

PROTECTING CARDIFF MET STUDENTS DURING THE NATIONAL LOCKDOWN AND ONGOING PANDEMIC

The Students' Union is committed to supporting and representing the interests of all Cardiff Met students during the current national lockdown and ongoing pandemic. We know this is a challenging time but believe that no individual or cohort should be disadvantaged as a result of being a student at this time. We are working to secure the most accessible and supportive student experience possible, which suits the current circumstances our students find themselves in. Your SU has chosen to prioritise three key areas which we feel more should be done for students. These include academic support, accommodation, and digital provision.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

The University has agreed to regular meetings with the SU to ensure students are not disadvantaged by the pandemic and their marks are not affected. We are asking for information on final grade classification for those graduating this academic year.

- The University has released information regarding their Safety Net approach to this academic year (2020/21) via [MetCentral](#). This includes moderating marks at the end of the year to ensure this year's cohort marks reflect previous years. We believe this is a beneficial first step but is not enough.
- We ask the University to ensure that final degree classifications are protected for those graduating this academic year, by introducing a Safety Net which ensures they do not fall out of a grade boundary that they fully deserve. This should consider previous attainment, which confirms or improves a student's final classification.
- We ask the University to introduce uncapped resits for any student who fails a module or assessment.
- We ask the University to ensure that they provide appropriate and safe study space on both campuses.

- We ask the University to be clear and communicative around the ability to receive an extension or mitigating circumstances for pieces of work due during this period. This includes both individual and group circumstances. If you or your course mates are struggling with a deadline due to COVID-19 we encourage you to speak to academic staff and look at the information found [here](#).
- We ask the University to request that academic staff members proactively engage in conversation between themselves and the relevant student reps within their school, to address any cohort-based issues quickly and efficiently.
- We ask the University to provide further support for those who can no longer complete practical elements or placements, which provide invaluable learning opportunities that cannot be replicated online.

ACCOMMODATION

We will be asking all accommodation providers to consider and recognise the situation students find themselves in, and to review their charges for this period. We will also be looking to the university to provide further support to those living in private rented accommodation across the city.

- Cardiff Met has granted students living in their owned halls a 100% rent rebate for the time their course is completely online. We want to ensure that those students who were placed elsewhere by the university are receiving the same. We ask the University to use their relationship with the private halls that they place students in to mirror the support that has been put in place for campus-based students.
- Unite Students has granted a 50% reduction for 4 weeks, which is considerably less, with no guarantee that this will continue if the situation worsens and students are asked to stay at home for longer. We will be contacting Unite to push for an offer like the University. We will also be contacting other accommodation providers across the city, especially those who we choose to advertise with us.
- We would like to make clear to our students that you are able to travel for education purposes and if you do wish to return to your Cardiff accommodation you are able to do so. We understand that this can sometimes be the best place to complete assignments and concentrate on deadlines. On the other hand, we completely support those who choose to stay away to alleviate risk to themselves or others.
- We are asking the University to provide financial support to those who live in Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) and are having conversations around a support fund.
- Your SU Sabbatical Officers have written a letter to landlords, lettings agencies and other accommodation providers, asking them to consider and recognise the situation students find themselves in, and to review their charges for this period. This is available to [download](#) on our website. We will also be looking to other SUs in Cardiff to support us on this and to co-sign the letter with scope for it being sent to the Welsh Government, Cardiff Council, and local Senedd Members.

DIGITAL PROVISION

We are looking to ensure that all students have adequate equipment and capabilities to aid them in completing their assignments at home.

- We are having regular engagement with staff in Library and Information Services around the loaning of equipment, predominantly laptops. Further information on this can be found [here](#).
- We are requesting that the university establish a fast-track system to ensure that the digital hardship fund is utilised effectively for those in need of extra support regarding equipment that makes studying at home that little bit easier.
- The Students' Union and Cardiff Met are jointly approaching broadband providers, in a bid to provide students living in HMOs with free upgrades, including increased speeds and installing Wi-Fi boosters. A letter will be sent to the Education Minister asking for her support, and most importantly to allow university students to complete work and attend online lectures at home without the worry of weak broadband.

We will provide regular updates on our progress to you, recognising the need for flexibility and continued communication as the pandemic changes. We encourage you to use your SU Student Reps to voice any concerns or worries that you have, it is only with your engagement with us that we can represent you and create positive change.

To keep up to date with our activity, follow our social media channels [@cardiffmetsu](#) and look at our [website](#).

We have not forgotten about our students at Cardiff Met.