

AMM Proposals – Response from Trustees

Proposals

1) Proposal: Multi-Instalment Tuition fee Payment Plan to Ease Financial Burden on International Students. Submitted by multiple students

What issue would you like us to consider?

The current policy requires Master of Research students to pay their tuition fees by May, which places significant financial pressure on many students. This issue particularly affects January intake students, who are more vulnerable due to limited part-time job opportunities during the January to April period.

As a result, students face increased stress in trying to meet the payment deadline, which can negatively impact their academic focus and performance. Additionally, a late payment penalty of £200 further adds to their financial burden, making the situation even more challenging.

If the deadline could be extended until October—providing an additional six-month timeframe—it would greatly support students in managing their finances more effectively. This flexibility would allow them to concentrate better on their studies, achieve stronger academic outcomes, and ultimately contribute positively to the university's reputation and goodwill.

What would you like to see happen?

I propose extending the tuition fee payment deadline by six months—from May to 31st October 2026—and allowing students to pay their fees in multiple instalments during this period rather than in only two instalments.

This change would reduce financial pressure on students, enabling them to focus on their academic studies without stress and achieve better academic outcomes.

Trustee Board Response

The Trustee Board recognises the financial pressures that tuition fee payment schedules can place on students, particularly international students and those studying on postgraduate research programmes. The Board acknowledges that financial concerns can have a significant impact on students' wellbeing, academic experience, and ability to fully engage with their studies.

While decisions relating to tuition fee payment deadlines, instalment arrangements, and associated penalties are the responsibility of the University rather than the Students' Union or its Trustee Board, the Board is supportive of the Students' Union working with affected students and elected representatives to raise these concerns and advocate for payment arrangements that better support students' needs. The Board is satisfied that

this proposal aligns with the Union's charitable objectives and presents no material risk to the organisation and is therefore content for the proposal to stand as Union policy.

To note: *This proposal was included as an 'Emergency Proposal' as part of the Students' Assembly and under Byelaw 424. The proposal was time sensitive and shared quickly with the University, who provided context and information on this situation. Following this meeting, the SU's Advice Service produced an informative and signposting email to the students who had submitted this proposal.*

2) Proposal: Disabled Student Commitment. Submitted by Laura Kenny

What issue would you like us to consider?

Disabled students are facing ableism at every turn. If they approach the union for support, they are sent to complain to the university individually. The students' union itself have also made several decisions that prevent disabled students from taking part. At the last AMM, a resolution was proposed on 'Enhancing Mental Health, Wellbeing, and Accessibility Support for Students,' but no commitments were made because students were unable to cast meaningful votes. The students' unions need to do more for disabled students, as disabled students are struggling and don't know where to turn to get help.

What would you like to see happen?

A firm commitment by the SU to prioritise and tackle the access and inclusion issues. This requires real action and change, as endless consultations without impact are insulting, a waste of resources, leave disabled students with no hope and make disabled students feel like the SU does not care.

Trustee Board Response

The Trustee Board recognises the importance of ensuring that the Students' Union is accessible, inclusive, and representative of all students, including disabled students. The Board is supportive of the Students' Union maintaining a strong commitment to addressing access and inclusion issues and working in partnership with elected student representatives, liberation groups, and student communities to identify barriers and drive meaningful improvements.

While the responsibility for shaping and delivering activity in this area sits with the Union and its student leaders rather than the Trustee Board, the Board is satisfied that this proposal aligns with the Union's values and charitable objectives and presents no material risk to the organisation. The Board is therefore content for the proposal to stand as Union policy.

3) Proposal: A neurodiverse friendly approach supports all neuro types

What issue would you like us to consider?

Lecturers should receive training to make their teaching more neurodiverse friendly. They lecture about topics in isolation, without context or how it fits into the wider theory and practice.

Assignments have one final end date for large research projects when most work better when they have lots of smaller deadlines to meet for each section. The word counts are too low, which can result in neurodiverse student being penalised for now being succinct and struggling to expand ideas with a very tight word count. The academic support tutors are no longer in place, but neuro diverse student needs their knowledge of the subject and assignments to keep their writing focused on the question. Practical exams don't seem to allow for extra time, when written exams do.

The head of the course has not been sympathetic to my different needs and refers me to mental health services rather than providing appropriate support.

The course has never given out module evaluation forms, so we cannot feed this back to the department.

What would you like to see happen?

To make sure all lecturers receive training in neuro diverse issues and how to teach to their profile, which would benefit everyone. Greater knowledge of the needs of this cohort should lead to greater understanding and a more person friendly approach, rather than viewing individuals as the problem, which would align with the employment practices.

Students should also have the opportunity to feed this back via module evaluations and opportunities to discuss these issues in a way that won't penalise them.

Trustee Board Response

The Trustee Board recognises the importance of ensuring that teaching, assessment, and student feedback mechanisms are accessible and inclusive for neurodivergent students. The Board supports the principle that students should be able to access learning environments that recognise and accommodate a range of neurotypes, and that student feedback should play an important role in shaping improvements to the academic experience.

While decisions relating to curriculum design, staff training, assessment practices, and academic processes sit with the University rather than the Students' Union or its Trustee Board, the Board is supportive of the Students' Union working with student representatives and neurodivergent students to raise these issues, advocate for positive change, and ensure that student voices are heard. The Board is satisfied that this proposal aligns with the Union's values and charitable objectives and presents no material risk to the organisation and is therefore content for the proposal to stand as Union policy.

4) Proposal: Review the {representative} structure and practices of the SU

What issue would you like us to consider?

This university is the only one of its size to not have full time elected student representation. The "new era" changes this year have made the union less effective and led to serious issues around access and democracy. Students are not able to access details on the actions of the su or effectively scrutinise its decisions. As a result, students are not engaged and do not feel part of the union.

What would you like to see happen?

I propose that consultation and insight reports from before and during the change are made public. I also move for a full and honest student led evaluation of the new era project, including a specific focus on equality impact, and for the students' union to become radically transparent and inclusive. We have the opportunity to become a best practice beacon of equality and representation, change was needed but it should not be at the expense of representation and student voice.

Trustee Board Response

The Trustee Board recognises the importance of effective student representation, transparency, and ensuring that students have opportunities to engage with and influence the work of their Students' Union. The Board supports the principle of regularly reviewing structures and practices to ensure they continue to meet the needs of students and is supportive of the Students' Union working with student representatives and the wider student body to gather feedback and evaluate the effectiveness of its approaches.

The Board also wishes to acknowledge the strength of feeling expressed within this proposal. However, the Trustee Board is confident that the Students' Union is operating in a way that meets its charitable objectives and regulatory responsibilities. The Board does not consider the matters raised to represent a governance concern or organisational risk requiring Trustee intervention.

The Trustee Board, the Board is satisfied that this proposal aligns with the Union's values and charitable objectives and presents no material risk to the organisation. The Board is therefore content for the proposal to stand as Union policy.