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Research Report

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Acknowledgements

First and foremost, without student participants, empirical research on their experiences goes nowhere. My thanks go out to academic colleagues at Russell and Polly Universities who facilitated my participant recruitment but particularly to the 42 Russell students who gave generously of their time and themselves.

I also have to thank SRHE for not only supporting this project but also for being incredibly accommodating as my life and the research circumstances changed. Firstly, I was allowed to take the project to a new job and start it later than originally planned, and secondly, as my initial recruitment strategy failed and strikes impeded progress, I was granted a further extension. The advent of the Covid-19 pandemic eventually curtailed my data collection altogether, and of this of course impacts conferencing; my dissemination funds have since been extended to allow me to share my work once travel restrictions ease. The irony of writing a report which in part describes the role of the university campus, at perhaps the first time in centuries when it has little to no function, is not lost on me.

More broadly, I have been richly encouraged and supported, both directly and indirectly, by colleagues near and far, but particularly by Kirsty Finn and Remi-Joseph Salisbury. Presentations at Lancaster, Surrey, Bielefeld, and Cambridge, as well as at the 2019 SRHE conference, have allowed me to share and develop emerging thoughts and findings, and a great many other chats over coffee/beer have been cumulatively helpful.

To everyone, thank you.

Executive Summary

This project sought to investigate the ways in which a university mediates its students' experiences across three potentially interlinked dimensions: its organisational culture, its social composition, and its geographies. Each of these was seen to shape how students engaged with and felt about 'Russell University', and was greatly dependent on who they were in the sense of where they were from, both geographically and personally, as well as what they were studying.

- The three dimensions can be seen to be both individually and cumulatively important and they interrelate in complex ways. For example, the university's high status attracts particular kinds of students, who are taught and divided in certain ways, at the same time being distributed across a large campus in particular patterns.
- It was evident that the organisational culture, at least from the students' perspective, consists of a range of often conflicting subcultures within both the student and staff bodies. Prevalent themes were the nature of Russell as a high status institution and the related tension between research and teaching.
- Participants described the university's social composition as diverse in terms of the backgrounds and countries from which students came, while academic staff were seen as more homogenous. By and large the university population was considered to be inclusive and progressive but there were also divisions, most notably in relation to social class, discipline, language, and race.
- The location of university campus in the UK, and in a major, but not capital city, attracted many of the students. The campus was seen to reflect the university's character – among other things prestigious, traditional, modern, diverse – and while the range of facilities enabled a lot of activities, there was also evidence of ways in which they inhibited them, too, and in some ways served to maintain some of the social divides.

Introduction

This project represents an early attempt to draw together three interlinked but relatively distinct perspectives in higher education – the organisational, social, and geographical. It connects with the common-sense observation that universities somehow feel different to one another. The question here is how we can meaningfully pick this ‘different’ apart and, more specifically, try to understand how it relates to students’ experiences.

Weaving different perspectives together is exciting but also challenging in that the volume of potentially relevant scholarship grows exponentially. Firstly, it requires an awareness of bodies of literature which seldom overlap: the micro-level student experience, the meso-level organisational angle, and the socio-material. In the second instance, the disciplines which offer literature related to these topics is almost limitless, ranging from architecture and anthropology, through geography and management, to sociology and urban planning. These tend to apply different units of analysis and therefore also different theorisations. There is work which includes two of the necessary dimensions, such as the cultural and the individual (Bourdieu 1989), the organisational and geographical (Beyes and Holt 2020), or the geographical and individual (Massey 2008), but as yet a theorisation which includes all three has proven elusive.

It is widely accepted that metrics tell us little of real value about the differences between universities (Hazelkorn 2014), and most of the research using thicker/qualitative analysis in higher education anonymises the universities where data collection has taken place. This practice is appropriate for a number of reasons, not least participant anonymity or as a condition of access, which is often connected to reputational concerns. It reduces the contextual information that researchers can share (Temple et al. 2014), but this is not a problem where the university itself is not the focus, rather the experience of minority groups (Reay et al. 2009; Clark et al. 2019) or how universities negotiate the balance between widening participation and status (Boliver et al. 2018). However, it could be argued that, cumulatively at least, research implicitly suggests that universities grouped around particular profile types are more similar than they actually are.

Having said this, this study has been conducted within (yet another) anonymised institution, in this case the research-intensive ‘Russell University’ in the north of England. What matters here, though, is not which university this is, but rather how studying it helps us learn something about life in universities more generally. Russell does bear a number of surface similarities with other high status universities in the UK, but what this study highlights is that it – and its ‘student experience’ – is not and cannot possibly be the same as any other.

Methodology

Focus Groups with Vignettes

Focus groups were seen the most appropriate method of data collection in that they facilitate experiential discussions while the more participant-centred dynamic alleviates some of the common power and positionality issues associated with qualitative methods (Kitzinger 1994; Merriam et al. 2001; Wilson 2006). This was particularly important given that the experiences of marginalised students can be uncomfortable, and sharing these with a British, male, middle class, white, non-disabled, straight, academic raises issues of positionality (Merriam et al. 2001). The discussions revolved around prompts/questions related to the university's organisational culture, campus, and social composition (see Appendix 1). This format was also supported by vignettes (Kandemir and Budd 2018) – in this case a campus map for framing the geographical dimension, and the university's mission statement as an entrance point to discussions around organisational culture. These have not been included in order to preserve the institution's anonymity. Ethical approval was obtained from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Lancaster University Management School Research Ethics Committee in June 2019.

Sampling and Recruitment: Plans A, B...and C

The original plan was to recruit c.140 participants across three instrumental case study (Stake 2005) universities in the same city, each of which had contrasting profiles; their varying age, social composition, and teaching/research orientation, were expected to produce different conditions for students. A job change and house move made this financially unachievable within the budget, so only two universities were targeted, a prestigious, research-intensive institution (Russell University) and a neighbouring former polytechnic (Polly University).

The initial recruitment strategy was to approach student union interest groups/societies across the different dimensions of LGBTQI+, International, BAME, Class, Gender, and Disability, both as a purposive sampling technique and also to attract participants who were interested in, and sensitised to, issues related to these social groups. Contact details for these at both Russell and Polly, though, were often incomplete or firewalled, and of the 20+ groups contacted, only a handful responded. From these, no participants were forthcoming at all.

The second strategy, hampered by two sets of UCU strikes and the Christmas break, was to gain access through academics at both institutions. 80 course leaders in a range of disciplines across both institutions were contacted, about a third of whom responded positively. This led to a variety of in-class 'pitches', email and flyer circulations, and

began to elicit interest. The few students at Polly who initially agreed to take part proved elusive when it came to arranging the focus groups, while those at Russell were more amenable, which forced the decision to focus solely on Russell. This did sacrifice the cross-institutional, comparative element of the project but still allowed the research questions to be answered.

Data collection was conducted from January 2020 onwards until the Covid-19 pandemic curtailed further progress. In all, 15 focus groups were completed with 42 students, either in groups or one-to-one, depending on participants' preferences. As per table 1, below, these students were aged 18-35, were drawn from 11 (largely social science) disciplines, with 1:1 ratios of male to female, and international to domestic, and an almost equal number of undergraduates to postgraduates; for a full overview, see Appendix 2.

Table 1: Sample Summary

Demographics			Disciplines
Gender F/M	31	11	Education: 14
International/Domestic	29	13	Sociology: 9
Under-/Postgraduate	20	22	Politics: 9
Age Range	18-35		Economics: 1
White British	10		Medical-Related: 2
British BAME	4		Accounting: 1
Southeast/East Asian	22		Management: 1
Continental European	2		Engineering: 1
Middle Eastern	2		Nursing: 1
(Black) African	2		Languages: 3

Data Treatment and Analysis

All transcripts were professionally verbatim transcribed and then anonymised. This involved not only altering/masking the names of participants and staff where they were mentioned, but also some course titles and the names of buildings and other locations.

Due to the lack of a suitable conceptual framework which encompassed all three dimensions of the line of enquiry noted earlier, Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006; Braun and Clarke 2019) was applied. This allowed the data to be analysed

largely inductively according to the three research questions, as well as for connections between the themes to be drawn. Table 1.2, below, provides an overview of the themes.

Table 2: Thematic Map

Research Question	Theme
Organisational Culture	Conflicting Orientations Pedagogy Status Markers Policy Issues
Social Composition	Student Characteristics Staff Characteristics Bridges and Barriers
Campus Geographies	Location, Location, Location Campus Places and Spaces Activity Mediation Character/Status

Main Report

Organisational Culture

Literature

Scholars have long noted that organisational culture consists of a combination of an overarching organisational identity and an agglomeration of employees'/members' values and attitudes (Hofstede 1998), as well as potentially divergent subcultures (Sinclair 1993). This sense of internal diversity is evident in work on organisational culture within higher education, and relates largely to normative preferences, power dynamics and the loci of decision-making. Discussions often highlight the balance between co-existing but potentially competing orientations such as academic freedom, procedural structures, de-/centralisation, and market forces (McNay 1995). The importance of variety due to (and within) national socio-political contexts is key (Lacatus 2013) as are the organisational history and status or 'market position' of a university (McNay 1995; Telling 2019). Marrying this with the observation that organisational culture to some extent reflects its people, it is clear that no two universities' cultures will ever be exactly the same because the populations differ.

Scholarship on how this impacts students to date is speculative rather than empirical. We can see, though, a growing tendency in the UK to direct more attention towards marketing, as well as increased investment in/refurbishment of facilities in order to attract students (Temple et al. 2014). Some have asserted that marketisation encourages students to be passive and instrumental, a position that they willingly occupy (Nixon et al. 2018), although empirical research indicates that these claims are exaggerated (Budd 2016; Tomlinson 2017). It is evident, though, that institutions may see and treat their students in more or less collegial or market-oriented ways (van der Velden 2012), and research-intensive universities may be less interested in widening participation in part because it potentially diverts too many resources away from research and towards more supportive teaching methods (Boliver et al. 2018).

Findings

Research Question: How do students perceive their university's organisational culture, and to what extent does this reflect or refract broader national higher education policies?

Conflicting Orientations

The sense that the university embodied a wide variety of cultural orientations is evident across the students' accounts. It was at the same time passionate and socially engaged,

traditional and modern, hierarchical and egalitarian, profit- as well as socially-oriented, supportive and neglectful, focused on research, committed to teaching and/or uncommitted to teaching. Some of this related to individual departments, 'the management', or the student union, some to the university as a whole. At one level, the university was seen as caring due to the resources deployed towards supporting students, mental health, and careers advice. Others saw this differently, in that their provision was tokenistic, insufficient for demand, and only there because of legislative, competitive, or normative pressures.

Pedagogy

Descriptions of the teaching culture were generally but not always positive, and the counterweight of research as more important was ever-present. Teaching provision varied enormously in format and style between departments/courses, and was largely seen as engaging, supportive, and fostering independent learning, and academics were seen, in the main, as friendly and approachable. At the same time, though, undergraduates in particular talked of large lectures being given by academics and smaller classes by adjunct postgraduate students, which they knew freed up time for research but at the same time this increased the distance between permanent staff and learners.

Status Markers

The sense that Russell University was a high status institution permeated much of the students' accounts. Not only was status framed by tangible or measurable factors such as entrance standards, rankings, resources, size, and citations, but also through perception: being famous/reputable, relatively old, disciplinarily broad, and a member of the Russell Group. This was supported by a general discourse of superiority over the neighbouring Polly University (and its students). At the same time, though, there was an awareness that many of the formal markers meant little to nothing in real terms, but that status overall did aid one's employment chances at home and abroad.

Policy Issues

The November 2019/March 2020 University and College Union (UCU) strikes acted as a prism through which other policy issues were visible. The students were well-informed about the industrial action and invariably supportive of them, interpreting the situation as symptomatic of a contrast between service-oriented academics and an excessively parsimonious university management. Tuition fees were not seen as inappropriate or as absolving students of any responsibility for their academic success, but all participants bemoaned the loss of several weeks of teaching and what this 'cost' them in both financial and pedagogical terms. Alongside this, there was a recognition in both domestic and international students of a heavy, and sometimes excessive, recruitment of overseas

students for fee purposes, particularly where some courses were populated almost entirely by international visitors.

Social Composition

Literature

Structural forces clearly play a significant role in students' experiences, in that who you are and where you study has implications for the likelihood of your feeling in- or excluded within an institution. High status universities in the UK are not only academically but also socially selective, being predominantly white and middle class (Budd 2017). A significant body of scholarship consistently shows that inequity around students' experiences are prevalent in relation to class (Abrahams and Ingram 2013), gender (Barnard et al. 2012), ethnicity and race (Joseph-Salisbury 2019), sexual identity and orientation (Breeze and Taylor 2018), disability (Holloway 2001), as well as for international students (Madriaga and McCaig 2019).

The overall trend is clear: for reasons that sit outside students' own effort and 'talent', minority/marginalised groups face greater barriers in terms of entry to university, engagement with both academic and non-academic aspects of university life, and attain less well. These inequalities also persist into the academic labour market, meaning that teaching and research staff are not representative of the wider population and minority employees experience ongoing discrimination (Bhopal 2019; Doharty 2019). This in itself further hampers universities' progress towards greater cultural and teaching inclusivity.

Findings

Research Question: How do students describe the social composition of their university, and how do they understand themselves in relation to it?

Student Characteristics

Asking the students themselves about their view of the student body elicited a sense of diversity not reported in other studies. The domestic student population was perceived as predominantly young, white, affluent, socially progressive, hard-working, and left leaning, while wealthy East Asians were considered to comprise the majority of international students. There was also a self-association of intelligence and/or high attainment. However, while the university was considered diverse and inclusive, it was also divided, highlighting a distinction between differences that reflected variety, and divides that represented social barriers between groups. Differences created few issues and covered a panoply of elements such as character, taste, fashion, interests, social activities, study orientation, accent, gender, and sexual orientation. Divides, on the other hand, could be difficult to overcome, and featured social class and/or wealth, age, personal politics,

discipline, language, and race – the latter two being particularly pronounced in relation to international students.

Staff Characteristics

Participants described the academic staff as predominantly white British/Western and left-leaning, although the graduate teaching assistants were noticeably more ethnically diverse. By and large the teaching staff were considered to be aligned with supporting students as best they could and teaching diverse perspectives. Many staff were seen as approachable, and international postgraduate students noted a much weaker hierarchical relationship between staff and students compared with their home countries. The management of the university, on the other hand, were considered invisible, interested primarily in finance, efficiency, and promoting or protecting the university's prestige and reputation at the expense of academic working conditions and students' learning.

Bridges and Barriers

A number of activities served to act as bridges that facilitated interaction between social groups or erected barriers which inhibited them. Bridges existed where small, diverse groups of students were able to interact, such as university sports and student societies, accommodation, foreign language classes, shared social spaces, and small group teaching. These did not always work well, though, usually due to the stronger influence of the social divisions already noted. Large lectures, and in some instances excessive staff workloads (highlighted through the strikes) on the other hand, maintained a distance between staff and students, as well as between students through group-based seating preferences in lecture theatres and other shared spaces. It was also marked that many domestic students thought that (Asian) international students were not interested in socialising with them, while the East Asian participants repeatedly cited frustrations at not being able to make British friends.

Campus Geographies

Literature

There is no shortage of concepts that lend themselves to an analysis of university campuses. Landscapes are used widely as a metaphor rather than literally in higher education research, but geographers use the term to denote historically contingent stages where actors are constrained by topography and power relations (Mitchell 2003; Wylie 2007). Place and space, too, would lend themselves well to universities; places are essentially locations, while spaces are dynamic, relational areas in which different groups move, interact, and with/in which they engage according to their identity (Massey 2008). It is, though, curious that research around the social dimension of campuses is rare (Temple 2019) given that universities are largely anchored physically and in name to a

geographical location¹. Some are even categorised in part according to their architecture, such as the 19th/20th Century ‘red brick’ and ‘sandstone’ universities in the UK and Australia respectively, or the Ivy League in the US.

There is, however, an established literature on university architecture. University buildings represent a significant investment, and particularly older universities’ campuses can tell a history of architecture in their own right as each new building is invariably in a different style to its predecessors (Dober 1996). University buildings are not only – and not always – functional (Cranz et al. 1997; Alzeer 2018), representing political statements and used to project status (Stanton 2005; Whyte 2017). Campuses contain an array of facilities, take all manner of shapes and sizes, and their arrangement frames the activities and flows of people (Greene and Penn 1997). When campuses grow (or shrink), this can impact not only the internal social and political dynamic but also its relationship with its surroundings (Halsband 2005; Brooks et al. 2016). As Brennan and Cochrane (2019) note, too, universities are socially and materially bound to their cities through local partnerships, as employers, and as a source of customers in the form of staff and students.

Findings

Research Question: How do students experience and negotiate the geography of their university vis-à-vis their own personal geographies?

Location, Location, Location

Russell University’s geographical position formed a clear part of the often complex choice processes that led students there. Being based in a diverse and bustling city with a breadth of recreational and employment opportunities was regularly cited as a draw. Its location within the UK was also important, being a combination of accessible in terms of transport links, cheaper than London, and with a more amenable climate than Scotland. International students associated British higher education with quality, and cited the UK as being safer than the US, their other preferred destination for overseas study.

Campus Places and Spaces

Visceral responses to Russell University’s physical constitution varied greatly. The wider campus was seen as architecturally diverse as well as sprawling, complicated, and confusing, or compact and self-contained. Individual building descriptions ranged from beautiful to ugly, inspiring to daunting, historical to cutting-edge. Outside a number of common buildings such as the student union or library, where students went and where they didn’t often depended on their course/subject of study. They saw the campus as

¹ Of 132 UK universities, all but 14 are named at least in part according to their geographical location.

nominally divided into disciplinary zones, and had little to no reason to cross the boundaries between them – some students had classes all over the campus while others were located almost entirely within one building. Alongside this, a number of buildings were only accessible to people in particular subject areas, and many felt less comfortable entering others which they no formal connection to, even if they were allowed.

Activity Mediation

It is important to note the diversity of student activities which take place in universities, and in basic terms the existence of facilities for these enables, among other things, teaching, research, studying, living, socialising, eating, shopping, sports, activism, mental health support, and entertainment. By and large the students were complimentary about the quality and extent of these but there were also signs of the ways in which the campus inhibited certain activities. Chief among these was, as noted above, the divides between disciplines, while on-campus catering was seen as excessively expensive and finding study spaces was a challenge at certain times of the year. Accommodation where different groups were mixed together could provide an opportunity for boundary crossing, but some participants also cited instances where it created significant tensions.

Character/Status

Finally, the campus and its constituent buildings were seen to project something of Russell University's character and standing. The original 'Redbrick Building' was the face of the university for many, demonstrating its long history and prestige, but in practice was largely symbolic as very few students had any reason to enter it. Newer, modern buildings, on the other hand, were well-appointed and reflected what they thought was Russell's cutting edge, future-oriented nature. These were not seen as in tension but dimensions of the same character. It was also reported that the better buildings were often in STEM subjects while poorer, more tired facilities for the arts, humanities and social sciences indicated that they were less lucrative, second class citizens in the eyes of the university.

Conclusions

The overarching research question for this project was:

How does a university mediate the student experience three-dimensionally, through their organisational culture, the social composition of their student bodies, and their individual geographies?

There are many threads here, and the organisational, social, and geographical, clearly intertwine. What binds many of the elements together is the profile of Russell as a particular kind of university, in (and as) a particular place, at a particular time. Its identity as a British 'red brick' university in 2020 – large, relatively old, of high national and international status, research-oriented, and disciplinarily diverse – has ramifications throughout the three dimensions:

Organisationally, Russell's strong research focus does not mean that pedagogy is neglected per se, but it was clear to the participants in this study that teaching was not the university's primary focus. Its broad disciplinary base furthermore ensures a variety of educational, philosophical, and political, orientations. The university's status attracts staff and students from all over the world, and the scale of the institution involves a cast of tens of thousands. In combination, this creates an enormous diversity of interests and identities. Alongside the research-intensity, we can also see the hallmarks of the UK's highly marketized university system in the heavy (over-) recruitment of lucrative international students and the cost-effective, labour-efficient reliance on lecture-based teaching. The strikes, too, are symptomatic of the state of current UK higher education although the late 2019/early 2020 industrial action was not limited to research-intensive universities².

Socially, as a high status and academically selective institution, Russell attracts high attaining (and therefore largely affluent) domestic students, as well as a significant proportion of international ones. This, with the subject profile of the university and its size, ensures the maintenance of a pronounced social heterogeneity. At the same time, though, this diversity is limited, particularly in terms of social class and to some extent ethnicity, which concomitantly creates a number of sometimes impermeable social divides between different groups.

From a geographical perspective, the campus is very large – it needs to be to host the sheer volume of people and activities – and the university's story to some extent can be read through the steady addition of buildings over more than a century. We can also see

² Strikes in February-March 2018 were related to a dispute around the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) pension fund, which is the main pension for pre-92/research intensive universities.

how the size and shape of the campus, along with disciplinary influences, corrals students together as well as apart. The perception that money is spent in/on some disciplines and facilities and not others featured in a number of the focus groups, and this connects back to marketisation and commodification. Alongside this, Russell's location in an affordable, diverse, and accessible, English city, attracts students, as does the UK's position as a heavily marketed, key destination for overseas visitors.

The threads, then, influence each other but the strength and directions of influence are not yet clear. The organisational culture revolves around maintaining the university's high status, and this attracts a mix of people who in part constitute, and contribute to, that culture. There are dynamics within that social composition which enable and hinder interactions – and sometimes create tensions – between different constituencies. The campus acts as a container for this, controlling the flows of people towards and away from one another while also projecting something of the university's culture as both old and new, caring and neglectful, traditional and forward-facing.

As a sociologist of education, the social dynamics have been of particular interest, and the divisions between groups represents a problem. While it is not to say that we should expect universities to be entirely harmonious, if diversity and cross-group interaction are seen to be an essential part of the student experience – and if they are what some staff and students want – then universities do need to facilitate it. Simply putting people on the same campus, in the same building, or even in the same room, is not enough. Many of the themes evident in this study will be familiar elsewhere, and perhaps particularly at universities with similar profiles. However, it is essential to highlight that how they feature and relate cannot be the same elsewhere because every university's organisational culture, social composition, and geography, are different. In short, if we change any of the university's profile characteristics – research/teaching orientation or disciplinary spread, location or layout, status or size – this would have immediate implications elsewhere, not least on the social.

Extending Knowledge

A number of findings in this project extend what we know about students' experiences and offer the potential for publication.

Overall, the inclusion of the three interrelated elements, which we can see all have some bearing on students' experiences, draws together literatures which do not often overlap; combining them offers richer insights into our understanding of universities and their myriad variations. A tentative paper would 'Universities as socio-spatial constellations of culture, population, and campus', potentially for *Theory and Society*.

Secondly, this study offers a rare insight into the ways in which a university's physical characteristics feature in, and shape, its students' lives. There is work of this nature in schools, and outside the (higher) education literature, and this is likely to be of interest to geographers and anthropologists. A likely paper here – perhaps titled 'The Space/s of a University' would suit the audience of Geography Compass.

Finally, there is relatively little scholarship exploring students' views of the wider university body. The majority of work examines the experiences of particular – usually marginalised – groups in relation to others, rather than different students' senses of the staff and student population as a whole. This element, infused as it is with evidence of the physical and social boundaries and bridges, would complement existing research around race, international students, and class. This might find favour in Studies in Higher Education, with a paper along the lines of 'Bridges and boundaries in a diverse and/but divided university populations'.

Each of these areas merits extensive further research, and not simply because there is relatively little work here. In combination, they connect and extend somewhat separate literatures, as well as offering opportunities to better understand – and potentially improve – how universities influence their students' lives. The lack of a comparative case university in this project is keenly felt, in part because of the considerable effort lost in seeking (in vain) to overcome that barrier, but more importantly due to insights it may well have offered. Conducting similar research, potentially with mobile and visual methodologies, across multiple universities, and particularly in different national contexts, appears to be the most pressing and interesting continuation of this work.

An unanticipated aspect – at least at the point of the projects' inception – in the participant accounts was the presence of the UCU strikes and how this impacted their studies and their understanding of their institution. As we might expect, students were concerned by the impact of the strikes on their studies and to some extent this highlighted a loss of value for money, particularly for international students. What was also clear, though, was how the industrial action informed their views of contrasting orientations towards higher education between academic and management staff. Examining this in more detail may also provide a useful addition to the literature.

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Appendix 1: Sample Overview

Group	Discipline	Name	Level	Nationality (Heritage)	Gender	Age
1	Education	YY	PGT	Japan	F	23
	Education	JY	PGT	Malaysia (Chinese)	F	24
	Education	YG	PGT	China	F	34
	Education	WZ	PGT	China	F	23
2	Education	SS	PGT	China (Half Korean)	F	30
	Education	KK	PGT	China	F	22
	Education	CY	PGT	China (Mongolian)	F	23
	Education	AJ	PGT	China	F	32
	Education	ZX	PGT	China	F	22
3	Education	LG	PGT	China	F	26
4	Sociology	SC	UG	Korea	F	19
	Sociology	MO	UG	Ghana	F	18
	Sociology	MS	UG	China	F	18
5	Sociology	SX	UG	China	F	18
	Sociology	YW	UG	China	F	18
6	Education	MM	PGT	Armenia	F	28
7	Sociology	SA	UG	Turkey	F	18
8	Sociology	NM	UG	British (Jamaican)	F	19
	Sociology	PB	UG	White British	F	20
	Politics	TA	UG	Ghanaian-British	F	19
9	Politics	TW	PGT	White British	M	22
	Politics	MA	PGT	British (British-Turkish)	M	22
	Politics	TN	PGT	White British	M	24
10	Education	LM	PGT	White British	M	35
11	PPE	OW	UG	Luxemburg	M	21
	PPE	HN	UG	Maldives	M	24
	PPE	BM	UG	Palestinian	F	19
	PPE	AS	UG	British (Pakistani)	M	20
12	Education	YL	PGT	China	F	22
	Education	ZC	PGT	China	F	23
13	Medicine	CN	UG	White British	F	20
	Politics	OH	UG	Norwegian	F	21
	Accounting	NC	UG	White British	M	20
14	Economics	KL	PGT	Philippines	M	27
	Management	XL	PGT	China	F	21
	Engineering	XZ	PGR	China	M	26
	Sociology	RE	UG	Japan	F	21
	Nursing	EM	UG	White British	M	18

Group	Discipline	Name	Level	Nationality (Heritage)	Gender	Age
15	History	HM	UG	White British	F	20
	Languages	AS	UG	British (Norwegian-Japanese)	F	21
	Languages	CL	UG	White British	F	22
	Linguistics	LF	UG	White British	F	22

Appendix 2: Focus Group Schedule

Introduction:

- Re-introduce the topic
- Set ground rules – respect of other participants;
- Participant-led questions (if chosen)
- Speaking Object
- Attention to Emotions:
 - Good Faith
 - Mindful of Others
- Stopping Strategies
 - Continue and Explore
 - Continue but Change
 - Break and Reconvene
 - Break and Reschedule
 - Break and Quit
- Researcher's own positionality;
- No right/wrong answer

Info sheet, consent forms, vouchers – start recording.

Introducing Yourself

- Name
- Age
- Degree and year of study
- Where you're from (nationally/internationally)
- Have you live/d on campus at any point in your degree
- Did your parents/carers go to university and what are/were their jobs?

A. Social Composition

A1. How would you describe the 'average' - or stereotypical - student at this university, and how close to/far from this are you?

A2. How diverse do you think the university is, in terms of students and staff, and does this affect you at all?

A3. How inclusive do you feel the university is – is there respect and free interaction between lots of different social groups?

A4. Do you think we're seeing changes in public perception through social movements around minority/marginalised groups - e.g. #MeToo #BlackLivesMatter #itsthegbt - and do you feel this in the university in any way?

B. Geographies

B1. Which building or space, for you, represents the centre or character of the university, and why?

B2. How would you describe the campus/es to someone who's never been there, and what do you - and don't you - like about it?

B3. Where do you spend most of your time on campus, and are there any parts of the university that you associate with particular social groups?

B4. Are there any areas of the university that you feel are particularly welcoming – or unwelcoming – and why?

C. Organisational Culture

C1. Why did you choose to study here – rather than any of the others you might have considered?

C2. In what ways do you think this university differs from the other ones in the city?

C3. Have a look at the mission statement. In what ways does – or doesn't - this reflect how you see and experience the university?

C4. How would you describe the relationships/interactions with the academics and or other staff in your department/s and elsewhere in the university?

Warm-down

Is there anything else you'd like to add, or ask?

Thanks for your time...