**Table 5 Qualitative findings from the open-ended questions**

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| **Theme** | **Sub-theme** | **Example quote** |
| (1) Sleep disruption is a direct strain on students learning capacity and academic performance | 1.1 Students productivity levels are at risk (n=33) | “When I don't get a good night's rest, I wake up feeling less energetic. It’s harder to feel motivated to get out of bed and do the things I have to do during the day, like go to university or work.” |
| 1.2 Students attention is at risk (n=63) | “I’m unable to concentrate on my work or in lectures which means I miss vital information which I would have to catch up on later.” |
| 1.3 Students attendance is at risk (n=6) | “Because I have been getting to sleep really late. I don’t want to get up for my lectures or seminars” |
| (2) Sleep disruption is a direct strain on student’s mental wellbeing and physical health | 2.1 Experiencing complex psychosocial responses (n=61) | “If I get a bad night’s sleep it will always affect my mood the next day.” |
| 2.2 Experiencing physical symptoms of exhaustion (n=81) | “I went through a period when I was getting less than 7 hours sleep every night for a few months and my health had never been so bad as it was during that time, I was constantly feeling like I wanted to collapse because I was so tired, I didn't want to eat, I felt sick and I felt very anxious constantly.” |
| 2.3 Experiencing irregular sleep management (n=53) | “I constantly need sleep. I often feel dizzy or disoriented and need multiple naps during the day just to get basic work done.” |
| 2.4 The importance of regular sleep and good sleep habits (n=28) | “The more sleep the better not just mentally but also physically and spiritually. Sleep relaxes your body and allows the brain to focus on other functions and process all the new info[rmation] learnt that day and keep the body healthy and ready for the next day to absorb more information.” |
| (3) Sleep preventing factors versus sleep aiding strategies | 3.1 Controllable and uncontrollable factors that prevent sleep (n=20) | “Most of the time it is a noise that prevents me from falling asleep or wakes me up during the night.” |
| 3.2 Successful factors that improve sleep (n=26) | “This year, I have tried my best to go to sleep at regular times and wake up fairly early even on weekends. My mental health is so much better this year.” |