UCD Registry
Clárlann UCD

UCD Registration 2019/20

Review Report

Review of Registration 2019/20

Contents

1 INTRODUCTION

The Review of Registration is an annual process in which groups from around the University carry out a self-analysis process under the auspices of the Registration Implementation Oversight Group (RIOG). This group has been in place since the preparations for the 2007 start of year registration season, operating under the sponsorship of the Registrar.

This document brings together the successes, challenges and recommendations identified in the individual strands of the Review of Registration 2019. The specific areas covered by the review are:

- **Curriculum Management**
- **Timetabling**
- **Module Capacity Planning and Management**
- **IT**
- **Registration (online, manual, central)**
- **Supports for Staff/Faculty**
- **Supports for Students**

Section 2 of this document gives an overview of Registration 2019/20 while section 3 provides a more specific commentary on each area.

Section 4 contains a summary of the main recommendations made by the various individual strand reviews as well as relevant actions arising.

Section 6 highlights some key figures from the student survey, and section 7 presents data on the volume of queries (in person, on the phone and online) dealt with by the UCD Student Desk during the registration period.

While not all the feedback received is mentioned in this document, it is being reviewed by the relevant support areas and will be acted on accordingly.

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overall, Registration 2019 went well for staff and students who responded to the survey. Staff across the University emphasised the challenges they faced in this registration period in the context of new academic regulations, which required changes to programmes, systems and processes. Student respondents highlighted the value of clear communications and assistance for their queries, while also pointing out areas for improvement in IT systems and student supports. Engagement with the student surveys increased, with around 25% more respondents than in each of the previous two years.

A summary of the survey results will be available on the [UCD Start of Term Survey](#)[1] web page.

The following subsections provide a brief commentary on what worked well for 2019/20 and what can be improved for 2020/21. Sections 3 and 4 provide more information on specific areas.

2.1 WHAT WORKED WELL

⚙️ **Support and Collaboration**

- Staff respondents in schools and colleges appreciated the support and assistance they received from the various Registry units and the Room Allocations team, especially with issues relating to curriculum management, module capacity and room bookings.
- Students at both undergraduate and graduate level highlighted the quality of assistance they received from the Student Desk in person and over the phone, while students dealing with the International Office were also grateful for the support they received.

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[1] www.ucd.ie/students/survey.html

Communication and Information

- Staff welcomed the Registry information sessions in June and July 2019 as being informative and helpful, and also mentioned the Academic Regulations Forum in February 2019 as being useful in the context of new academic regulations.
- Student respondents at all levels found email to be the most beneficial of the current means of communication from UCD and said they made good use of UCD websites.

Technology and Systems

- Staff commended the new Curriculum Management System interface as being user-friendly and easy to navigate, and also felt that the timetabling system worked well.
- Students were mostly satisfied with the various parts of the online registration system. Those respondents who use the UCD Mobile app said they did so mainly to access Brightspace.
- The rollout of connector systems, such as those in the College of Engineering and Architecture and the College of Arts and Humanities, helped school and college offices manage the queries they received from students.

2.2   WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Communication and Information

- Staff suggested improved communication on areas such as the process for increasing module capacity, the information required for module descriptor fields, and new academic regulations. They also suggested that the Targeted Communications function in InfoHub be updated so that users can create their own distribution lists to better target their email communications to staff and student cohorts, and also raised the issue of the Targeted Communications email field not accepting formatted text from other sources.
- Staff in schools and colleges suggested that a fee holds report be circulated, which would inform them of students who cannot be registered due to fees holds and thereby save time and reduce the need to contact Registry with queries.

Student feedback included the suggestion that more essential basic information be provided in Orientation Week and on campus tours, such as where to find water dispensers and microwaves, how to get lockers, how to use printers and where to buy class equipment such as lab coats.

Reporting and Data

- Staff asked that the current Degree Audit Report SYS003 in InfoView be fully replicated when it is moved to InfoHub.
- Some staff respondents noted that the reports they required in InfoHub were often difficult to find.
- Staff also felt that the former SWGENQY screen in Banner had not been adequately replaced by the UView portal in InfoHub.

Timing and Deadlines

- Staff pointed out that the Module Descriptor deadline of 30 May clashed with Gradebook deadlines, PERC and School Grade Review meetings, and asked if they could be coordinated for future registration periods.
- Students felt there could be more support made available for those who start late e.g. those who get their place in the later rounds of CAO offers.

2.3 CONCLUSION AND FURTHER ACTIONS

The key issues and recommendations identified in this report, detailed in the sections below, can be addressed at a local level by the relevant support areas and the appropriate action decided by the area(s) responsible. All actions arising will be included in the planning for registration 2020/21.

3 SUMMARY BY AREA

3.1 CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT

The curriculum management cycle went well during this registration period, with staff being satisfied with the Module Descriptor functionality within the new interface for the Curriculum Management System (CMS). Schools and colleges highlighted the Curriculum team members in Registry as being particularly supportive and helpful during this period and appreciated the Module Descriptor remaining open until the end of August.

Regarding areas for improvement, schools and colleges suggested training being made available for module coordinators on the CMS and, bearing in mind the requirements of partner universities, on what information should be added to module descriptors and why. Staff also enquired if it were possible that the CMS could have a notification email to Module Coordinators whenever an incompatible module is added. Another suggested improvement is for Programme Directors to automatically and systematically receive access to their Programme/Major Class Lists.

3.2 TIMETABLING

Schools and colleges were happy in general with the timetabling process and appreciated the assistance of the Systems and Data team in Registry and the Room Allocations team in Estate Services.

Among the suggestions for improvements were to give access to test systems for large, complex programmes and to display a link to room information when making an individual room booking in URooms.

3.3 MODULE CAPACITY

Staff feedback was positive regarding the support on module capacity issues provided by the Systems and Data team and College Liaisons in Registry. It was noted that timetables were published a week later this year than the previous year, which caused a delay in the manual pre-registration of study abroad students, and it was suggested that timetables be ready for verification and testing by the end of July.

3.4   IT AND SYSTEMS

The timetable and curriculum management systems worked well during the registration period, with no reports of any major technical issues.

Staff respondents found the new UView screen replacing SWGENQY in Banner less convenient for searching for students, for instance when a student had a common name, and suggested that other criteria be made active in the UView search function. It was felt that comments should also be made visible in UView without having to go into the SPACMNT screen in Banner. Staff also asked if the Targeted Communications system in InfoHub could be improved so that users could create their own distribution lists and paste content from another source into the body of the message without any formatting issues.

Students suggested the UCD Mobile app could be improved by including a more tailored app interface and a more detailed map feature that includes building names and room numbers. They also reported that using Brightspace on the app was difficult.

3.5   REGISTRATION

Student respondents mostly found the online registration process to be an excellent or good experience. The introduction of allocated start times to stage 1 undergraduates was welcomed by students and staff alike as making the online registration process a lot easier. However, staff using the online registration system reported getting error messages that appeared incorrectly.

3.6   SUPPORT FOR STAFF/FACULTY

Staff were appreciative of the Registry information sessions and especially the drop-in sessions for faculty to update module descriptors – one suggestion was that these drop-in sessions for updating module descriptors be offered later into the summer too. The support and help provided by the different UCD Registry teams during the registration period was also recognised by staff respondents.

Suggestions for improved supports to staff include a fees holds report that would be circulated to schools and colleges informing them of students who cannot be registered due to fees holds.

3.7 SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

Feedback on start-of-term events such Orientation Week, Registration Labs and GradsConnect was generally positive from respondents who attended.

Student respondents suggested having better online maps and physical signposting for the Belfield campus, especially featuring building names and room numbers, given the size and variety of the campus and its buildings. Some graduate students, especially part-time students who are also working, felt that start-of-term events weren't always geared towards them and mentioned clashes with classes and with work commitments – one suggestion was to have events on a weekend. Some students felt they needed more guidance and clarification when paying fees, particularly on when fee payments were due and how much was owing.

UCD's social media accounts were not widely used by students, for whom Facebook and Twitter (UCD's largest presences on social media) are used less than Instagram and Snapchat. Students also highlighted the issue of broken links and unclear navigation on the UCD Current Students website; this will be addressed with the migration to a new website content management system in early 2020, which will improve the website management process in Registry and also include a review of content on the website.

The ongoing Unified Service Model (USM) rollout facilitated the sharing of information and the development of processes and services for supporting students. Projects associated with the USM rollout included the Student Experience Mapping Project run by UCD Agile. This helped provide staff across the University with a better understanding of how students engage with UCD and how this can be improved, and the development of connector systems such as those now used by the College of Engineering and Architecture and the College of Arts and Humanities in managing the queries they receive from students.

The Student Desk reported a decrease of 13% from 2018 to 2019 in the volume of visitors to the Desk during the registration period (1 August – 31 October inclusive). This can be attributed to a number of factors that improved UCD Registry's support for students, including the following:

- The redeveloped Student Desk Connector, rolled out in August, now displays responses and links to relevant information based on the query type chosen by the user. This enables the user to get an answer to their query without having to submit it through the Connector, and accounts for a 20% reduction in the number of queries submitted.
- Prompt response to emails reduced the number of follow-up queries in person and by phone to the Desk.
- The online registration process for students saw no significant technical issues that would cause a spike in student queries.
- The Fee Assessment Project resulted in assessment for free fees and EU/non-EU fees now being done online, thereby streamlining the process and reducing the volume and complexity of related queries.

The UCD Supports for Students Group has continued to meet regularly as a forum for schools, colleges and support services to share information on events, key dates, projects and other initiatives for supporting students.

4 OVERVIEW OF IDEAS/RECOMMENDATIONS AND ANY ACTIONS REQUIRED

This section contains a summary of the key recommendations made by the various individual strand reviews as well as any relevant actions arising.

Action category	Action by	Recommendations/actions required
Curriculum and capacity management	UCD Registry (Curriculum)	Provide training on new CMS in general, and also around January/May CRNs required for research students
	UCD Registry (Curriculum)	Review and improve communication on required information for module descriptors and on updating programme outcomes, visions and value statements
	UCD Registry (Systems and Data Services/Curriculum)	Review and improve communication to module coordinators and school administrators re: process for increasing capacity
IT related systems and developments	UCD IT Services/EAG	Review and improve user experience of timetable on SISWeb
	UCD Registry (Systems and Data Services/Curriculum)	Provide school administrators with access to test systems to help with planning for large, complex programmes.
Registration (online/central/manual)	UCD Registry (Systems and Data Services)	Review and resolve issue of error messages and green tick for completed registration appearing incorrectly
	UCD Registry (Systems and Data Services)	Look at a late online registration window for later rounds of CAO offers
	UCD Registry (Communications Officer)	Review communication to students to clarify the difference between start time selection and module registration
	UCD Registry (Systems and Data Services)	Look into making the link to the Course Search feature more prominent, so that students do not inadvertently register to a module that is core in a stage ahead.

Action category	Action by	Recommendations/actions required
	UCD Registry (Systems and Data Services)	Look into feasibility of assigning start times to all students, following successful implementation for stage 1.
	UCD Registry (Systems and Data Services)	Review and advise if manual registration process be shortened as part of Banner upgrade due in 2020
Staff Supports	UCD Registry (Systems and Data Services/Curriculum)	Improve communication to module coordinators re: process for increasing capacity
	UCD IT Services/EAG	Update Targeted Communications functionality so that users can create their own distribution lists and can add formatted text to the body of an email
Student Supports - Communications	UCD Registry (Student Desk/Assessment)	Review and advise schools & colleges on how to assist students who need confirmation for visa authorities of fully completing their degree but cannot access results during GAP process.
	UCD Registry (Communications Officer)	Review and update content and navigation on UCD Current Students website
Student Supports - Registration help	UCD Registry (Systems and Data Services)	Provide clearer indication on online registration system to confirm to student when they have completed registration or show they have action(s) outstanding.
Student Supports - Orientation	Orientation Advisory Group	Provide peer mentors with information to pass on to new students re: essential basics (water fountains, microwaves, printer use)
	UCD IT Services/EAG	Review UCD Mobile App interface and functionality, esp. online campus map, timetable and Brightspace

5   REGISTRATION IMPLEMENTATION OVERSIGHT GROUP MEMBERSHIP FOR 2019/20

Kevin Griffin, Director of UCD (Chair)

Andrew Myler, Director: Administrative Services, UCD Registry

Kate Griffin, Deputy Director: Administrative Services, UCD Registry

Ryan Teevan, Deputy Director: Administrative Services, UCD Registry

Caroline Barrett, Systems and Data Services: Administrative Services, UCD Registry

Lizanne Hutton, Curriculum Team: Administrative Services, UCD Registry

Caroline McTeigue/Aidan Curran, Support & Training: Administrative Services, UCD Registry

Emma Caron, Communications Officer, UCD Registry

Dr Fionnuala Dillane, Associate Dean, Arts and Humanities

John Buckley, School/Programme Office, UCD Veterinary Sciences Centre

Angela Evans, Graduate School Manager, College of Engineering and Architecture Administration Office

Janet Carton, UCD Graduate Studies

Karen Jackman/Pauline Slattery, UCD School of English, Drama and Film

Helen McCarthy, UCD School of Biology & Environmental Science

Bronwyn O'Callaghan, Business Systems Project Manager, UCD IT Services
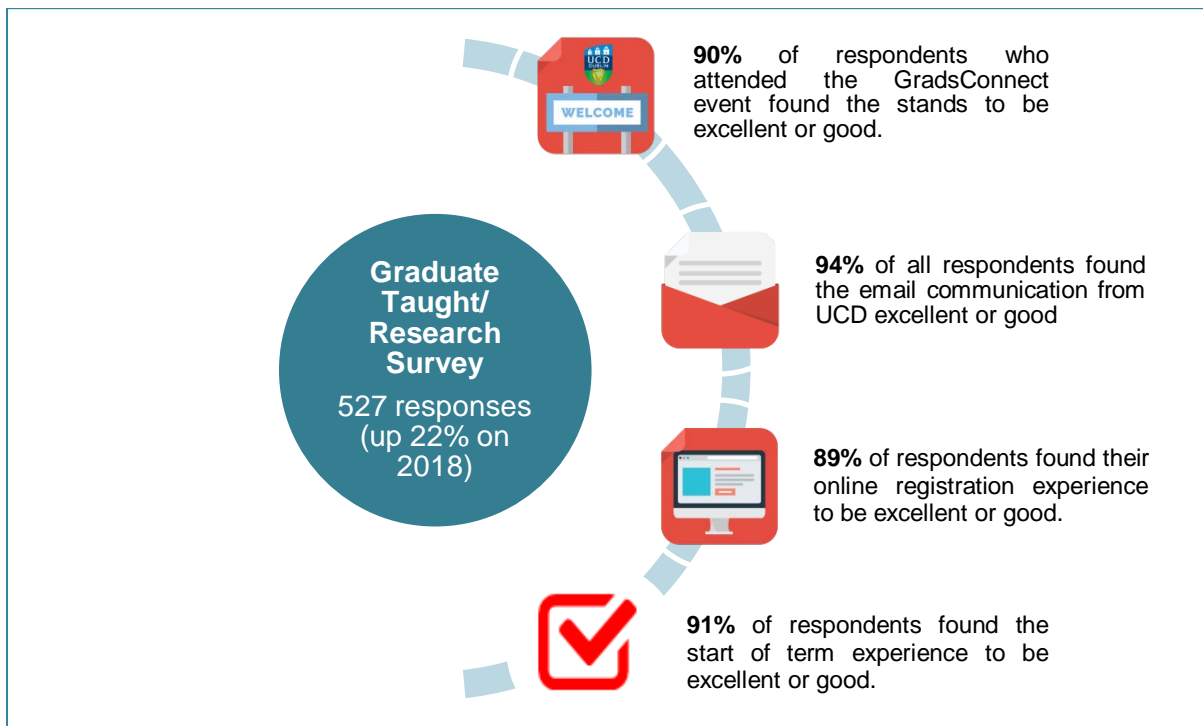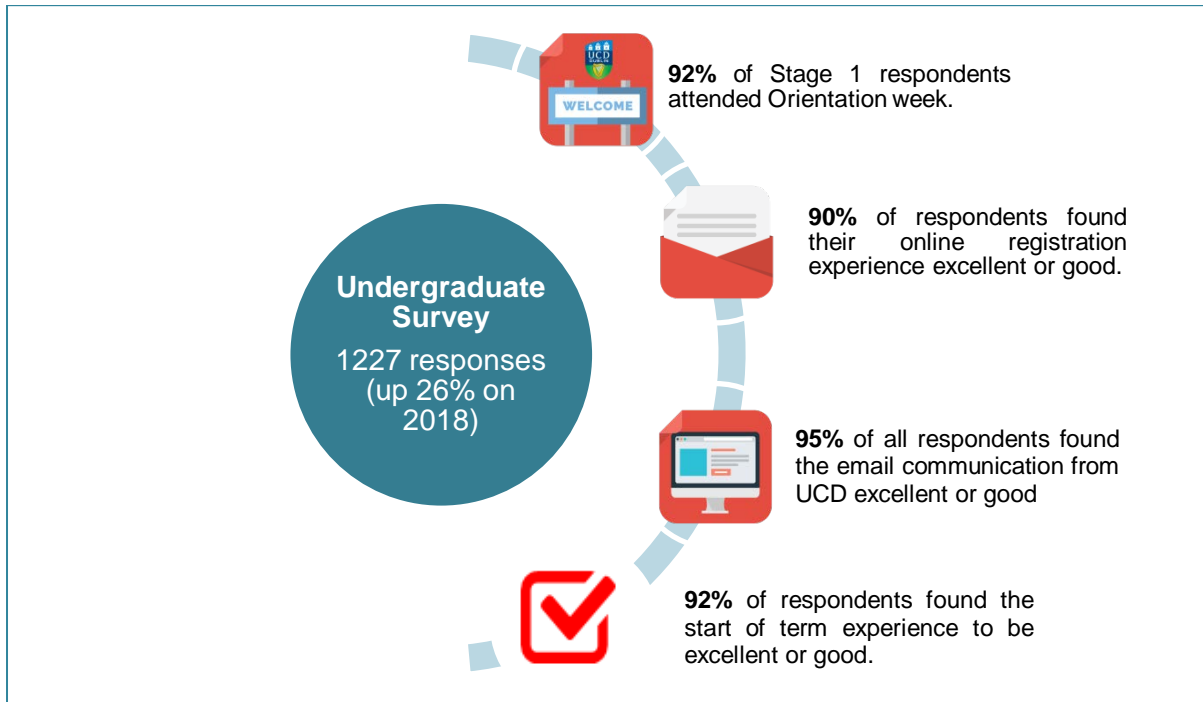
Eoin Hanratty, Head of IT Customer Services

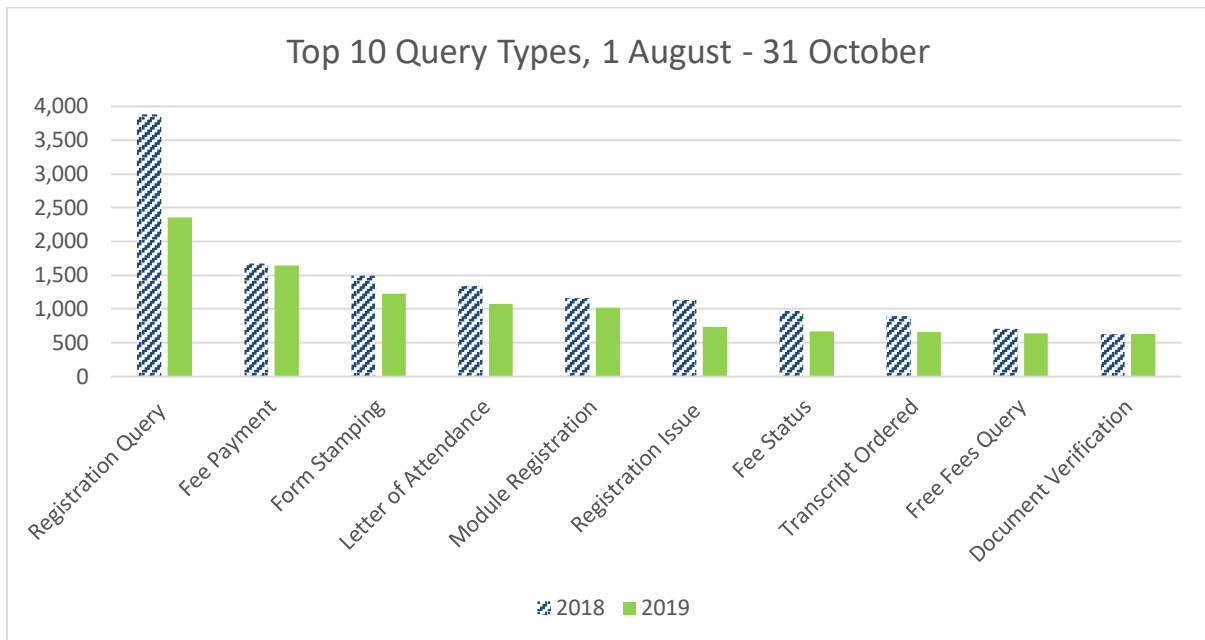June O'Connor, UCD Commercial, Residential, and Hospitality Services
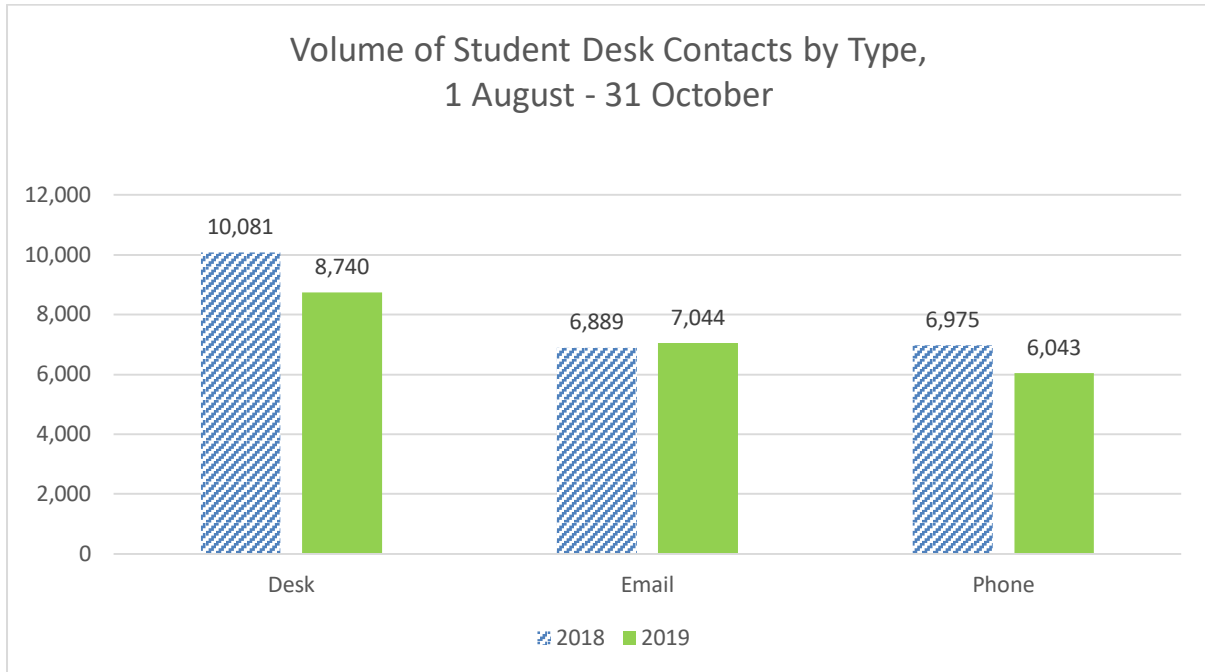
Brian Treacy, Education Officer, Students' Union

Conor Anderson, Graduate Officer, Students' Union

6 START OF TERM 2019/20 SURVEYS - KEY RESULTS

Undergraduate Survey
1227 responses (up 26% on 2018)

92% of Stage 1 respondents attended Orientation week.

90% of respondents found their online registration experience excellent or good.

95% of all respondents found the email communication from UCD excellent or good

92% of respondents found the start of term experience to be excellent or good.

Graduate Taught/ Research Survey
527 responses (up 22% on 2018)

90% of respondents who attended the GradsConnect event found the stands to be excellent or good.

94% of all respondents found the email communication from UCD excellent or good

89% of respondents found their online registration experience to be excellent or good.

91% of respondents found the start of term experience to be excellent or good.

7 STUDENT DESK – KEY DATA

Volume of Student Desk Contacts by Type, 1 August - 31 October

Type	2018	2019
Desk	10,081	8,740
Email	6,889	7,044
Phone	6,975	6,043

Top 10 Query Types, 1 August - 31 October

Note: 'Registration Query' denotes general queries answered by Student Desk. 'Registration Issue' denotes more complex queries.