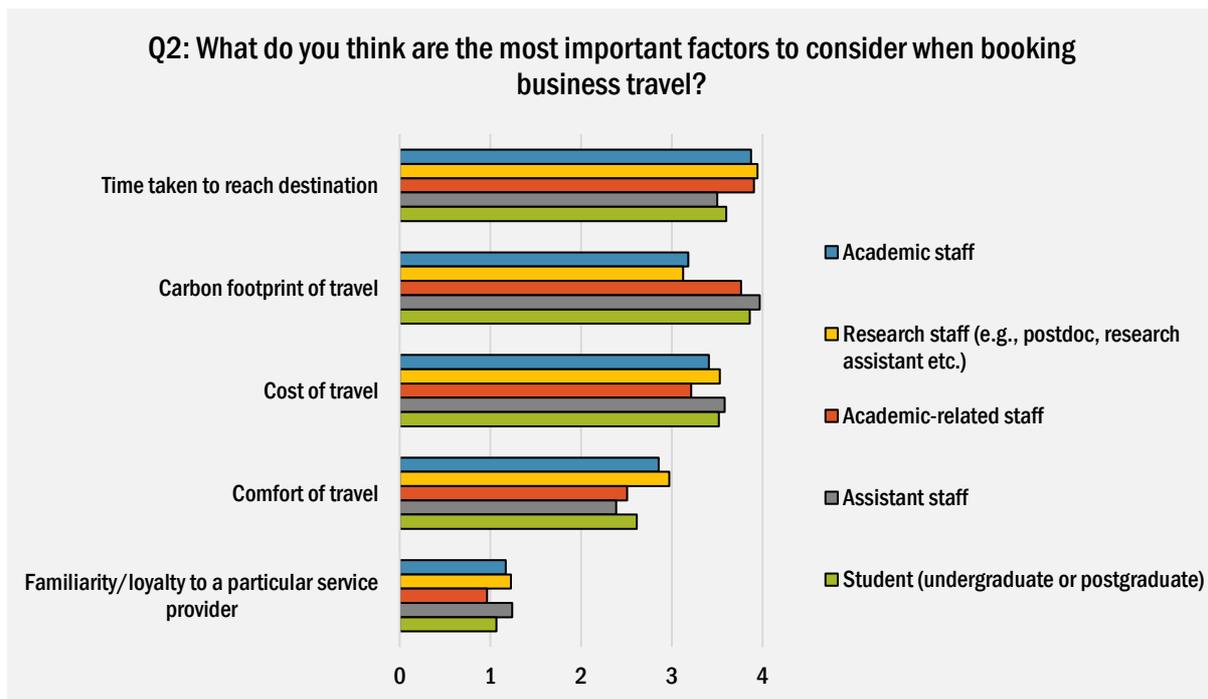


Figure 7. Results of Q2, categorised by self-declared staff/student groupings. Respondents were asked to rank the importance of factors considered when booking travel. Higher values are attributed to factors that were ranked more highly by respondents.

Carbon footprint, cost and time taken were ranked as the top three factors considered when booking travel by respondents. The precise order of importance of these different factors varies between different staff and student groups: for academic, academic-related, and research staff, time was the most important factor overall. For assistant staff and students, carbon footprint of travel was ranked as the most important factor, while amongst research and academic staff, overall carbon footprint was ranked lower than time and cost. Other factors added by respondents that were ranked highly were: safety, accessibility (e.g. disability considerations), flexibility, reliability, ease of the travel booking process, the complexity of the travel (i.e. different transport modes, and number of changes) and a consideration of whether the travel is truly necessary given the virtual alternatives available.

Encouragingly, a majority of respondents across all staff and student groups predict that they will travel less for business than they did before the COVID-19 pandemic (Figure 8).

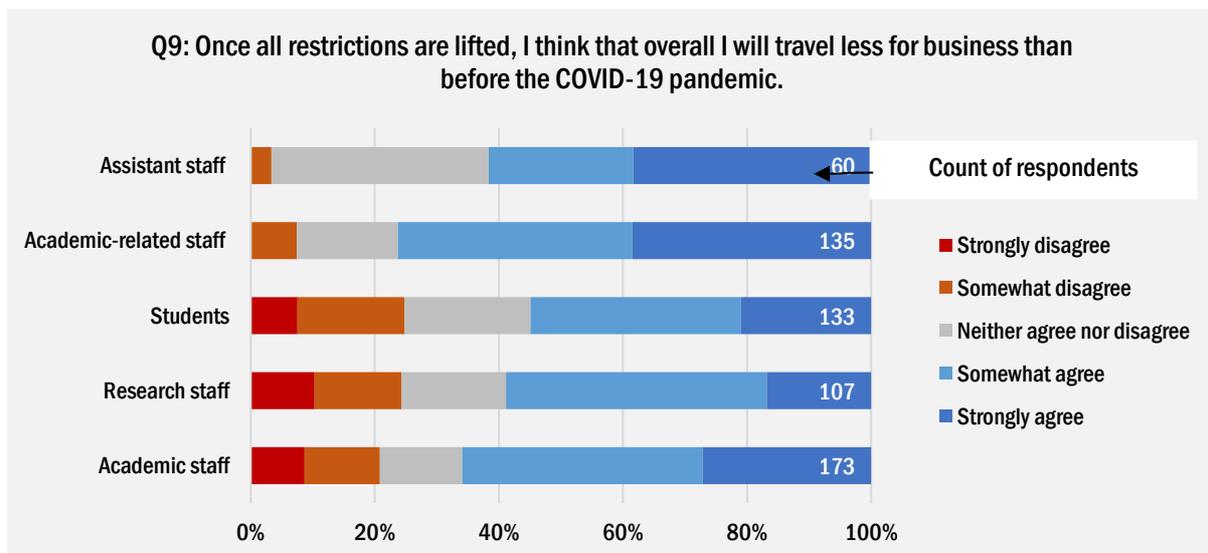


Figure 8. Results of Q9, categorised by self-declared staff/student groupings.

3.2.2 Virtual versus in-person working – which in-person activities are essential?

Following over a year of predominantly online working during the COVID-19 pandemic, the consultation period was well-timed to capture University staff and student’s reflections on the advantages and disadvantages of replacing in-person business travel with virtual alternatives.

The most common issues raised against virtual working were that it cannot provide networking or mentoring opportunities, or the less tangible outputs of for example conference attendance such as establishing connections that may lead to future research outputs. Clearly virtual alternatives cannot replace in-person working such as fieldwork, lab-work at other institutions, or extended stays at external institutions. Consultation respondents also suggested that the quality of engagement and communication can be substantially lower than that achieved in-person.

However, respondents also highlighted some of the benefits of virtual communication methods, including that it removes barriers to accessing events for those who might not have previously been able to attend such as those with health conditions, disabilities or caring responsibilities that prevent frequent business travel.

Recommendation

- The University should encourage all events to take into account access considerations and wherever possible, take an 'inclusivity by design' approach where online alternatives are offered as standard.

Respondents to the consultation questionnaire were asked to consider broad categories of activities that might involve business travel, and to assess the importance of these activities (Q3; Figure 9) and the effectiveness of achieving these activities using virtual alternatives (i.e., online working; Q10; Figure 10). Results from Q3 and Q10 suggest that virtual alternatives can play a role, to a

greater or lesser extent, across most business travel activities (except for in-person fieldwork and lab-work).

Policy development

- The results from these questions, and from written responses and consultation discussions regarding the value of in-person versus virtual attendance were used to develop the essential and non-essential business travel guidance in the proposed sustainable business travel policy

Meetings: Similar importance was attributed to virtual and in-person meetings with colleagues or collaborators, for academic and research staff and students. For academic-related and assistant staff, virtual meetings were given a higher degree of importance than in-person meetings (Figure 9). However, there is some nuance to this that was highlighted through consultation discussions. In particular, in-person interactions were deemed to be important for establishing collaborations and trust within the initial stages of those relationships.

Conferences: For academic staff, research staff and students, conference attendance in person is valued over attendance online (Figure 9). Consultation discussions highlighted the importance of the in-person interactions that occur outside of presenting one's work, such as: establishing connections with potential collaborators and access to potential future career opportunities. Consultees generally felt that virtual conferences could not provide the same opportunities for mentorship and networking as an in-person conference. Establishing connections in-person was generally thought to be most important for early career researchers, however it was pointed out that more senior staff also need to attend in order to provide career opportunities and mentorship to more junior researchers.

Talks: For academic staff, research staff and students, giving an invited talk or lecture in-person was felt to be more important to giving one virtually. Consultation discussions suggested that this was due to: 1) the perceived higher value of giving an in-person talk to one's career prospects (i.e. recruitment and promotion), and 2) the other interactions that accompany an in-person visit, such as networking and establishing future collaborations or career opportunities.

Recommendation

- The University should make it clear that it values virtual attendance for e.g. invited talks equally to in-person attendance in recruitment and promotion policies. During the 2021 consultation a review of recruitment policies had just been carried out so there was not appetite to reopen the review. However, the University should return to this issue in future reviews of promotion and recruitment policies.

Courses and educational programmes: For academic staff, research staff and students, delivering or receiving a course in-person was deemed to be more important than doing so virtually. Consultation discussions highlighted that it was sometimes difficult to engage as fully with courses online, and that complex

concepts were not as easy to teach online. For external courses, better opportunities for networking and establishing collaborations in-person are likely to also be important.

Fundraising: For all staff and student groups apart from academic staff, fundraising initiatives in-person and virtually were deemed to be equally important. For academic staff, opportunities to win funding in-person were valued over virtual fundraising. Consultation discussions highlighted that academics felt that presenting to funding panels in-person was more likely to lead to a positive outcome in funding applications. Ultimately the extent to which funding panels are carried out virtually or in-person will be decided by the funding bodies themselves.

Recruitment: For academic-related and assistant staff, virtual recruitment of staff was valued equally or even higher than in-person recruitment, and consultation discussions indicated that virtual recruitment during pandemic-related restrictions has been successful. However, responses from academic staff indicated that in-person recruitment for academic roles is still valued over virtual recruitment.

Student examinations (including PhD vivas): For academic staff, research staff and students, respondents were divided over whether virtual examinations were an effective alternative to in-person examinations (Figure 10). Again, opportunities to establish a working relationship, or access career opportunities through in-person interaction with examiners were highlighted as an important part of PhD vivas.

Recommendation

- If this is not already the case, the default for student examinations should be virtual if the examiner would have to fly to attend the examination in person.

Q3: At your current career stage, how important do you feel the following activities are for your career?

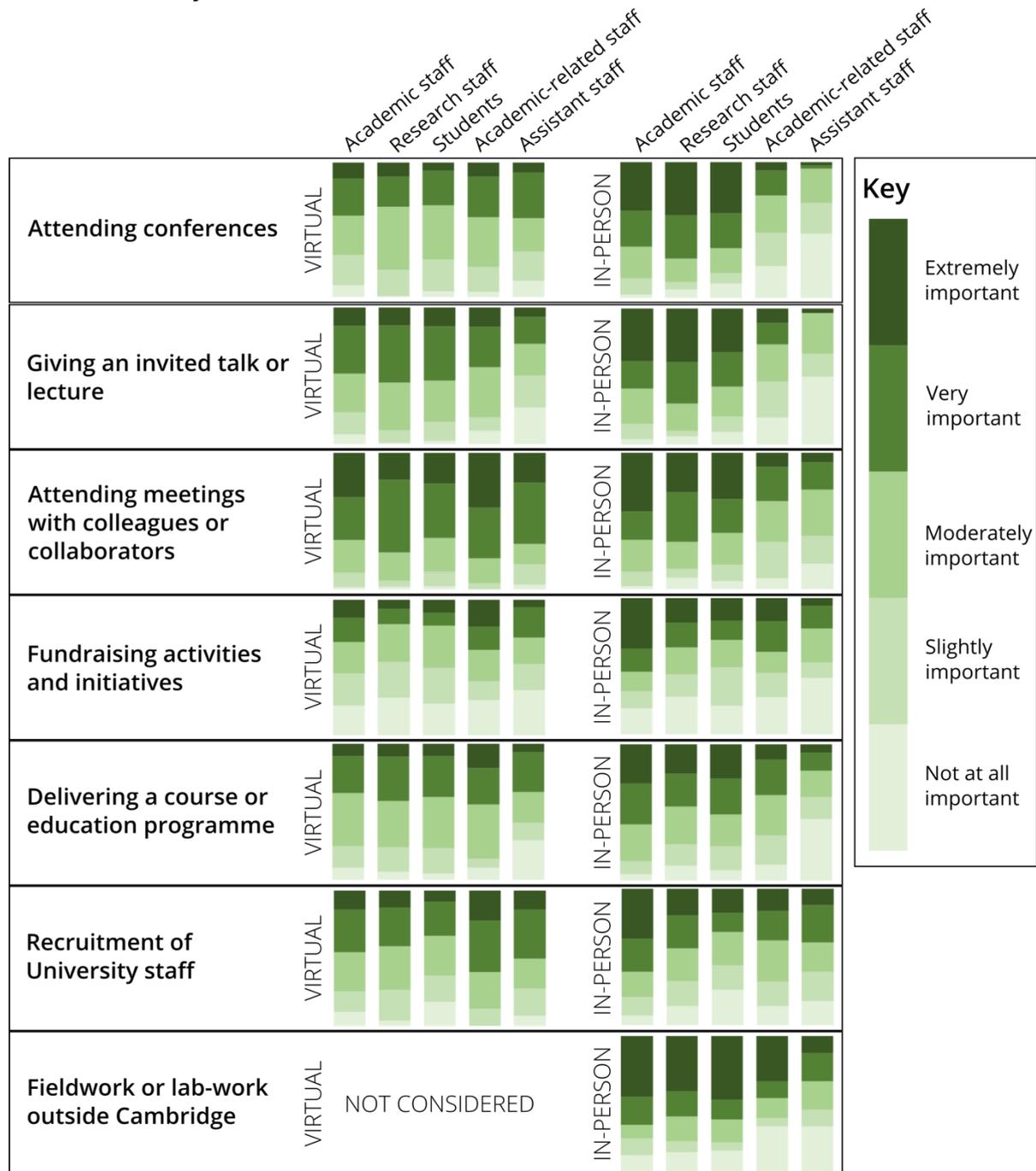


Figure 9. Results of Q3, categorised by self-declared staff/student groupings.

Respondents had the opportunity to suggest other activities that they felt were not captured by the categories in Q3:

- Where they felt that activities were important, respondents highlighted site visits to monitor projects in person, the value of meeting and sharing ideas with colleagues in person, networking and forming collaborations in person,

outreach in person, archive work in person, visiting labs or industry partner’s facilities, work performance discussions and hosting virtual events.

- Where they felt that events were not at all to moderately important they highlighted in-person examinations, travelling to external training, sabbaticals, meetings at other departments, business development meetings and taking part in institutional reviews.

Q10: In my experience, video conferencing software can provide an effective alternative to travelling in person for:

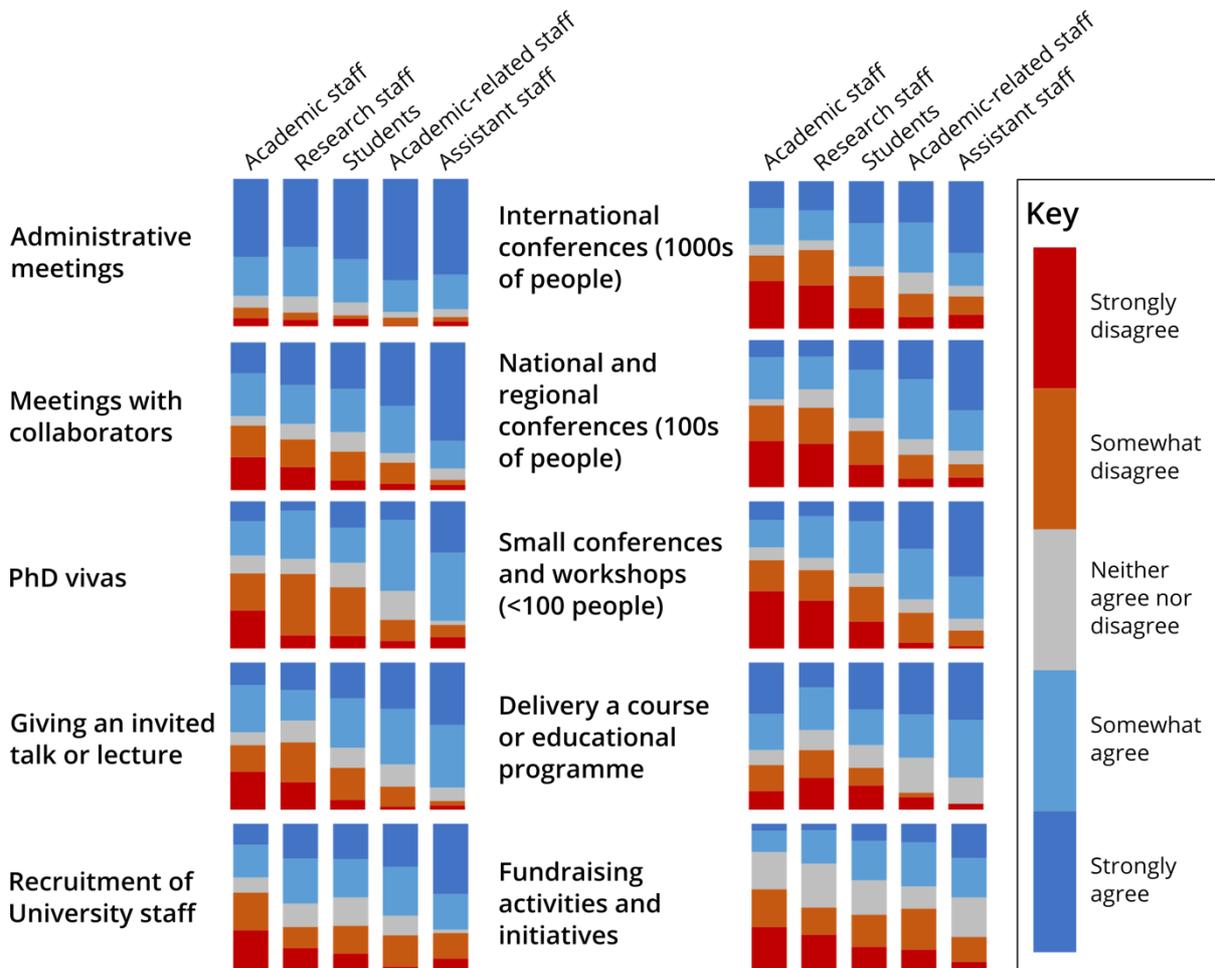


Figure 10. Results of Q10, categorised by self-declared staff/student groupings.

Respondents had the opportunity to suggest other purposes of business travel that they felt were not captured by the categories in Q10. Respondents highlighted the importance of considering hybrid meetings. Respondents also emphasised the importance of in-person fieldwork (including sometimes obtaining archival material in-person), but also drew out some of the nuance of the activities that they might take part in during business trips.

- Where they felt that virtual communication was an effective replacement, respondents highlighted student admissions interviews, regular or informal

meetings with colleagues, business development meetings, governing body or committee meetings, external training, and some industry engagement.

- Where they felt that virtual communication was not an effective replacement, respondents highlighted grants panels and institute reviews, initial meetings with people to start new international collaborations, some meetings with colleagues or at other departments, mentorship, outreach/public engagement, and some of the social aspects of working with colleagues and collaborators.

3.2.3 Policy feedback

In this section, policy-specific feedback is discussed. The structure of this section approximately follows the structure of the draft policy that was released for consultation.

Overall agreement

Respondents were asked to give their overall level of agreement with the policy in its current form, having considered all the sections of the policy in turn. Overall, agreement was strongest amongst assistant staff and weakest amongst academic staff (Figure 11).

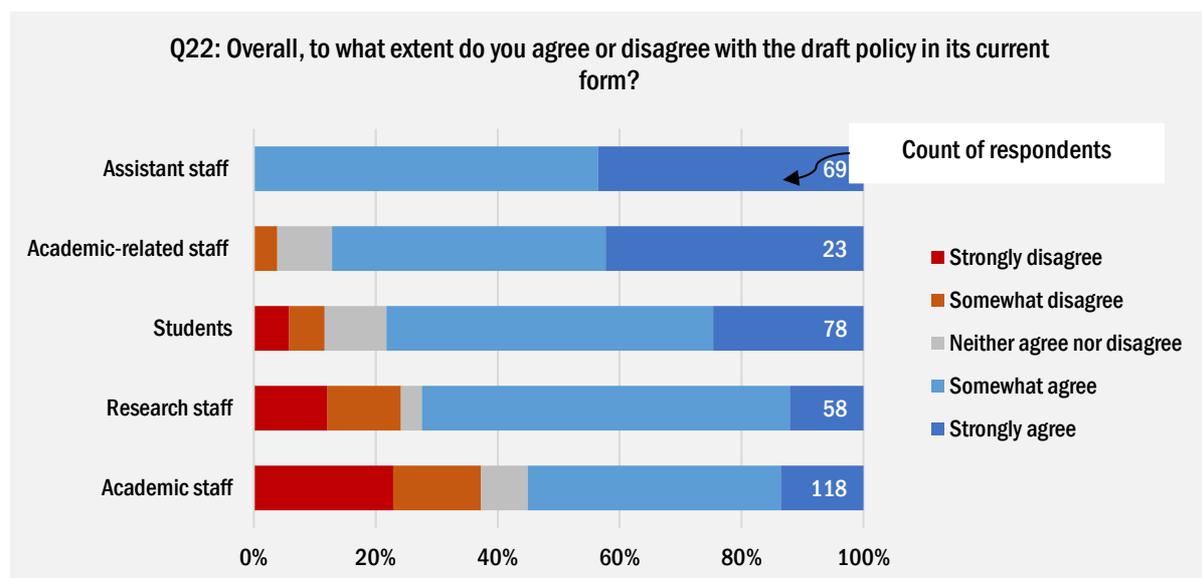


Figure 11. Results of Q22, categorised by self-declared staff/student groupings. There is a statistically significant (p -value = $1.7E-08$) relationship between Q22 and self-declared staff/student groupings.

Scope

The draft sustainable business travel policy proposed that it should apply to the following activities, regardless of who paid for the travel:

- Attendance at conferences.
- Academic meetings.
- Fieldwork (for research).
- Delivering a talk.
- Delivering a course.
- Administrative meetings.
- Fundraising activities and initiatives.
- Travel to the University’s international sites and properties,

- for example laboratories in Singapore and China.
- Undergraduate student field trips.
- Recruitment of University staff.
- Student interviews.

Student travel to/from home at the start/end of term was explicitly excluded.

Overall, there was broad majority support for the scope of the policy across all staff and student groups (Figure 12).

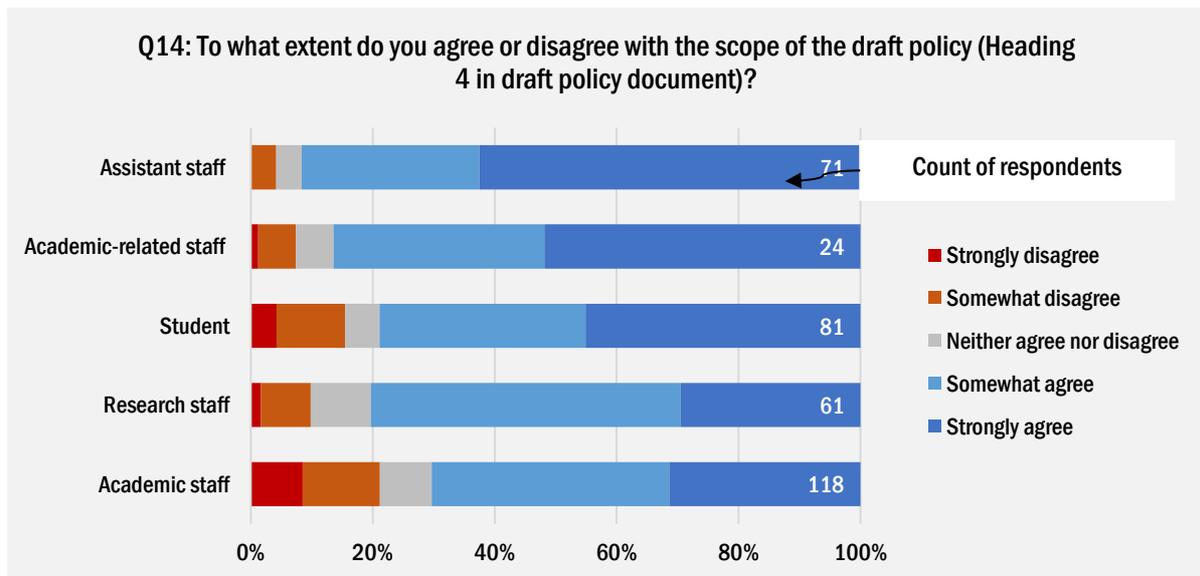


Figure 12. Results of Q14, categorised by self-declared staff/student groupings.

Comments on the scope of the policy included the following:

- Many respondents stated that student travel to/from the University “should be considered”, with one respondent stating that they were “strongly against seeking to reduce some types of travel and simply ignoring others”.
- There was also considerable confusion as to why this policy did not include staff commuting and travel between different sites on the University Estate.
- Questions were also raised over the policy’s focus on emissions from flying.
- A desire for the policy to be communicated to direct collaborators, suppliers and visitors was expressed.
- A desire for linking this policy with practices in Cambridge Colleges was expressed.

Recommendations

- **Calculate and report emissions from student travel**, including from undergraduate and postgraduate student admissions interviews and student travel to/from home at the start/end of term (this will be reviewed as part of the new Sustainability Strategy development in 2022).
- Additional clarification of the **distinction between, and sustainability strategies for, different types of travel** (i.e. commuting, student out-of-term travel and for interviews) is recommended in the revised policy (Annex A).
- Additional **justification for the focus on air travel** is recommended in the revised policy (Annex A).
- The revised policy includes **encouragement to communicate the policy to collaborators** etc.
- **Communicate the policy clearly to colleges**, and encourage them to adopt similar measures, or to go further where this does not cause significant negative EDI impacts.

Travel hierarchy and rules, including the proposed approval process

In the draft policy, a set of travel rules was proposed, as well as a guiding travel hierarchy. The travel rules were as follows:

1. For local and national travel, public transport should be chosen over car use.
2. For national travel, train and/or other public transport should be chosen over air travel.
3. Eurostar should be chosen over air travel for travel to all destinations served by Eurostar.

On occasions when staff or students needed to break these rules, they would require permission from their Head of Department.

There was support for the travel hierarchy and rules across all staff and student groups, although support was lowest amongst academic staff and highest amongst assistant staff (Figure 13).

For those who disagreed with the travel hierarchy and rules, most raised concerns over the proscriptive nature of the policy and/or the additional administrative burden involved in an approvals process. Some academic and research staff also raised that since money often comes from external funders, stipulations from funders may need to be followed that contradict travel guidance or rules. Some respondents also disagreed with the rules as they did not feel that they were strict enough, and that they would not be effective in reducing emissions, and therefore mitigating the effects of climate change.

A preference for non-proscriptive policy was also expressed by all six School Councils and the Research Policy committee. However, the Environmental Sustainability Strategy Committee was strongly of the view that the policy should include proscriptive elements.

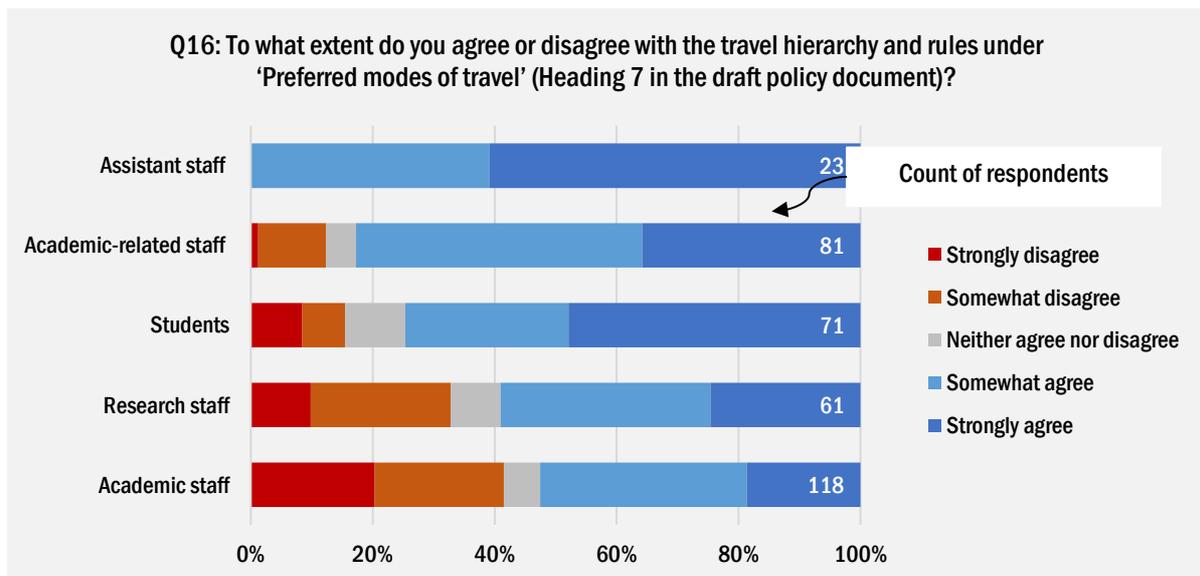


Figure 13. Results of Q16, categorised by self-declared staff/student groupings. There is a statistically significant (p -value = $4.1E-07$) relationship between responses to Q16 and self-declared staff/student groupings.

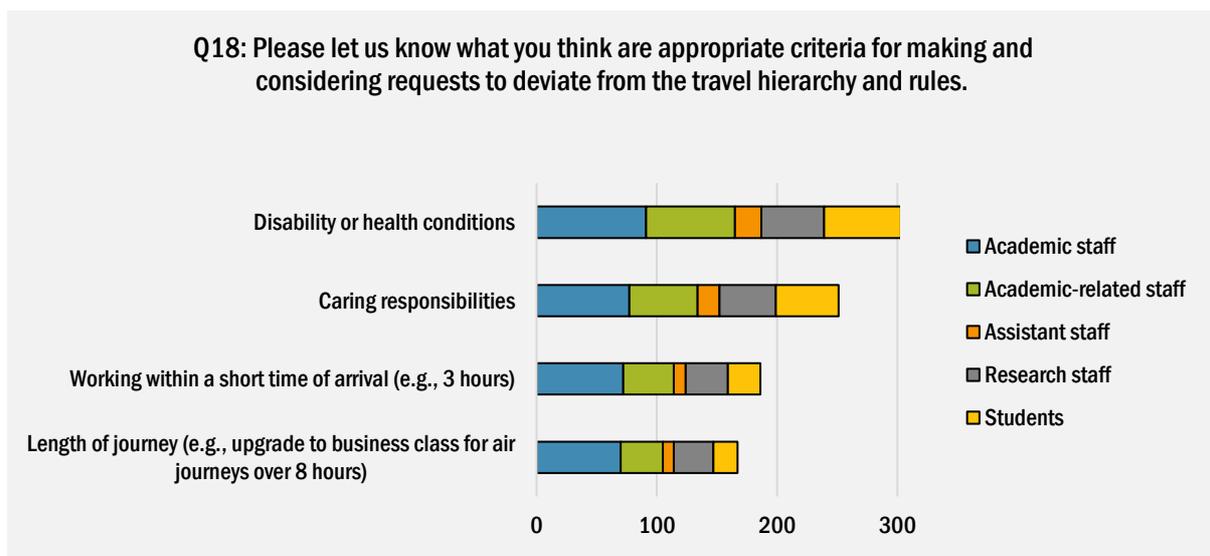


Figure 14. Results of Q18, categorised by self-declared staff/student groupings.

Respondents were given the opportunity to suggest other appropriate criteria for exemptions to those in Figure 14. Among the suggestions, aside from those who expressed a preference for not having rules at all, the most common suggestions for exemptions were as follows:

- If low-carbon transport takes longer than carbon-intensive options such as flying
- Safety considerations, including COVID-19 considerations
- If low-carbon transport costs more than carbon-intensive options such as flying

- Ability to work whilst travelling
- Business class should never be allowed or only allowed due to health condition/disability
- Reasonable arrival and departure times
- Availability of the transport mode
- Convenience of the transport mode

On the specific detail of the proposed travel hierarchy and rules, a number of key points were raised:

- A number of respondents suggested the Eurostar rule should be reframed as international rail and extended to all journeys of ~ 6 hours, or Eurostar + 3 hours, with several respondent suggesting that most of Western Europe could be reached easily by rail. A six hour journey is a reasonable suggestion for rail travel to Europe because it is similar to the length of rail journeys to major Scottish cities, which will be some of the longest rail journeys staff and students will be expected to make under the no domestic air travel rule.
- On the rule relating to public transport, a frequent comment was that public transport is not always available or practical.

Recommendations

- **Initially introduce rules as guidelines/expectations.**
- **Establish proof-of concept for travel rules and an associated approvals process through pilot schemes** in institutions. In pilot institutions two rules should be enforced: 1) no domestic air travel, and 2) no air travel to destinations that can be reached within 6 hours of London terminals by rail. We recommend that the effectiveness of the guidelines in changing business travel behaviours is regularly reviewed. Alongside the effectiveness of the pilot schemes, the performance of proscriptive policies at other institutions (e.g. University of Edinburgh) should be monitored in the coming years.
- **Extend the Eurostar travel guideline** to all international rail from London Terminals for journeys of up to 6 hours. University members should also be encouraged to consider longer train journeys if their specific needs and constraints allow.
- Implement behavioural **nudges where relevant and design friction/reflection into travel booking processes.** This could include changing the way flights are displayed in booking systems, supplying University members with individualised carbon footprints during reporting, integrating existential climate risks into travel risk assessments.
- **Compulsory training for staff and students on sustainable business travel**, including how to maximise opportunities and outputs from business travel activities. This can be integrated into the existing sustainability training module for staff.

Subsidies and incentives

This section of the draft policy proposed subsidies and incentives to facilitate choosing low-carbon transport modes. There were two incentives proposed:

- Low carbon travel days (i.e. time off in lieu when low-carbon travel takes longer and requires weekend travel).
- Additional expenses for low-carbon travel.

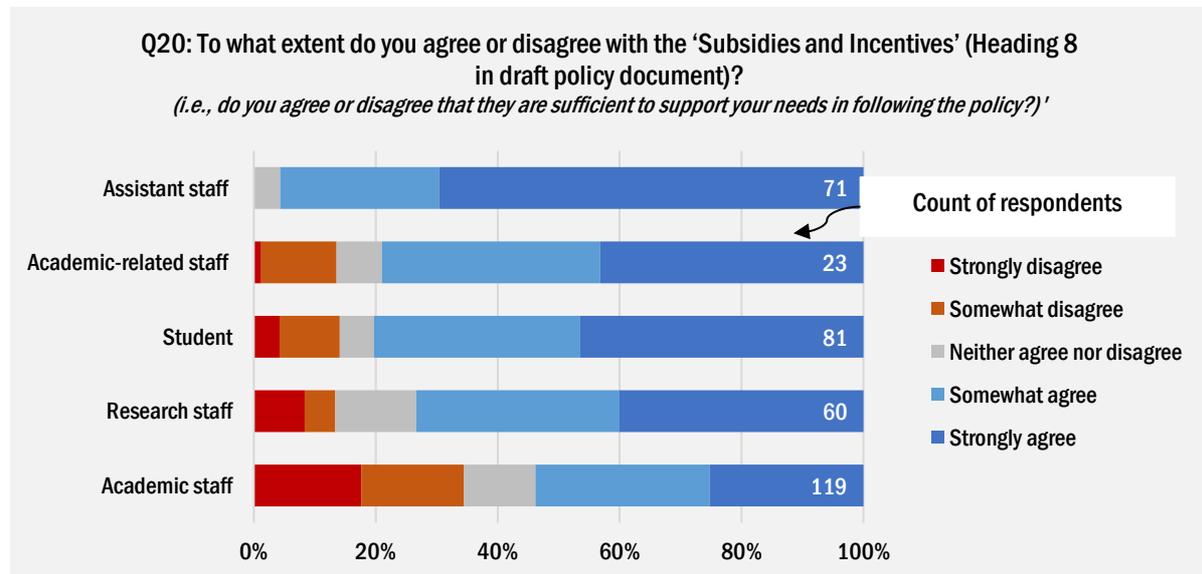


Figure 15. Results of Q20, categorised by self-declared staff/student groupings.

While there was majority support for the subsidies and incentives proposed overall (Figure 15), amongst academic staff, the group that tends to travel most frequently (Figure 3), support for low carbon travel days was lowest.

In consultation discussions, there were mixed reactions to low-carbon travel days. For those who disagreed with them, the most common themes were:

- Low carbon travel days don't fit with the way leave is taken, particularly for academics
 - Some cited that they take a more flexible approach to leave that low-carbon travel days would not be compatible with,
 - Some suggested that as they don't take all their leave anyway, they would not be able to use low-carbon travel days.
- There is no resource to cover additional staff leave due to the taking of low-carbon travel days

The most commonly suggested alternative incentives or subsidies were:

- University funding to pay the difference between rail and air fares (under the assumption that rail fares are typically more expensive),
- Incentives for car-sharing or no refunds for solo car use when it could have been shared,

- Childcare support when University members are expected to spend longer away from home to travel by low-carbon travel modes.

Recommendations

- **The pilot schemes, where mandatory rules will be tested, will provide more evidence of what subsidies might be needed to support staff and students.** Other incentives may need to be considered, particularly for those with limited funding. For example, for PhD students this might include an additional source of funding they could apply to with the sole purpose of paying the difference between low-carbon transport modes (e.g. trains) and flying.
- Due to the complexity of different leave structures for different staff groups and postgraduate students, the introduction of low carbon travel days is not straightforward. Therefore further work is needed to understand how these would work in practice. **Low carbon travel days should be reconsidered in a future review of the policy.**

4 Conclusions

4.1 Summary of recommendations

4.1.1 General recommendations

- The University should support its individual constituent institutions to go further than the University policy where there is a desire and a mandate within the institution to do so, and where this does not cause significant negative equality and diversity impacts.
- The University should encourage all events to take into account access considerations and wherever possible, take an 'inclusivity by design' approach where online alternatives are offered as standard.
- The University should make it clear that it values virtual attendance for e.g. invited talks equally to in-person attendance in recruitment and promotion policies. During the 2021 consultation a review of recruitment policies had just been carried out so there was not appetite to reopen the review. However, the University should return to this issue in future reviews of promotion and recruitment policies.

4.1.2 Reporting recommendations

- Calculate and report emissions from student travel, including from undergraduate and postgraduate student admissions interviews and student travel to/from home at the start/end of term (this will be reviewed as part of the new Sustainability Strategy development in 2022).
- Additional clarification of the distinction between, and sustainability strategies for, different types of travel (i.e. commuting, student out-of-term travel and for interviews) is recommended in the revised policy (Annex B). Additional justification for the focus on air travel is recommended in the revised policy (Annex B).
- The revised policy includes encouragement to communicate the policy to collaborators etc.
- Communicate the policy clearly to colleges, and encourage them to adopt similar measures, or to go further where this does not cause significant negative equality and diversity impacts.

4.1.3 Travel rule/guidance recommendations

- Initially introduce rules as guidelines/expectations.
- Establish proof-of concept for travel rules and an associated approvals process through pilot schemes in institutions. In pilot institutions two rules should be enforced: 1) no domestic air travel, and 2) no air travel to destinations that can be reached within 6 hours of London terminals by rail. We recommend that the effectiveness of the guidelines in changing business travel behaviours is regularly reviewed. Alongside the effectiveness of the pilot schemes, the performance of proscriptive policies at other institutions (e.g. University of Edinburgh) should be monitored in the coming years.

- Extend the Eurostar travel expectation to all international rail from London Terminals for journeys of up to 6 hours. University members should also be encouraged to consider longer train journeys if their specific needs and constraints allow.
- Implement behavioural nudges where relevant and design friction/reflection into travel booking processes. This could include changing the way flights are displayed in booking systems, supplying University members with individualised carbon footprints during reporting, and integrating existential climate risks into travel risk assessments.
- Compulsory training for staff and students on sustainable business travel, including how to maximise opportunities and outputs from business travel activities. This can be integrated into the existing sustainability training module for staff.

4.1.4 Subsidies and incentives recommendation

- The pilot schemes, where mandatory rules will be tested, will provide more evidence of what subsidies might be needed to support staff and students. Other incentives may need to be considered, particularly for those with limited funding. For example, for PhD students this might include an additional source of funding they could apply to with the sole purpose of paying the difference between low-carbon transport modes (e.g. trains) and flying.
- Due to the complexity of different leave structures for different staff groups and postgraduate students, the introduction of low carbon travel days is not straightforward. Therefore further work is needed to understand how these would work in practice. Low carbon travel days should be reconsidered in a future review of the policy.

4.2 Equality and diversity considerations

Concerns were raised in consultation over the loss of opportunities to network, generate ideas and establish collaborations that are key to research or business objectives. The loss of such opportunities may negatively impact more junior staff and students who are yet to develop their network and establish their career. However, there are also co-benefits to an increased focus on virtual alternatives to business travel, including increasing access to those who cannot travel, or cannot travel as regularly as they might want to.

In the proposed pilot travel rule schemes, equality and diversity considerations need to be treated with care. These may arise if significant additional barriers are created for those with disabilities, health conditions or caring responsibilities. Applying for exemptions for travel rules should be straightforward, and should ideally not require individuals to declare protected characteristics. Issues of unfairness may also arise due to differences in availability of funding, which is likely to be strongly linked to career stage.

4.3 Communicating and implementing the policy

4.3.1 Communicating the guidelines

The Sustainability Team will publish and communicate the policy through all relevant channels, including central University Comms, the Research Office, Postdoc Academy, *ourcambridge*, student unions, and emails from heads of department to their constituent staff and students. The final policy will also be communicated to the various committees that provided feedback on the policy throughout the consultation.

The Sustainability Team will communicate the policy through its own communication channels (including the *Greenlines* newsletter, the Energy and Environment Champions, and Green Impact teams). Cambridge Zero will also publicise the policy through their communication channels (website, Cambridge Zero academy etc.)

The University should also engage with other HEIs and funding bodies to communicate the policy and encourage other institutions to move in the same direction.

4.3.2 Developing and reviewing the pilot schemes

The pilot schemes need to be sufficiently large to produce significant results. Both small and large departments, departments from all 6 schools, as well as non-academic departments should be included in the schemes. All departments that wish to volunteer for the scheme should be permitted to do so. Departments with different dominant modes of booking travel (e.g. predominantly expenses or Key Travel) should also be included.

The most straightforward way to enforce travel rules will be through the University's preferred travel provider (currently Key Travel). This allows for integration of the rules into the booking process, including an integrated approvals process that will send the approval request directly to the assigned person(s). Where departments participating in pilot schemes do not currently book a majority of travel through Key Travel, the pilot schemes could also be used to encourage a shift in travel booking behaviour. It would also be useful to include departments in the pilot scheme that have started using the University's new online expenses systems.

Historical travel data can be used to identify departments that have, at least in the past, regularly used air travel to reach domestic or Eurostar destinations (Paris, Brussels). Even if these departments are not included in the scheme, they should be engaged with to understand why air travel was needed, and why it might be needed in the future.

As mentioned in section 4.2, pilot schemes should be carefully assessed for any emerging equality and diversity issues. The Sustainability Team will regularly engage with pilot departments throughout the duration of the schemes, and will analyse and evaluate the data received. This will include the number of times an exemption to the rules was granted, and the reasons for this.

Annexes

Annex A: Proposed sustainable business travel policy used for consultation

National and international business travel can play a key part in achieving academic, research and education objectives at the University of Cambridge. The purpose of this policy is not to limit all business travel, but rather to encourage and support a reduction in non-essential travel and the carbon impacts of travel. In particular, it aims to achieve a reduction in the total number of flights and the total distance travelled by air (as opposed to other transport modes) by University staff and students.

1 Policy context

In 2018/19⁷, carbon emissions from business travel were estimated to be around 16,000 tonnes CO₂e, which is roughly equivalent to emissions from gas used for space and water heating across the University estate.

The University has a target to reduce per-capita emissions from flights by 25% against 2014/15 levels by 2024/25⁸. Between 2014/15 and 2018/19, per-capita emissions from flights increased by around 30%⁹.

The [Carbon Reduction Strategy \(2020 Update\)](#) sets an ambition to minimise the University's scope 3 carbon emissions, including those from business travel, using offsetting to achieve net-zero carbon emissions¹⁰ for residual unavoidable emissions from business travel.

2 Aims

This policy aims to promote and incentivise climate conscious business travel (including alternatives to travel) amongst University staff and students.

The term “climate conscious travel” was first developed by the University of Edinburgh. It is achieved when the travel choices that staff and students make as part of their day-to-day work and study are informed and prioritised by the environmental impact they have, and preference is given towards virtual collaboration and lower carbon travel modes. With climate conscious travel in effect, the environmental cost of travel is prioritised over the financial cost and individual convenience.

To encourage and support a culture of climate conscious travel, this policy aims to:

- make it easier and more culturally acceptable for staff and students to attend meetings, conferences, etc., virtually, rather than having to, or feeling that they have to, attend in person,
- empower those who cannot or do not want to travel regularly for the purposes of their work or study, and
- empower those who need to travel but wish to do so via more sustainable modes.

⁷ 2018/19 is used here as the reference year as it is the last full academic year where travel was unaffected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

⁸ https://www.environment.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/carbon_reduction_strategy_2020_update.pdf

⁹ https://www.environment.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/environmental_sustainability_report_2019.pdf

¹⁰ The University's target for scope 1 and 2 emissions is to become absolute zero carbon by 2048; the University has also expressed an aspiration to achieve zero carbon against scope 1 and 2 by 2038. The University's [Carbon Offsetting Working Group](#) is working to develop an internal offsetting scheme for residual unavoidable emissions from business travel.

3 Guiding Principles

This policy has been developed with the following guiding principles in mind, which are based on those previously developed by the Tyndall Centre:

- a. Simple: The policy should place minimal administrative burden on staff. We aim to provide staff and students with clear information that allows them to make informed choices.
- b. Self-guided: There will be a diversity of reasons/circumstances for travel, and of views on which business travel is 'essential'. We will ask staff to form and evaluate their rationale for their travel emissions themselves. We will provide general principles to support their evaluation.
- c. Self-monitored: Calculations of emissions from air travel will be derived from our financial systems, as and when these are sufficiently developed to support reporting. Interested individuals will be able to assess their own performance over time, and compare themselves to other (anonymised) members of staff and students within their department and across the University.
- d. Transparent: The University will report on its business travel and publicly disclose air travel emissions at a granularity of not less than 50 people. A department with more than 50 members (staff and research students) will be reported as a unit. Smaller departments will be aggregated.
- e. Equality and inclusivity: By helping to reduce the need or expectation for an individual to fly for work purposes, the policy supports inclusion of those who cannot fly for reasons of health, mobility, caring responsibilities etc., and those who choose not to fly. At the same time, however, the aim of the policy should be to reduce University flights in a way that does not discriminate against or disadvantage any particular individual, and to provide equality of opportunity for all.

4 Scope

This policy covers business travel, which is defined to include:

- Attendance at conferences.
- Academic meetings.
- Fieldwork (for research).
- Delivering a talk.
- Delivering a course.
- Administrative meetings.
- Fundraising activities and initiatives.
- Travel to the University's international sites and properties, for example laboratories in Singapore and China.
- Undergraduate student field trips.
- Recruitment of University staff.
- Student interviews.

The policy applies to these categories of travel, regardless of who has paid for the travel.

The following types of travel are excluded from this policy:

- Student travel to/from home at the end/ start of term.

5 Reducing the need to travel

Alternatives to travel must be considered before agreeing to travel in person.

The University will invest in technological support to ensure staff and students have access to high-quality video conferencing facilities that provide them with an alternative to travelling for certain events and meetings. These provisions will include:

- Software: including selecting a reliable set of virtual collaboration tools across the University.
- Hardware and space: providing suitable equipment for staff and students to conduct virtual meetings effectively; providing suitable space within the University for virtual meetings to take place.
- Training and support: providing training and technical support for staff and students using these virtual collaboration tools.

6 Essential versus non-essential travel

The University recognises that some travel is essential for supporting academic, research and education objectives. Staff and students should refer to the criteria listed below to determine whether a specific journey is essential for progressing their research or study. Journeys that do not meet these criteria will require authorisation by exception by the Head of Department/Institution (or the Head of School where the request is coming from the Head of Department/Institution).

Criteria for identifying essential travel:

- *To be developed through consultation.*

Wherever possible, the number of individuals who travel should be limited to essential travellers only. Staff and students should refer to the criteria listed below to help them to identify essential travellers. Staff/students who do not meet these criteria will require authorisation to travel by exception by the Head of Department/Institution (or the Head of School where the request is coming from the Head of Department/Institution).

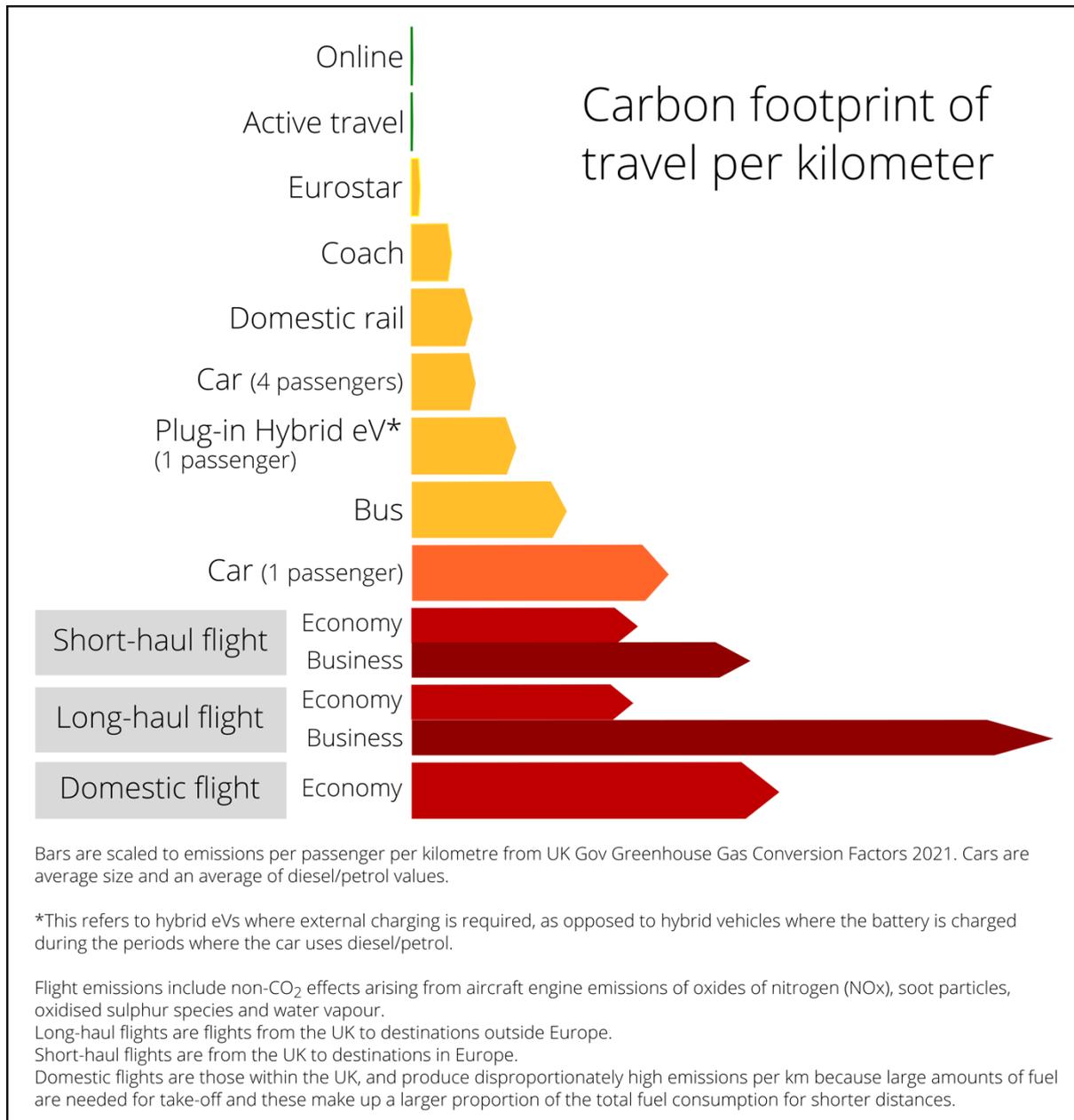
Criteria for identifying essential travellers:

- *To be developed through consultation.*

Generally, there is a presumption against an individual member of staff/student making regular, short-stay trips (especially on a regular basis), in particular journeys made by plane. Wherever possible, individuals should combine their needs to travel into fewer, longer-stay trips.

7 Preferred modes of travel

When it is essential to travel, staff and students should prioritise modes of travel that have the lowest carbon impact. The carbon efficiency of different modes of travel is shown in the travel hierarchy shown below.



In addition to this, staff and students are required to follow the specific stipulations below:

- For local and national travel, public transport should be chosen over car use.
- For national travel, train and/or other public transport should be chosen over air travel.
- Eurostar should be chosen over air travel for travel to all destinations served by Eurostar.

In instances when staff/students are unable to adhere to the travel hierarchy and stipulations above, for example due to personal circumstances, authorisation by exception is required from the Head of Department/Institution (or the Head of School where the request is coming from the Head of Department/Institution). In making and considering such requests, staff should be guided by the criteria below:

Criteria for making and considering requests to deviate from the travel hierarchy:

- *To be developed through consultation.*

When there is a genuine need to fly, there is a general presumption against Business and First Class bookings, which produce greater emissions than Economy bookings due to the allocation of more space on the plane. Exceptions to this require authorisation by exception from the Head of Department/Institution (or the Head of School where the request is coming from the Head of Department/Institution). In making and considering such requests, staff should be guided by the criteria below:

Criteria for making and considering requests to book flights in a class above Economy Class:

- *To be developed through consultation.*

8 Subsidies and incentives

When using a less carbon-intensive mode of travel that takes longer (for example, train rather than plane), staff and students will be permitted to use more of their working hours/days to complete their journey. Individuals are not expected to use their non-working hours/days in order to travel by a less carbon-intensive mode.

If for some reason an individual cannot complete their journey using the less carbon-intensive mode during their working days, then they may request additional annual leave for low-carbon travel days. Individuals may claim up to a maximum of five low-carbon travel days per year. Individuals must gain approval to claim low-carbon travel days from their Head of Department/Institution in advance of making their travel arrangements.

Staff and students may claim additional subsistence expenses (accommodation, food and drink) when travelling by a less carbon-intensive mode necessitates more travel time.

If a member of staff/student needs to incur additional expenses to allow them to work whilst travelling by a less carbon-intensive mode (e.g. roaming charges, internet connection charges), then they may claim these as expenses, provided it can reasonably be shown that these additional expenses were incurred as a consequence of utilising a less carbon-intensive mode of travel.

9 Mitigating the impact of air travel

In instances where it is necessary to travel by plane, staff and students are required to offset the carbon emissions associated with their flights in accordance with the University's [offsetting policy](#). The cost of offsets must be met from the Department's budget.

If an individual needs to pay for the offsets themselves, they can claim this back via expenses ([University expenses policy](#)).

10 Reporting

Staff and students are strongly encouraged to book all travel by public transport or plane via the University's preferred travel provider. This will facilitate more robust measurement of the carbon impact of travel being undertaken by University staff and students.

Departments may put measures in place to monitor how their staff and students are booking travel. If necessary, Departments have the authority to take steps to address the behaviour of staff and student who persistently book business travel via means other than the University's preferred travel provider.

The University will regularly report its emissions from business travel. Emissions from air travel will be disclosed at a granularity of not less than 50 people. A department with more than 50 members (staff and research students) will be reported as a unit. Smaller departments will be aggregated.

Where possible and subject to data availability, the University will also disclose the reasons for travel, in particular for air travel.

Where comparable data are available, the University will benchmark its emissions from flights against those of other universities.

11 Engagement and review

The University will engage with grant providers, travel providers and other HEIs to promote this policy and clarify the University's requirements and expectations of its staff and students in relation to business travel.

The University will continue to monitor best practice in this area and will periodically review the policy in light of this.

1 Introduction

This policy covers business travel, which here is defined to include all domestic and international travel outside the University Estate by University staff and students for research, business, education and study purposes. It does not include travel between different parts of the University Estate or commuting to/from home (the University has a [Transport strategy](#) which covers local travel initiatives).

The purpose of this policy is to encourage and support a reduction in non-essential travel and the carbon impacts of travel, and not to limit all business travel. In particular, it aims to achieve a reduction in the total number of flights and the total distance travelled by air (as opposed to other transport modes) by University staff and students.

2 Policy context

National and international business travel can play a key part in achieving academic, research and education objectives at the University of Cambridge. However, in 2018/19¹¹, carbon emissions from business travel were estimated to be around 16,000 tonnes CO₂e, which is roughly equivalent to emissions from gas used for space and water heating across the University estate.

The University's target for scope 1 and 2 emissions is to become absolute zero carbon by 2048; the University has also expressed an aspiration to achieve zero carbon against scope 1 and 2 by 2038. The [Carbon Reduction Strategy \(2020 Update\)](#) sets an ambition to minimise the University's scope 3 carbon emissions, including those from business travel, using offsetting to achieve net-zero carbon

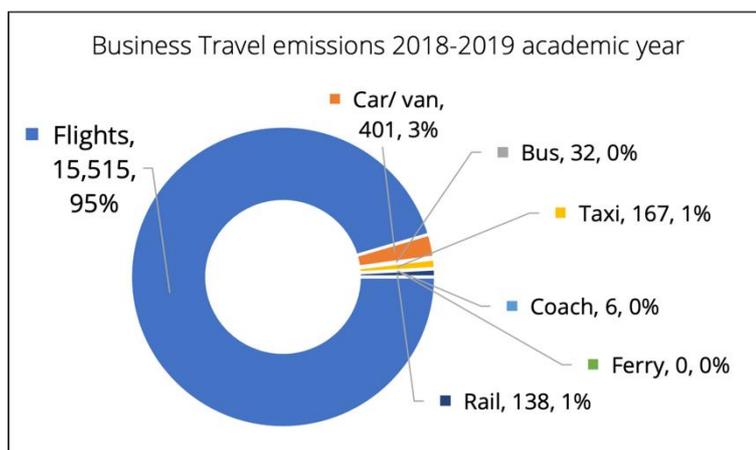


Figure 16. Greenhouse gas emissions (tonnes CO₂e) from business travel in the 2018–19 academic year, by transport mode used. Data are obtained from the University's financial systems (travel bookings through the University preferred travel provider, expenses claims etc.). Legend keys are as follows: transport mode, tonnes CO₂e, percentage of total emissions associated with this transport mode.

¹¹ 2018/19 is used here as the reference year as the last full pre-COVID-19 pandemic academic year.

emissions¹² for residual unavoidable emissions from business travel. The University has a target to reduce per-capita emissions from flights by 25% against 2014/15 levels by 2024/25¹³. Between 2014/15 and 2018/19, per-capita emissions from flights increased by around 30%¹⁴.

The focus on emissions from flying in this policy is motivated by the following reasons:

- **Emissions from air travel make up around 95% of business travel CO₂e emissions at the University.** Flying is a very carbon-intensive activity. One return flight from London Heathrow to New York JFK emits around 2700 kg CO₂e, which is equivalent to approximately half the average annual per capita emissions in the UK¹⁵.
- **Rates of flying are unevenly distributed across society.** It has been estimated that only 1% of the global population causes 50% of CO₂ emissions from commercial aviation¹⁶. University data indicates that travel is also unevenly distributed amongst University members – between 2017–2019 approximately 50% of those who did travel took only one trip, and most University members did not travel at all.
- **Aviation is a hard-to-decarbonise sector.** Currently, there are no airborne low carbon alternatives to fossil-fuelled flight. Low- or zero-carbon flights (powered by e.g., batteries, hydrogen or sustainable aviation fuels) are unlikely to be widely available for even short-haul flights before 2050. Industry and UK Government net-zero plans do not currently include a demand-management framework¹⁷, and will rely heavily on carbon sequestration and offsetting to 2050. Due to the challenges associated with decarbonising aviation, the sector is predicted to account for as much as 25% of UK greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050¹⁸.

Within this context, it is appropriate to consider measures at the University level to reduce emissions from business travel.

3 Aims

This policy aims to promote and incentivise climate conscious business travel (including virtual/online alternatives to travel) amongst University staff and students.

¹² The University's [Carbon Offsetting Working Group](#) has developed an internal offsetting scheme for residual unavoidable emissions from business travel.

¹³ This target will be reviewed and updated during the development of the University's new Sustainability Strategy.

¹⁴ [Environmental Sustainability Report 2019](#)

¹⁵ Average airline emissions, according to: <https://www.atmosfair.de/en/offset/flight/> (calculated in November 2021). UK per capita emissions in 2018 (5.7 tonnes CO₂e), from [World Bank](#).

¹⁶ Gössling, S., & Humpe, A. (2020). [The global scale, distribution and growth of aviation: Implications for climate change](#). *Global Environmental Change*, 65, 102194.

¹⁷ This is despite the Climate Change Committee recommending the introduction of demand-side measures as a priority for aviation in its [2021 Progress Report to Parliament](#).

¹⁸ [Letter: International aviation and shipping and net zero](#), September 2019, The Climate Change Committee.

The term “climate conscious travel” was first developed by the University of Edinburgh. It is achieved when the travel choices that staff and students make as part of their day-to-day work and study are informed by the environmental impact they have, and preference is given towards virtual collaboration and lower carbon travel modes. With climate conscious travel in effect, the environmental cost of travel is prioritised over the financial cost and individual convenience, but not over individual safety considerations (as covered by the [University’s Safeguarding Policy](#)).

To encourage and support a culture of climate conscious travel, this policy aims to:

- make it easier and more culturally acceptable for staff and students to attend meetings, conferences, etc., virtually, rather than having to, or feeling that they have to, attend in person,
- empower those who cannot or do not want to travel regularly for the purposes of their work or study, and
- empower those who need to travel but wish to do so via more sustainable modes.

4 Guiding Principles

This policy has been developed with the following guiding principles in mind¹⁹:

- f. Simple: The policy should place minimal administrative burden on staff. We aim to provide staff and students with clear information that allows them to make informed choices.
- g. Self-guided: There will be a diversity of reasons/circumstances for travel, and of reasons for which in-person business travel is ‘essential’. We will provide general guiding principles to support their evaluation, which we will ask staff and students to use to form and evaluate their rationale for their travel emissions.
- h. Self-monitored: Calculations of emissions from air travel will be derived from our financial systems, and reporting will be reviewed and/or expanded as these systems are developed further. As and when financial systems support this, individuals will be able to assess their own performance over time, and compare themselves to other (anonymised) members of staff and students within their department and across the University.
- i. Transparent: The University will report on its business travel and publicly disclose total emissions, at least annually. Subject to agreement, Institutions and Schools will receive anonymised reports of emissions produced by their constituent staff and students.
- j. Equality and inclusivity: By helping to reduce the need or expectation for an individual to travel for work purposes, the policy supports inclusion of those who cannot travel for reasons of health, mobility, caring responsibilities etc.,

¹⁹ Following those developed in the [travel strategy](#) at the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research.

and those who choose not to fly. At the same time, however, the aim of the policy should be to reduce University business travel in a way that does not discriminate against or disadvantage any particular individual, and to provide equality of opportunity for all.

5 Scope

The scope of this policy determines which types of travel are covered by the policy. Note that this does not mean that all the types of travel in the scope should be subject to reductions to the same extent. However, they may be subject to offsetting requirements as detailed in the [University's offsetting policy](#).

This policy covers **business travel**.

Business travel, as defined in this policy, includes all domestic and international travel outside the University Estate for research, education and business purposes related to the University. This includes overseas assignments²⁰. It does not include travel between different parts of the University Estate or commuting to/from home (the University has a [Transport strategy](#) which covers local travel initiatives). It does not include student travel to/from the University at the start/end of term, but students are expected to be aware of the policy and follow the travel guidelines when making travel decisions.

Cambridge Colleges, which are independent institutions from the University, are not covered by this policy but the University encourages colleges to adopt similar sustainable business travel practices to those outlined in this policy.

Business travel includes, but is not limited to, the following purposes:

- Attendance at conferences/workshops.
- Academic meetings.
- Fieldwork (for research).
- Delivering a talk or lecture.
- Delivering or receiving a course/training.
- Administrative and business meetings (inc. committees, governing body meetings).
- Fundraising activities and initiatives.
- Travel to the University's international sites and properties, for example laboratories in Singapore and China.
- Recruitment of University staff.
- Student examinations (e.g. PhD viva examinations).
- Student activities (e.g. trips made by University societies).
- Undergraduate student field trips.
- Staff travelling for student admissions interviews.
- Overseas assignments.

The policy applies to these categories of travel (when carried out by a member of the University), regardless of who has paid for the travel.

The University strongly encourages staff and students to communicate the policy to visitors to the University, and expects staff and students to follow the policy when arranging individual or group visits to the University.

Where external partners (e.g. funding bodies) allow, the University strongly encourages staff and students to incorporate the sustainable business travel

²⁰ Best practices and administrative processes for overseas assignments are laid out in the University's [Global Mobility Policy](#).

considerations outlined in this policy when designing research projects and applying for grants.

6 Reducing the need to travel: supporting virtual alternatives

Alternatives to travel must be considered before deciding to travel in person.

The University is investing in technological support to ensure staff and students have access to high-quality video conferencing facilities that provide them with an alternative to travelling for certain events and meetings. These provisions include:

- A reliable set of [virtual collaboration tools](#) across the University.
- Providing suitable equipment for staff and students to conduct virtual meetings effectively, and providing suitable space within the University for virtual meetings to take place (including [hybrid meetings](#)).
- Training and technical support for staff and students using these. Some of this is available via the above, but more will need to be developed.

7 Essential versus non-essential travel

The University recognises that virtual collaboration methods are not always an effective alternative to in-person interactions, and therefore some travel is essential for supporting academic, research, business and education objectives. However, wherever possible, the number of individuals who travel should be limited to essential travellers only.

The University also recognises that staff and students are best placed to form and evaluate their rationale for their travel emissions themselves, but they should refer to the guidance listed below to determine whether a specific journey is essential for progressing their research, study or business objectives, and to help them to identify essential travellers.

Essential and non-essential travel guidance for all staff and students²¹

Group	Well-justified emissions i.e. potentially suitable for travel, possibly including high-carbon modes, such as flying	Poorly justified emissions i.e. generally not suitable for carbon-intensive travel; suitable for virtual communication or low-carbon travel
	Before all travel, the following should be considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you achieve your goals using virtual methods? • Can you achieve your goals more locally or use low-carbon transport modes? 	
All	Fieldwork/lab-work/research/study trips that cannot be carried out locally or virtually.	Regular, routine or administrative meetings with colleagues/collaborators.

²¹ The following guidance was developed through consultation with staff and students across the University, and applies to academic, academic-related and non-academic staff, as well as to students. The University recognises that the potential additional outputs and opportunities of virtual versus in-person attendance should be judged by staff and students themselves.

	<p>Travel subject to contractual obligations with external partners (e.g. funding bodies) or organisations²².</p> <p>Key meetings to establish collaborations and trust.</p> <p>Some legally or commercially sensitive negotiations or discussions, where these cannot be carried out locally or online.</p> <p>Collaborations and knowledge-sharing with low-middle income countries.</p> <p>Long stays at other institutions for research, study or business purposes.</p> <p>Some public outreach/engagement activities that cannot be carried out locally or online.</p>	<p>Travelling without presenting new research results.</p> <p>Travelling for very short durations without significant associated opportunities or outputs (e.g. to give a talk only).</p> <p>Conferences/meetings where no new results are presented and there are limited associated opportunities or outputs.</p> <p>In-person examinations (recommended default is online when examiner travel involves air travel).</p> <p>When goals could be achieved with fewer travellers.</p>
Early mid career	<p><u>See 'All' above, as well as the below:</u></p> <p>Presenting and promoting work/research at conferences, meetings, workshops.</p> <p>Key opportunities for networking and mentorship, including finding new collaborators or career development opportunities.</p> <p>Attending key training not available locally.</p>	<p><u>See 'All' above, as well as the below:</u></p> <p>Attending a workshop or meeting not directly related to own research, study or business projects.</p>
Mid career	<p><u>See 'All' above, as well as the below:</u></p> <p>Conferences/meetings where there are significant associated opportunities and outputs.</p> <p>Key opportunities for networking, including finding new collaborators or career development opportunities.</p> <p>Attending key training not available locally.</p>	<p><u>See 'All' above, as well as the below:</u></p> <p>Attending a workshop or meeting not directly related to own research, study or business projects.</p>

²² However, where possible and appropriate, the University encourages staff and students to request virtual communication approaches from their external partners and collaborators.

Senior staff	<u>See 'All' above, as well as the below:</u> When in-person interaction is significantly more likely to result in a positive/successful fundraising/negotiating outcome. Conferences/meetings where there are significant associated opportunities and outputs.	<u>See 'All' above, as well as the below:</u> Speeches and lectures that could be given virtually instead.
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Generally, staff and students should avoid making regular, short-stay trips (especially on a regular basis), in particular journeys made by plane. Wherever possible²³, individuals should combine their needs to travel into fewer, longer-stay trips.

8 Preferred modes of travel

Alternatives to travel must be considered before deciding to travel in person.

When it is essential to travel, staff and students should prioritise available modes of travel that have the lowest carbon impact. The carbon efficiency of different modes of travel is shown in the travel hierarchy shown below.

²³ The University recognises that combining trips may be difficult or impossible for those with caring responsibilities or certain disabilities or health conditions; these considerations, as well as any safety implications, should take priority where necessary.

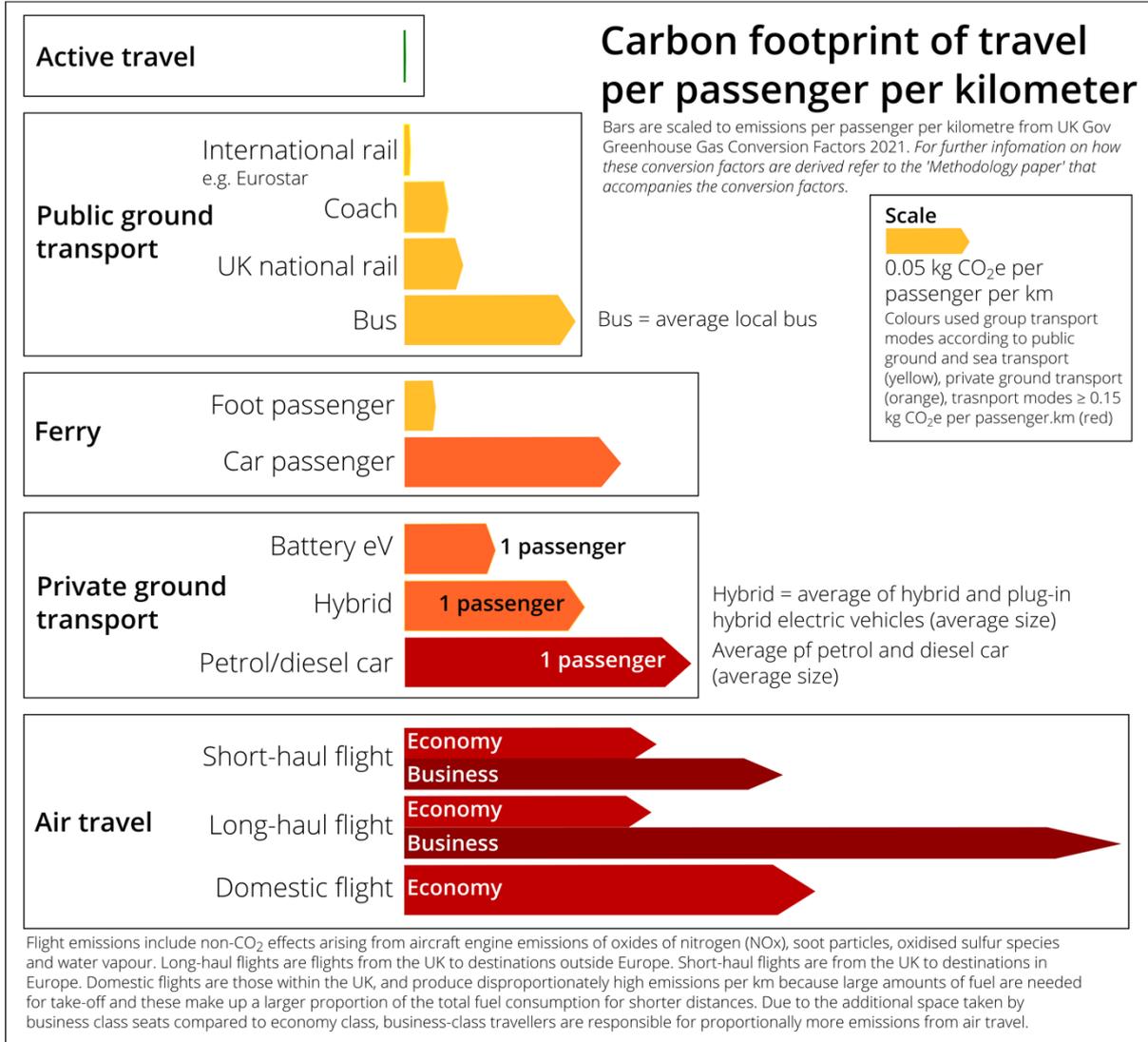
Is in-person business travel essential to achieve your goals?

No

Use virtual communication methods instead

Yes

Can you achieve your goals closer to home? (i.e. travelling a shorter distance)



In addition to this, staff and students are expected to follow the specific stipulations below:

1. For local and national travel, where available, public transport should be chosen over car use.
2. For national travel, train and/or other public transport should be chosen over air travel.
3. Train travel (including Eurostar and other international rail) should be chosen over air travel for travel to all European destinations that can be reached within 6 hours (minimum²⁴) from London terminals.

²⁴ Staff and students are encouraged to consider low-carbon transport modes for longer journeys (>6 hours), but should use their judgement to determine what total journey duration is appropriate for their purposes and constraints.

There may be occasions when it is not possible to follow the travel expectations above. Appropriate criteria for deviation from the travel hierarchy:

- Safety considerations (e.g. in some countries/regions public transport may not be sufficiently safe).
- Caring responsibilities, where a longer time away would mean you are unable to make the trip.
- When following the sustainable business travel guidelines would be detrimental due to disability or health conditions.
- When contractual obligations from external partners (e.g. funding bodies) make following the travel expectations impossible.

There is a general presumption against Premium Economy and Business Class bookings, which are responsible for greater emissions than Economy bookings due to the allocation of more space on the plane. First Class bookings are not permitted under the [University Finance Division travel policy](#) and are strongly discouraged.

Appropriate criteria for booking flights in a class above Economy Class, as stated in the [University Finance Division travel policy](#):

- the flight is more than 8 hours, **and** they are working on behalf of the University (e.g. presenting a lecture/attending an event) within 3 hours of landing.
- When flying in economy class would be detrimental due to disability or health conditions.

9 Timeline for enforcement of proposed travel rules

Travel stipulations 2 and 3 in section 8 will initially be introduced as expectations. However, several University institutions will be identified for pilot programs to run in Lent and Easter terms in 2022, where stipulations 2 and 3 will be enforced as rules. This will allow more evidence-gathering and will provide proof-of-concept for a travel approvals process.

The performance of the pilot schemes, including the travel bookings made in both pilot and non-pilot institutions will be monitored (as described in section 12) and assessed by the Sustainability Team for the duration of the schemes. The outcome of the pilots, together with the travel patterns of non-pilot institutions will be evaluated and presented to the Environmental Sustainability Strategy Committee for a recommendation to be made to University Council on whether certain aspects of the policy should move from being expectations to rules. This review will take place by Lent Term 2023.

10 Subsidies and incentives

Staff and students may claim additional subsistence expenses (accommodation, food and drink) when travelling by a less carbon-intensive mode necessitates more travel time.

If a member of staff/student needs to incur additional expenses to allow them to work whilst travelling by a less carbon-intensive mode (e.g. roaming charges, internet connection charges), then they may claim these as expenses, provided it can reasonably be shown that these additional expenses were incurred as a consequence of utilising a less carbon-intensive mode of travel.

11 Mitigating the impact of air travel – offsetting

In instances where it is necessary to travel by plane, staff and students are required to offset the carbon emissions associated with their business travel in accordance with the University's [offsetting policy](#).

12 Monitoring and reporting

Staff and students are strongly encouraged to book all travel by public transport or plane via the University's preferred travel provider, which provides options to book both online and through an agent (either via email or over the phone). This will facilitate more robust measurement of the carbon impact of travel being undertaken by University staff and students. The University will continue to work with the preferred travel provider to maximise the effectiveness of the booking system and to make sure that the booking systems are fit for purpose, as far as possible.

Departments may put measures in place to monitor how their staff and students are booking travel. If necessary, Departments have the authority to take steps to address the behaviour of staff and students who persistently book business travel via means other than the University's preferred travel provider.

The University will regularly publicly report its total emissions from business travel. Institutions within the University will be provided with anonymised business air travel emissions from their constituent staff and students. Individuals will be able to assess their own performance over time, and compare themselves to other (anonymised) members of staff and students within their department and across the University.

Where possible and subject to data availability, the University will also disclose the reasons for travel, in particular for air travel.

Where comparable data are available, the University will benchmark its emissions from flights against those of other universities.

13 Engagement and review

The University will engage with grant providers, travel providers and other HEIs to promote this policy and clarify the University's requirements and expectations of its staff and students in relation to business travel.

The University will engage with the University community to promote the expectations and guidance contained in this policy. The Sustainable Business Travel Policy will be included as part of the staff sustainability online training module.

The University will continue to monitor best practice in this area and will annually review the policy in light of this.

The University will support departments who wish to implement additional measures to those required by this policy.

14 Policy ownership, development and status

This policy was initially developed with oversight from key University committees and through consultation with University staff and students (between August and November 2021).

The policy is maintained by members of the Sustainability Team. Any queries relating to the document should be referred to the Sustainability Team at sustainability@admin.cam.ac.uk.

Status

Version	Summary amendment	of	Date
V1.1	Policy Launch		XXX

Welcome to the consultation questionnaire

The questionnaire will take most respondents **less than 15 minutes to complete**, however you have the option to provide detailed written feedback if you wish to.

The University is carrying out a consultation with staff and students on a draft Sustainable Business Travel policy (Raven-protected). There is an optional section in this questionnaire where you can provide written feedback on the draft policy, or express interest in joining a focus group or 1:1 discussion.

The questions you will be asked have been chosen with the following aims in mind:

- To understand attitudes towards travel, including how they have changed since the COVID-19 pandemic.
- To gauge the level of support for the proposed provisions of the draft policy.
- To establish whether there are any significant differences in opinion between different groups of staff and students.

The questionnaire is for all University of Cambridge staff and students and the information you supply is confidential. Personal information provided will be used for internal reporting, and results of this consultation may be included in a public consultation report (anonymised, and with protected personal data removed). You can find out more about how the data you provide is handled and stored (including how long it will be kept) on the [University's Information Compliance webpages](#). For more information about how Qualtrics uses your personal information, please see [Qualtrics' privacy statement](#).

Thank you for sharing your views in this questionnaire. Your input and feedback is valuable and will help shape the final policy.

Reminder: Business travel here refers to any travel (regardless of class, i.e., economy, business, first) outside the University estate that is not commuting from home. A more detailed description of the scope of business travel can be found in the draft policy.

Business travel habits

Q1: The University should introduce measures aimed at reducing emissions from business travel.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q2: What do you think are the most important factors to consider when booking business travel?

Click and drag to rank the following factors in order of importance:

- Comfort of travel (1)
- Familiarity/loyalty to a particular service provider (2)
- Cost of travel (3)
- Time taken to reach destination (4)
- Carbon footprint of travel (5)
- Other (please specify) (6)

Q3: At your current career stage, how important do you feel the following activities are for your career? Please answer this question imagining that in person and virtual engagement are equally possible.

*Note that you can distinguish between **in person and virtual** importance of these activities.*

You'll have the option to declare your career stage later in the questionnaire.

	Not at all important (1)	Slightly important (2)	Moderately important (3)	Very important (4)	Extremely important (5)	Not applicable (6)	I don't know (7)
Attending conferences in person (15)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attending conferences virtually (16)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attending meetings with colleagues/collaborators in person (17)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attending meetings with colleagues/collaborators virtually (18)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Giving an invited talk/lecture in person (19)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Giving an invited talk/lecture virtually (20)	<input type="radio"/>						
Delivering a course/educational programme in person (21)	<input type="radio"/>						
Delivering a course/educational programme virtually (22)	<input type="radio"/>						
Fundraising activities and initiatives in person (23)	<input type="radio"/>						
Fundraising activities and initiatives virtually (24)	<input type="radio"/>						
Recruitment of university staff in person (25)	<input type="radio"/>						
Recruitment of university staff virtually (26)	<input type="radio"/>						
Carrying out field or lab work in locations outside Cambridge (27)	<input type="radio"/>						
Other (please specify) (28)	<input type="radio"/>						

Q4: Do you have any additional comments on critical reasons for business travel?

Q5: Approximately how many roundtrips* for business requiring air travel did you take per year before the COVID-19 pandemic?

**A roundtrip flight includes one flight to a destination and another flight back from that destination, such as flying from London to Dubai and then Dubai back to London.*

- None (1)
- 1-3 (2)
- 4-6 (3)
- 7-10 (4)
- 11-20 (5)
- More than 20 (6)

Q6: Do you use taxis during business trips?

- Never (1)
- Rarely (2)
- Sometimes (on ~half of business trips) (3)
- Usually (4)
- Always (5)

Q7: What is the main means by which you book business travel?

- University's preferred travel provider (Key Travel) (1)
 - University credit card (Barclaycard) (2)
 - Pay for it myself and claim back on expenses (3)
 - I don't know (4)
 - Other (please specify) (5)
-

Q8: Please tell us why you book your business travel in this way.

Select all that apply.

- Perceived lower cost of your chosen booking method (1)
 - Convenience of your chosen booking method (2)
 - I wasn't aware of other options (3)
 - Departmental practices (this is just how everyone does things) (4)
 - Other (please specify) (5)
-

Changing attitudes to virtual working since COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to dramatic changes in the way we work, including a large reduction in business travel. We are interested to know whether or not this has changed your views on what constitutes essential business travel.

Q9: Once all restrictions are lifted, I think that overall I will travel less for business than before the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat agree (4)

- Strongly agree (5)

Q10: In my experience, video conferencing software can provide an effective alternative to travelling in person for:

For activities that are not relevant to you, you can choose 'Not applicable'.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)	Not applicable (6)	I don't know (29)
International conferences (1000s of people) (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
National/regional conferences (100s of people) (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Small conferences/workshops (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Meetings with collaborators (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Giving an invited talk/lecture (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Delivering a course/educational programme (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
PhD vivas (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fundraising activities and initiatives (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recruitment of University staff (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Administrative meetings (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify) (11)	<input type="radio"/>						
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Q11: Please add any further comments on COVID-19 and virtual/in-person working here.

Further engagement with the Sustainable Business Travel Policy consultation

In the next *optional* section, we are gathering responses on the draft policy (Raven-protected). You can also choose to participate in the consultation through a focus group or 1:1 discussion, where there will be opportunities to ask questions about the policy and give more detailed feedback. If you would prefer not to express your interest in this form, you can email sustainability@admin.cam.ac.uk instead.

All your answers up to this point have been saved.

Q12: If you would like to give feedback on the draft policy, how would you like to do this?

Select all that apply.

- I'd like to give feedback by **answering 6 questions now** (you will need to read the draft policy document now) (1)
- I'd like to be contacted to participate in a **group or 1:1 discussion** (you can read the draft policy later) (2)
- I would **not** like to give feedback on the draft policy (skips to equality and diversity questions) (5)

Q13: If you would like to participate in further discussions, please provide your name + email so that the Sustainability Team can contact you about this in the near future.

Name (1) _____

Email (2) _____

Support for and views on the draft Sustainable Business Travel policy

Q14: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the **scope** of the draft policy (Heading 4 in draft policy document)?

- Strongly disagree (1)

- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q15: If you somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the scope of the draft policy, please explain why.

Q16: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the **travel hierarchy and rules under 'Preferred modes of travel'** (Heading 7 in the [draft policy document](#))?

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q17: If you somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the travel hierarchy and rules under 'Preferred modes of travel', please explain why.

Q18: Please let us know what you think are appropriate criteria for making and considering requests to deviate from the travel hierarchy and rules.
e.g., booking flights in a class above Economy Class (Heading 7 in the [draft policy document](#))

The list below is non-exhaustive and we are interested to hear your views.

- Disability or health conditions (4)
 - Caring responsibilities (5)
 - Length of journey (e.g., upgrade to business class for air journeys over 8 hours) (6)
 - Working within a short time of arrival (e.g., 3 hours) (8)
 - Other - please specify additional reason(s) (7)
-

Q19: Who do you think should have a say in approving or denying exemptions to the travel hierarchy and rules?

The list below is non-exhaustive and we are interested to hear your views.

- Head of Department/Institution (1)
 - Line managers (e.g., head of research group) (2)
 - Other (please specify) (3)
-

Q20: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the **'Subsidies and Incentives'** (Heading 8 in [draft policy document](#))?

(i.e., do you agree or disagree that they are sufficient to support your needs in following the policy?)

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q21: If you somewhat disagree or strongly disagree, please explain why, and tell us what further subsidies or incentives you would require.

Q22: Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the draft policy in its current form?

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Q23: Is there anything that you think should be added to or removed from the draft policy?

Personal characteristics

We are asking the following *optional* personal characteristic questions to understand if there are significant differences of opinion on the policy between different groups in the University, and to ensure policies and practices do not discriminate based on ethnicity or ethnic background. These questions will also help with our Equality Impact Assessment of the policy.

The information you supply will be kept confidential.

Q24: Which department, faculty or division are you a member of?

We are asking this question because there are differences in business travel frequency and practices between different departments, and we would like to understand these differences better to inform the development of the policy.

▼ Academic Division (1) ... Prefer not to say (112)

Q25: If your department was not included in the previous question, please tell us which department you are a member of.

Q26: Which category does your role correspond to?

We are asking this question because the types and frequency of, and necessity for business travel differ between different role types.

- Academic staff (1)
 - Research staff (e.g., postdoc, research assistant etc.) (2)
 - Academic-related staff (3)
 - Assistant staff (4)
 - Student (undergraduate or postgraduate) (5)
 - Other (specify, if you wish) (6)
-
- Prefer not to say (7)

Q27: Staff: What stage (i.e., level of seniority) are you at in your career? Please choose the [grade band](#) that most closely matches you.

We are asking this question because the types and frequency of, and necessity for business travel differ between different career stages.

- 1–3 (1)
 - 4–6 (2)
 - 7–10 (3)
 - 11–12 (4)
 - I don't know my grade band (please describe your role if you wish, e.g., postdoctoral researcher) (6)
-
- Prefer not to say (5)

Q28: Students: please choose the option that most closely matches you.
We are asking this question because the types and frequency of, and necessity for business travel differ between different career stages.

- Undergraduate student (BA) (1)
- Masters student (taught or research) (2)
- PhD student (3)
- MBA student (4)
- Other (specify, if you wish) (5)

-
- Prefer not to say (6)

Q29: How do you describe your gender identity?

- Man (1)
- Non-binary (2)
- Woman (3)
- In another way (specify, if you wish) (5)

-
- Prefer not to say (4)

Q30: How would you describe your ethnicity or ethnic background?

- Asian British (1)
- Black British (2)
- White British (3)
- Chinese (4)
- Mixed - White and Asian (5)
- Mixed - White and Black (6)
- Other Asian background (7)
- Other Black background (8)
- Other ethnic background (9)
- Other White background (10)
- Any other mixed background (11)
- Other (specify, if you wish) (13)

-
- Prefer not to say (12)

Q31: How old are you?

- 19 and under (1)
- 20 - 24 (2)
- 25 - 29 (3)
- 30 - 34 (4)
- 35 - 39 (5)
- 40 - 44 (6)
- 45 - 49 (7)

- 50 – 54 (8)
- 55 – 59 (9)
- 60 - 64 (10)
- 65 and over (11)
- Prefer not to say (12)

Q32: Do you have an impairment, health condition or learning difference that has a substantial and long-term impact on your ability to carry out day to day activities (as defined in the [Equality Act 2010](#))?

Select all that apply.

- No (1)
 - Yes, but I'd rather not specify (2)
 - Blind or have a visual impairment uncorrected by glasses (3)
 - D/deaf or have a hearing impairment (4)
 - Development condition that you have had since childhood which affects motor, cognitive, social and emotional skills, and speech and language (5)
 - Learning difference such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D (6)
 - Long-term illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy (7)
 - Mental health condition, challenge or disorder, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety (8)
 - Physical impairment, mobility or dexterity issues, which might require you to use a wheelchair or crutches (9)
 - Social/communication conditions such as a speech and language impairment or an autistic spectrum condition (10)
 - No known impairment, health condition or learning difference (11)
 - An impairment, health condition or learning difference not listed above (specify, if you wish) (13)
-
- Prefer not to say (12)

Q33: Do you have caring responsibilities for a child/children and/or another adult/s?

Select all that apply.

- No (1)
- Yes, but I'd rather not specify (2)
- Primary carer of a child or children (under 18 years) (3)
- Primary carer of a child or children who is disabled or has a health condition or illness, or temporary care needs (under 18 years) (4)
- Primary carer or assistant for a disabled adult or adults (18 years and over) (5)
- Primary carer or assistant for an older person or people (65 years and over) (6)
- Secondary carer (another person carries out main caring role) (7)

- Other (specify, if you wish) (9)
-

- Prefer not to say (8)

Q34: In the last 12 months, have you taken, or in the upcoming 12 months do you expect to take, any of the following types of leave?

Select all that apply.

- No (7)
 - Adoption leave (1)
 - Maternity leave (2)
 - Paternity leave (3)
 - Shared parental leave (4)
 - Other (specify, if you wish) (5)
-

- Prefer not to say (6)

Q35: What is your religion or belief?

Select all that apply.

- No religion (including atheist) (1)
 - Buddhist (2)
 - Christian (3)
 - Hindu (4)
 - Jewish (5)
 - Muslim (6)
 - Sikh (7)
 - Any other religion or belief (specify, if you wish) (8)
-

- Prefer not to say (9)

Q36: How would you describe your sexual orientation?

Select all that apply.

- Asexual (1)
 - Bisexual (2)
 - Gay or lesbian (3)
 - Heterosexual/straight (4)
 - Queer (5)
 - In another way (specify, if you wish) (6)
-

- Prefer not to say (7)

Q37: If you have any personal thoughts on business travel and the draft sustainable business travel policy you would like to share, please use the space below.

Annex D: Miro board template for focus groups

