

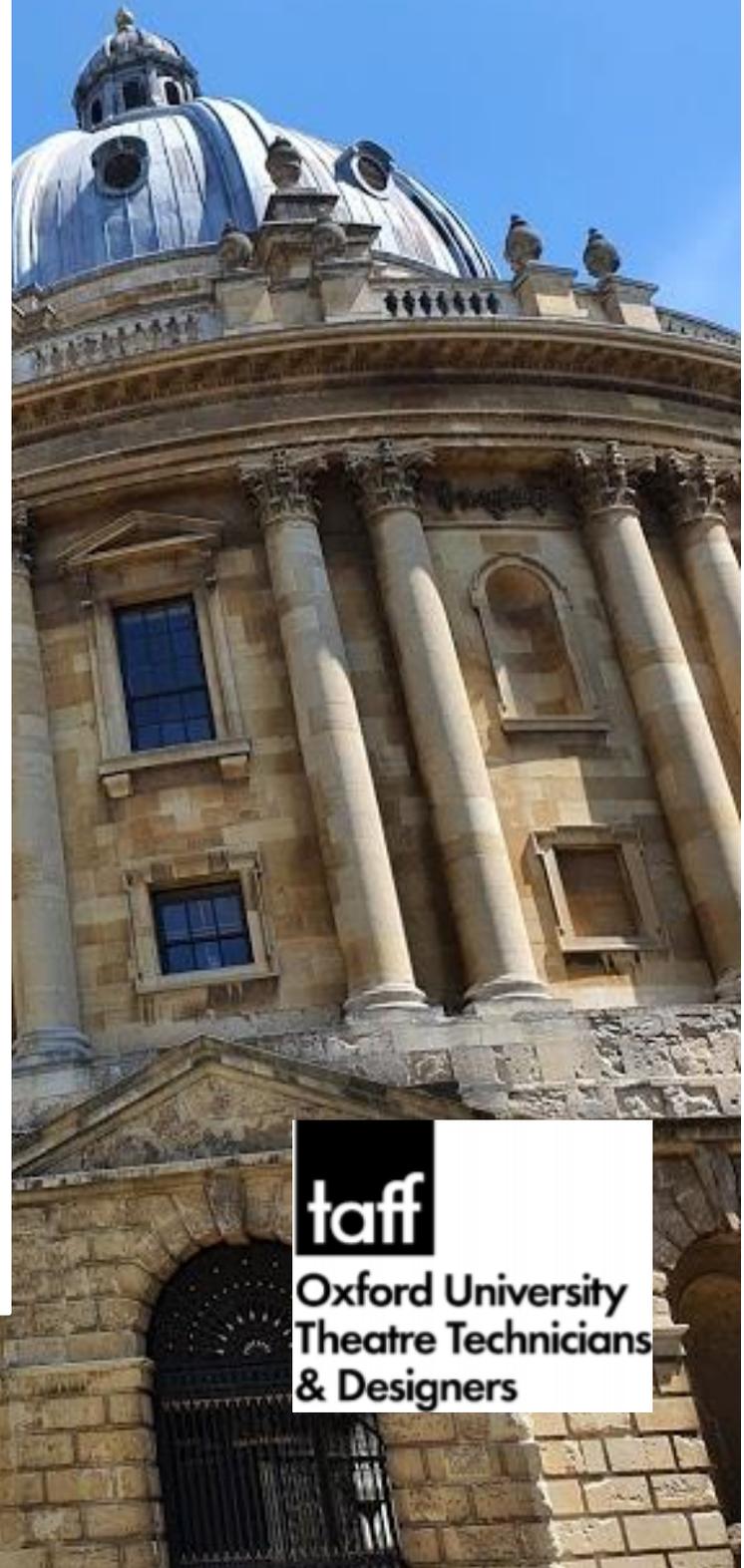
Welfare Report 2021

SEPTEMBER 27 2021

Sebastien Roberts

TAFF Welfare Rep

welfare@tabsareforflying.co.uk



taff
Oxford University
Theatre Technicians
& Designers

Aims

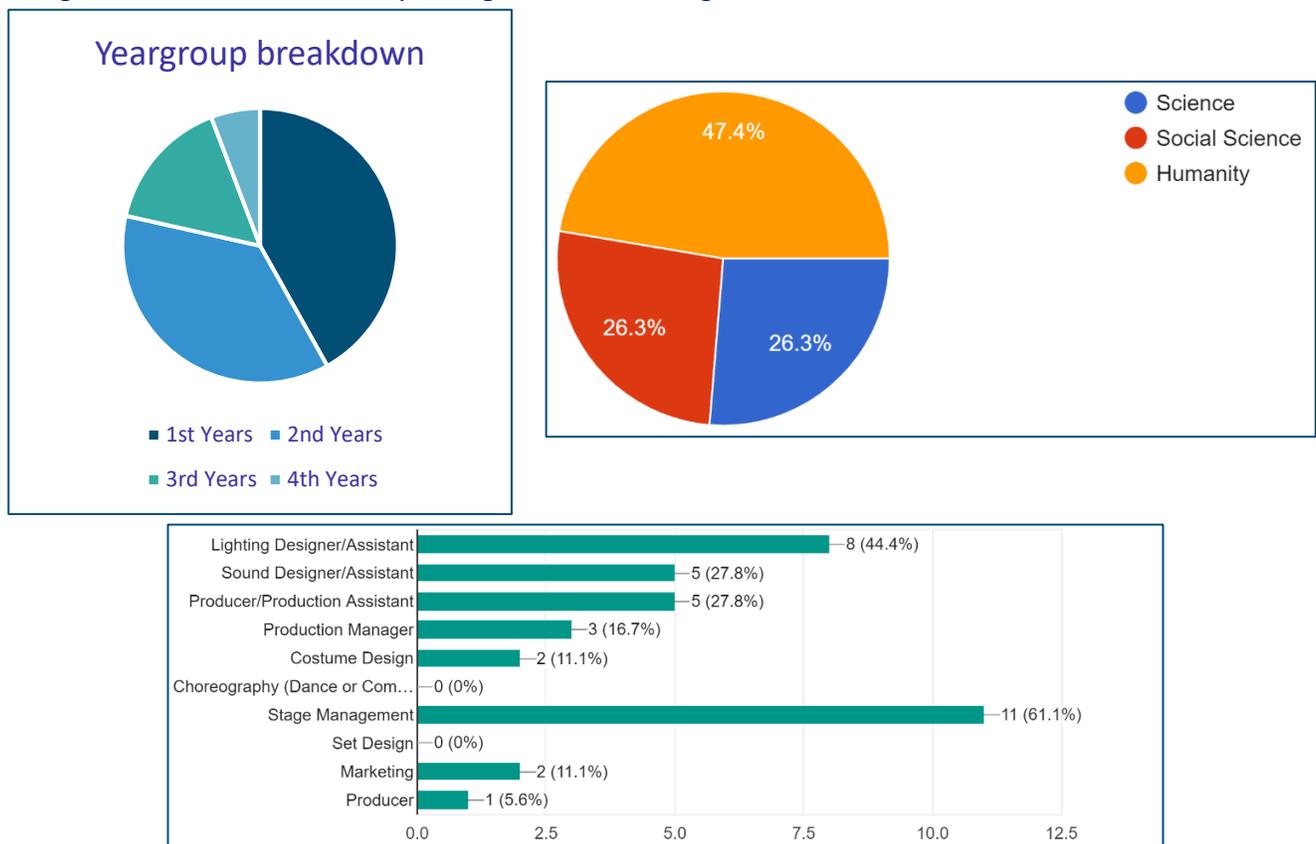
The Welfare Rep is a position within TAFF to ensure the well-being of society members. To inform the aims of this role, and of the TAFF committee in general, we sent out a questionnaire in TT21 to the mailing list. This report summarises the findings of that survey, to ensure transparency and accountability.

The Questionnaire

Questions 1, 2, 3 & 4 (Demographics)

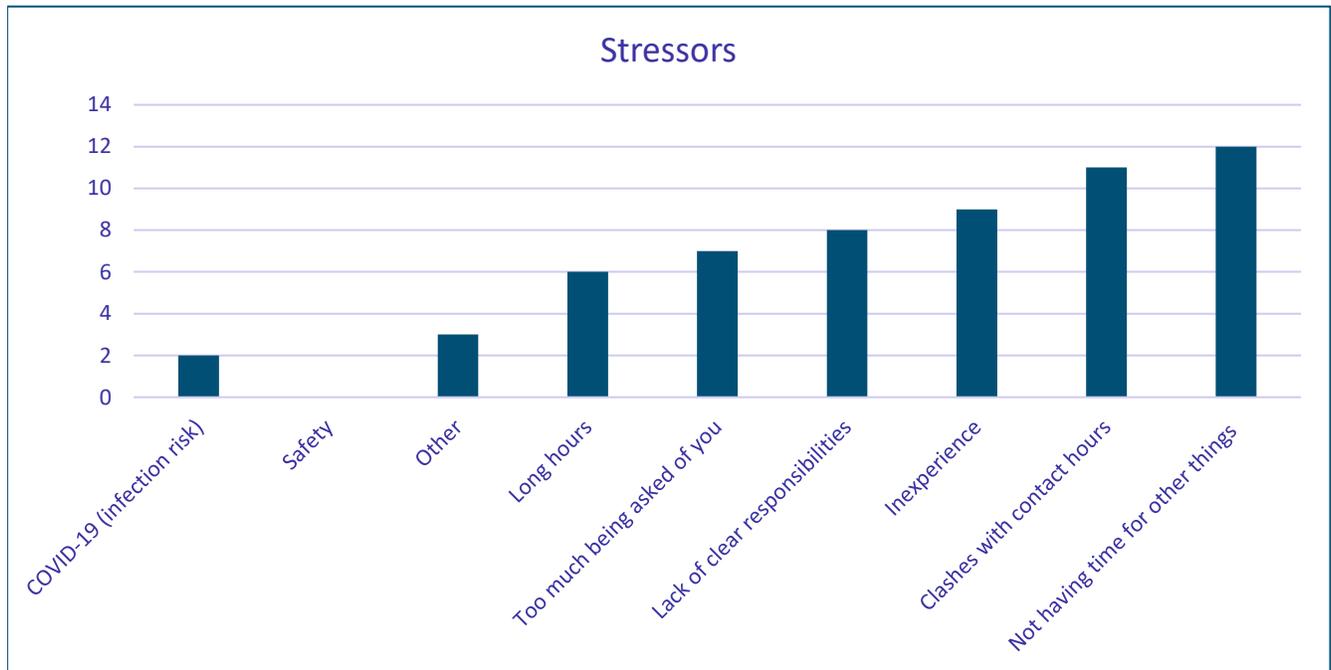
The questionnaire received 19 responses. Nearly half were Humanities students (47.4%), and the remainder were science students (26.3% 'Social Science' and 26.3% 'Science'). Nearly 90% of the respondents were undergraduates, although research postgraduates also responded too (filling in the remaining 10.5%). Most respondents were in the first year of their course (42.1%), with the second largest group being third years (36.8%), the third largest was second years (15.8%), and finally 5.8% were fourth years.

The most common roles taken by TAFF members is stage management, followed by Lighting Designer/Assistant, and then by acting as a Sound Designer/Assistant or Producer/Production Assistant.



Question 4 (Stressors)

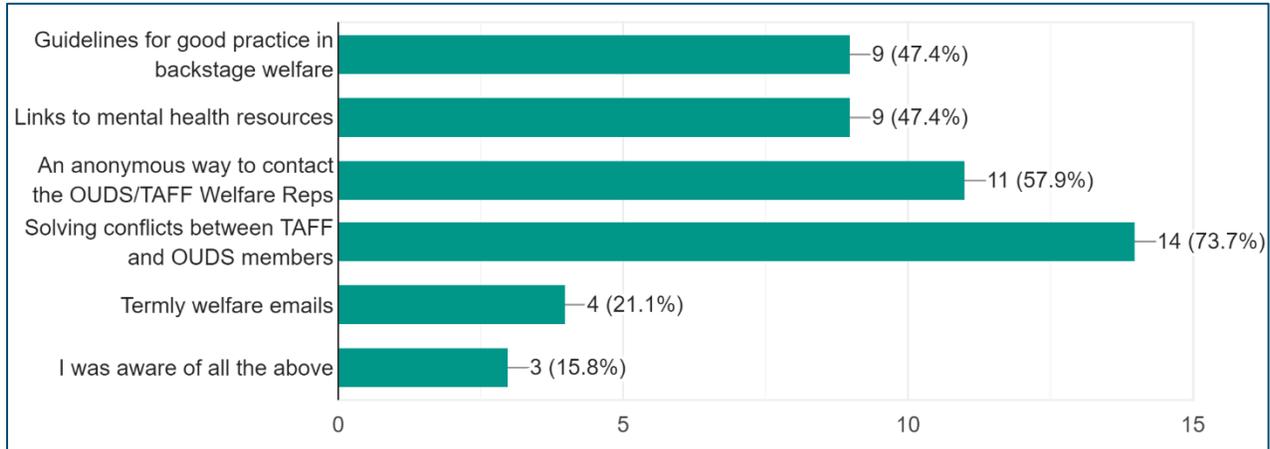
The questionnaire asked TAFF members to select their 4 most prominent areas of concern about returning to theatre after theatre returns to England in full following mass vaccination of COVID-19. The responses (shown below) show that the most common areas of concern in TAFF are not having enough time for other things and possible clashes with contact hours. This, as the previous year, is closely related to the next two most common areas of concern: inexperience and lack of clarity in roles. TAFF have no safety concerns. Two questions were asked in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.



The following table shows the causes of stress broken down by role. It is helpful to keep in mind the number of responses for each role when reading the chart. Producers and production managers experience the greatest effect of the time commitment, alongside set designers and stage managers. The feeling that too much is being asked is common across almost all roles, and the lack of role clarity is similarly pervasive, affecting more than half of TAFF members in most roles.

Question 5 (Available Welfare Resources)

TAFF members were asked what resources and services the society offered to help support its members they were unaware of. Most stated they were unaware of the fact welfare can be approached to try and mediate conflict between TAFF and OUDS members (73.7%) and that they did not know TAFF (with OUDS) provides an anonymous way to contact the OUDS/TAFF welfare reps (57.9%). Less than 20% were aware of all the options states.

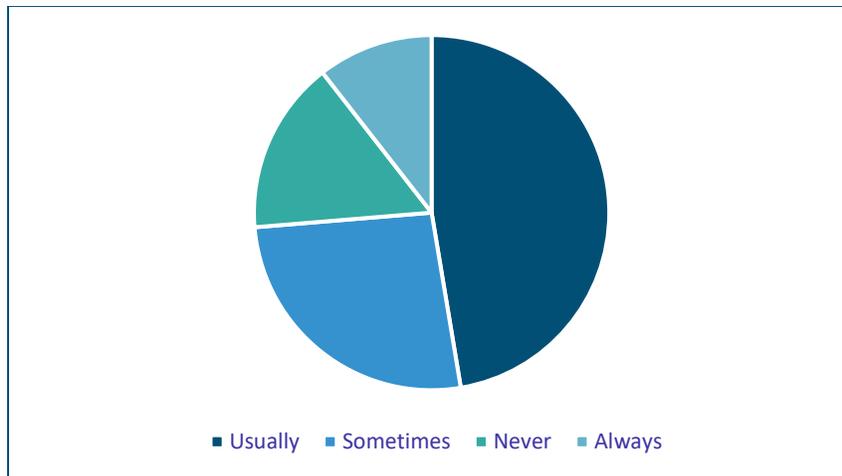


Action:

- Welfare emails to contain reminders of these resources on top of the usual link to the TAFF website, and a reminder to contact the TAFF welfare rep at welfare@tabsareforflying.co.uk .

Question 6 (Welfare Contact)

In the 2020 report, no member reported *usually* knowing who to go to with welfare concerns in past productions. For 2021, this was the highest scoring category, with 47.4% of those surveyed saying they *usually* knew to go to. Following that, 26.3% reported they *sometimes* knew, and 15.8% saying they *never* knew.

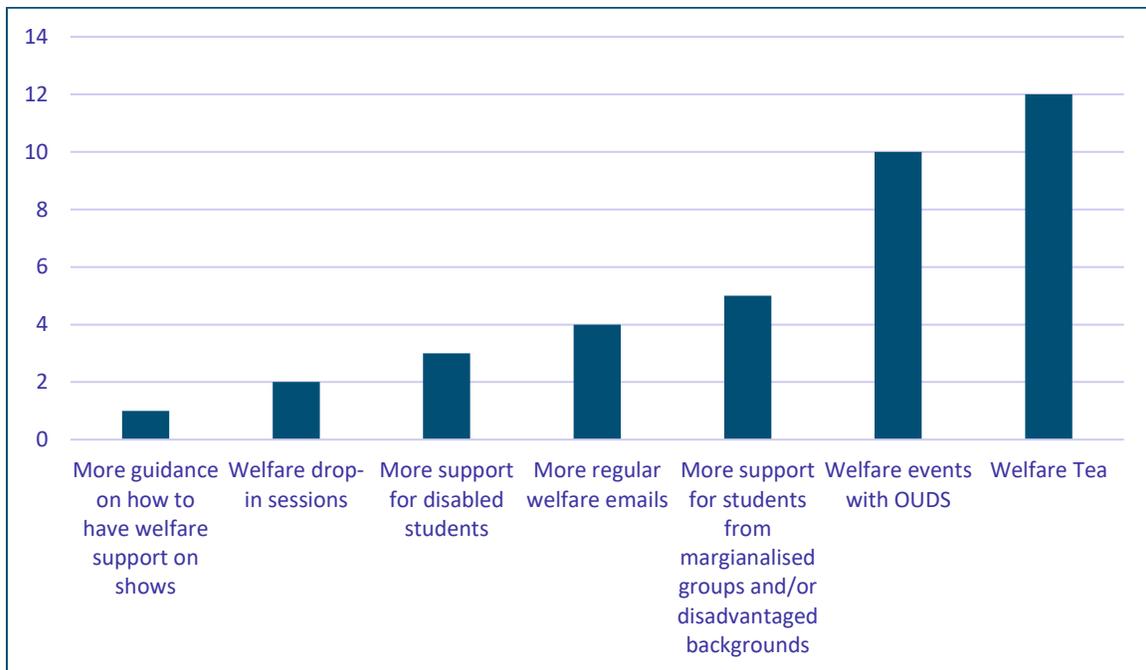


Action:

- Welfare guidelines to be updated and shared with the TAFF mail-list with MT21.
- TAFF to include a way to contact the OUDS welfare rep within each welfare email.

Question 7 (Planned new resources)

To help improve the overall well-being of TAFF members, those surveyed were asked what new welfare resources they may find useful in the academic year 2021-22. The most popular option was a welfare tea (66.7%) and was followed by welfare events combining OUDS and TAFF (55.6%).



Action:

- Introduce an annual welfare event with OUDS, and a separate one for TAFF members only.
- Discuss carrying out outreach work in a similar style to Humans Of Oxford and others to demonstrate TAFF as a welcoming space.
- Update welfare guidelines to be in line with current restrictions, and remind TAFF members there is support available to them for shows.

Question 7 (Other Comments)

The responses to this item have been separated into category below:

Oxford Theatre Culture

TAFF members have reported that Oxford’s theatre culture can feel tightly-knit and cliquey. There was an overall suggestion that there was little support for newer members looking to try out theatre tech, and few opportunities for them too.

Action:

- COVID-19 has placed severe restrictions on opportunities to welcome new members. As theatre opens up, shows should encourage people who are new to Oxford Theatre to help out in assistant and shadowing roles, and positions should be advertised like this with calls for roles. The removal of legal COVID restrictions also allows for TAFF to reform and encourage new freshers and second years to join.

Role Guidelines

Connected with theatre culture, a lack of clear guidelines and definition of roles backstage was reported (for example, appropriate responsibilities per person, per role). Assistant and Junior roles

were highlighted as lacking, which provides a gateway for many new members. There was also a concern that not all TAFF members feel confident in asking to be treated appropriately as crew and as people.

Action:

- TAFF role advisors are reviewing the TAFF role guidelines, which we hope to better advertise in the coming year, especially to freshers.
- TAFF role advisors can be contacted by email at any time with suggestions that might be added onto our role guidelines

If you would like any **more information** or a **plain text version** of this document, please contact welfare@tabsareforflying.co.uk