# Salford SU Policy Book

### Introduction

##### Salford Students’ Union (Salford SU) and the University of Salford are partners in setting and maintaining standards on the student experience.

##### This policy book outlines the principles, values, and commitments of Salford SU. It serves as a guide to supporting the diverse needs of the student body, ensuring their well-being, academic success, and professional development while fostering a sustainable, inclusive, and modern community. Ultimately, it expresses Salford students’ vision for an outstanding student experience at Salford.

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## Student Life

##### This area covers policies that enhance the overall student experience, including mental health support, housing, student employment, international student support, and volunteer opportunities. It aims to ensure that students have access to essential services, support systems, and opportunities for personal and professional growth.

### 1. Mental Health Support

1.1 The Union believes that raising awareness about mental health issues, prevention measures, and available solutions is crucial. Therefore, the Union actively promotes mental health awareness through various campaigns and programs. This work moves beyond awareness and seeks to address any aggravating factors which drive poor mental health.

1.2 Counselling services should be culturally competent, student-centred, easily accessible via a system which ensures timely and confidential support. This includes lobbying for expanded online counselling options to cater to students who may be unable to attend in person due to remote learning or other constraints.

1.3 Peer support programmes and schemes where students deliver peer engagement (for example Rafiki, Student Groups leadership) must include mandatory mental health awareness training, equipping students and staff with the knowledge to support students effectively. This training should be regularly updated to reflect new research and best practices in mental health support.

1.4 Peer support networks should be implemented where students can share their experiences and support each other under the guidance of trained professionals. These networks should be integrated into the broader mental health services offered by the University.

1.5 Regular mental health awareness campaigns should be conducted throughout the academic year, including workshops, seminars, and informational materials distributed both physically and online. These campaigns should aim to destigmatise mental health issues and encourage students to seek help when needed.

1.6 The Union believes that mental health is not just a state, a condition or a set of symptoms. Poor mental health does not just require support, it requires prevention. The University should continually assess the overall health of its students – and staff – and seek to understand where its choices are driving poor mental health and should aim to design out such triggers.

### 2. Housing Policy

2.1 The Union believes that access to quality, affordable housing is essential for students' well-being and academic success. All students should have access to housing that meets their needs and supports their social integration. This includes advocating for housing policies that prioritise student needs within the Greater Manchester area.

2.2 Student recruitment should consider the availability of accommodation for the students it recruits, and the University should be particularly concerned about housing supply as it relates to the appointment of international students and widening participation initiatives.

2.3 Student housing should be designed based on students' needs and preferences. Students should be involved in the planning and design processes of new housing projects to better reflect their preferences.

2.4 Increased investment in student housing projects is necessary, to maintain affordable and quality accommodation for students. This includes lobbying for policies that provide financial incentives for developers to create affordable student housing, and University support for appropriate planning applications.

2.5 Sustainable housing practices must be prioritised in new student housing developments, incorporating energy-efficient technologies and environmentally friendly designs in line with broader sustainability policies. Renewable energy sources and sustainable building materials should be used in all new housing projects.

2.6 Housing policies should promote communal living and equality, taking into account the diverse needs of the student population, including international students. Transparent and inclusive tenant allocation processes should be used to support a cohesive student community. Community-building activities and events within student housing are encouraged to foster a sense of belonging and mutual support.

2.7 Student housing should include adequate access to facilities for study and recreation, ensuring that students have a conducive environment for both their academic and personal lives. The inclusion of study rooms, common areas, and recreational facilities in all student housing developments is advocated.

### 3. Student Employment Policy

3.1 The Union believes that employment, entrepreneurship, and voluntary activities are integral parts of students’ learning and development. The University of Salford should recognise the importance of providing students with opportunities that do not hinder their academic progress while supporting their financial needs. The University should promote a balanced approach to work and study.

3.2 The University should endeavour to provide as many of its jobs to students as is practicably possible. All roles at Grade 4 and below should be reviewed with a view to making them appropriate for employment by Salford students. This demonstrates faith in students and their skills, as well as investing in a circular economy that benefits students and the university alike.

3.3 Comprehensive career services at the University should be tailored to meet the specific needs of different student groups, including international students, students of colour and those with disabilities.

3.4 Internships and placements relevant to students' fields of study must be accessible, with opportunities to earn academic credits and receive adequate support throughout their placement. Fair pay and working conditions are essential. Partnerships with local businesses and organisations should be developed and maintained to increase the availability of high-quality internships.

3.5 International students should be supported in transitioning to the local job market, including access to post-study work visas. Language support and integration programs should be provided to help them develop the necessary skills for the UK job market. Efforts should be made to reduce bureaucratic barriers that international students face when seeking employment.

3.5 Sustainability should be centred in the University’s employment offer. Encouraging students to seek jobs with organisations that prioritise environmental responsibility and align with the University's sustainability goals. Green jobs and opportunities in sectors that contribute to sustainability should be promoted. Consequently, each field of study should have coherent links to environmental careers outcomes.

3.6 The Union believes that students should be able to have access to flexible and supportive working conditions in their jobs alongside study. Their employment should contribute to their academic and personal development. The Union will champion students' workers' rights and ensure fair treatment in the workplace.

3.7 Entrepreneurial training and support should be included within the University’s curriculum, providing students with the skills and resources needed to start their own businesses. Access to mentorship programs, funding opportunities, and networking events is essential.

### 4. Student Development and Opportunities

4.1 Comprehensive training for elected officers, representatives, other student leaders and staff should be provided to ensure effective leadership and governance, supporting the University’s commitment to high standards of leadership. Training on financial management, strategic planning, and organisational governance support an accountable and democratic students’ union.

4.2 Volunteering is valuable for learning, networking, and developing skills for working life. Volunteers should be well-supported with access to training that promotes their well-being and the well-being of others. Volunteering work within academic programmes should be recognised and students should be permitted to earn credits for these contributions.

4.3 Volunteering opportunities should be inclusive and accessible, ensuring participation is meaningful. Volunteer programs that cater to a wide range of interests and skills should be created, ensuring that all students can find opportunities that align with their passions.

4.4 Clubs and societies should be provided with free facilities at the University. Societies should be supported by offering guidance, training, financial, and communicational support as needed. These associations should play a central role in fostering community and engagement among students.

4.5 Clubs and Societies play a crucial role in the Union's activities, serving as a link between the Union and its members. They should be encouraged to organise accessible events and consider accessibility in all activities, promoting equality and addressing any equality-related issues with Union support. The Union and University should work to enhance the visibility and impact of Clubs and Societies.

4.6 The Union believes in the importance of recognising and celebrating student achievements in volunteering and professional development. Awards and recognition programs should be developed and supported to highlight the contributions of students to their communities and fields of study.

4.7 Initiatives that encourage students to engage in leadership roles within the University, Union and broader community are valuable. Leadership training programs and mentorship opportunities should be provided to help students develop the skills needed to take on these roles.

4.8 All student-experience related strategies should address issues such as loneliness and belonging. Initiatives to promote community and a sense of belonging should be prioritised, including social events and peer support groups. Efforts should be aligned to the Tackling Loneliness Strategy.

4.9 Financial support and advice should be readily available to students to help manage the cost of living. Assistance for students who may encounter barriers in securing employment or accessing additional funding sources (e.g. students with disabilities, parents, carers, LGBTQ+ students) should be prioritised, ensuring they have access to the necessary resources and support.

4.10 Policies on student health, including alcohol, drugs and nightlife, should be informed by best practices and aligned with the University's Wellbeing Strategy. Alcohol and drug addictions should be combatted in part through using a harm reduction approach

4.11 Our University is a place to learn and to understand. Initiatives that encourage dialogue and mutual respect, while upholding free speech, should focus on bringing communities together and celebrating diverse perspectives in a safe and inclusive environment.

4.12 Opportunities for students to participate in governance and decision-making processes should be provided, ensuring their voices are heard in the management of the Union and the University. Representation on key committees and boards is essential.

4.13 A centralised platform for leadership development opportunities should be created, making it easier for students to find and participate in activities that enhance their skills and experiences.

## Learning and Teaching

##### This area focuses on educational aspects, including curriculum management, teaching staff support, digital strategies, feedback systems, and research. It aims to ensure high educational standards, quality teaching, and a supportive learning environment.

### Educational Principles and Quality Management

1.1 The Union believes in accessible, high-quality education that is free from financial barriers, ensuring that all students, regardless of their socio-economic background, have equal opportunities to succeed.

1.2 The Union believes that a comprehensive quality management system must involve collaboration among all stakeholders in the learning process. Continuous feedback and development activities at, school, directorate and programme levels are essential.

1.3 Education should prioritise learning outcomes over factual knowledge, emphasising skills in reasoning, analysis, and assessment. Curriculum designs that incorporate practical experiences and real-world applications are important to enhance student learning.

1.4 Curriculum content must be coherent and aligned with subject benchmarks, ensuring that goals, outcomes, content, teaching methods, assessment methods, and criteria are compatible. The Union believes that all students should be able to experience interdisciplinarity and problem-based learning.

1.5 Written assignments should be anonymised during assessment to ensure fairness. This practice helps eliminate bias and ensures that students are assessed purely on the quality of their work.

1.6 Flexible opportunities should be offered to develop study skills, including targeted support. Students should have access to various resources and support systems that cater to their individual needs and learning styles.

1.7 All forms of study, including distance learning, e-learning, and placements should be provided with the highest possible quality. The expansion of online learning opportunities is supported to accommodate students who may have other commitments or prefer a more flexible study schedule.

1.8 Regular review and revision of the curriculum are essential to maintain high educational standards. Feedback from students, academics, and industry professionals should be used to continuously improve the curriculum and ensure it remains relevant and effective.

1.9 The Union believes that disadvantage is a structural issue in our society, and not an individual one. Because of this, systems of quality and assessment will, without intervention, result in differential outcomes such as the Ethnicity Awarding Gap, disability awards gap and the gender pay gap.

### 2. Curriculum Management

2.1 The curriculum is a collection of subjects with a common objective and learning outcomes, organised into an academic programme. Regular assessments of curriculum content and structure should involve student representatives and other stakeholders, leading to detailed action plans for development. Diverse perspectives should be included in these assessments to ensure the curriculum meets the needs of all students.

2.2 Intended learning outcomes should be achieved through mandatory subjects, with each outcome supported by multiple subjects and topics. Smooth transitions between subjects should be ensured within the curriculum. Clear pathways and progression plans are essential for student success.

2.3 Student feedback is critical to curriculum management. Regular surveys and focus groups should be conducted to gather student opinions on the curriculum, and this feedback should be used to inform curriculum changes and improvements. Data alone is not sufficient. This feedback should be considered by student representatives, in partnership with academics and professional service representatives, who will together propose responses in learning and teaching provision, in course and programme design.

2.4 Experiential learning opportunities should be included within the curriculum, such as internships, multi-programme projects, and project-based learning. These experiences provide students with practical skills and knowledge that complement their academic studies.

2.5 Interdisciplinary programs that allow students to explore multiple fields of study and gain a more comprehensive education are valuable. These programs encourage critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

### 3. Teaching Staff

3.1 The Union believes in fair working conditions, competitive remuneration, and comprehensive support for academic staff to ensure a thriving and sustainable education sector.3.22Teaching positions should require prior teaching experience, theoretical training, or an agreed plan to complete relevant training within a reasonable timeframe.

3.3 The division of teaching, research, and leadership assignments should be balanced and motivating, allowing for a career path focused on teaching. Professional development should be a systematic and continuous priority. There should be recognition and reward of teaching excellence through awards and promotions.

3.4 Student feedback is essential for the continuous improvement of teaching quality. Academic teaching, including research on teaching methods and scholarship, should be valued equally. Teaching staff assessment should incorporate student feedback.

3.5 Students and programme directors should participate in the assessment process of teaching staff, ensuring comprehensive evaluations. Clear and transparent assessment criteria for teaching staff should be established.

3.6 A supportive and collaborative teaching environment where staff can share best practices and learn from each other is essential. Regular workshops and training sessions should be organised to facilitate this exchange of knowledge. This experience is further enriched when teaching development activities are done in partnership with students, where students are able to facilitate staff learning and development.

3.7 Teaching staff should be provided with adequate resources and support to carry out their duties effectively. This includes access to professional development opportunities, teaching materials, and administrative support.

3.8 Policies that promote diversity and inclusion within the teaching staff serve to promote diversity and inclusion within the student body. Efforts should be made to recruit and retain staff from diverse backgrounds, ensuring that students are exposed to a wide range of perspectives and experiences.

### 4. Digital Policy

4.1 Digital technologies should be leveraged to enhance the student experience and support educational excellence. Digital infrastructure and resources should be maintained at the highest standards to support learning, teaching, research, and administrative functions.

4.2 Continuous investment in new technologies should be prioritised to ensure that the University and the Union remain at the forefront of digital innovation. Training and support should be provided to students and staff to ensure they can effectively utilise digital tools and resources. Ongoing training is essential for keeping up with rapidly evolving technologies.

4.3 A robust and user-friendly virtual learning environment (VLE) should be provided, accessible to all students and staff. Online resources, including e-books, journals, and databases, should be available to support academic study and research. The expansion of these resources is supported to ensure that students have access to a comprehensive digital library.

4.4 Digital learning materials should be designed to be inclusive and accessible, adhering to international standards for accessibility. Virtual and hybrid learning opportunities should be expanded to offer flexibility and cater to diverse student needs, including the use of lecture capture. Flexible learning options are essential for accommodating students with different learning styles and life circumstances.

4.5 Artificial Intelligence technologies should be integrated thoughtfully and ethically into university operations, ensuring they enhance rather than replace human interaction and judgment. Transparency should be maintained in the use of AI, with clear communication to students and staff about how AI is used and its implications. Ethical guidelines should ensure AI applications do not perpetuate bias or inequality.

4.6 Efforts should be made to bridge the digital divide, ensuring all students have access to necessary digital tools and resources. Loan schemes for laptops and other digital devices should be available for students in need, and high-speed wireless internet access should be provided across all university campuses and residential facilities. Digital inclusion is essential for ensuring equal access to education.

4.7 Digital literacy programs should be offered to help students and staff develop essential skills for the digital age. Online platforms and social media should be used to foster a sense of community and engagement among students, and virtual events and activities should be organised regularly to complement in-person events, ensuring inclusivity for remote learners, and learners who cannot dedicate as much time to on-site activities.

4.8 Digital resources should be made accessible to all students, including those with disabilities. Efforts should ensure that digital materials are compatible with assistive technologies and meet accessibility standards.

## Students and Society

##### This area focuses on the relationship between students and society, including policies on the Greater Manchester Student Partnership (GMSP), NUS UK, sustainability, transport, health funding in Manchester, crime, and Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI). It aims to ensure that students are integrated into the wider community and have their rights and interests protected.

### 1. Greater Manchester Student Partnership (GMSP), NUS UK and SOS

1.1 The Union supports the objectives and initiatives of the Greater Manchester Student Partnership (GMSP) to enhance the student experience across the region. Collaboration with other students’ unions and institutions to address common issues and share best practices is essential.

1.2 The Union plays an active role in developing the policies of NUS UK, advocating for student rights and interests on a national level. The Union will participate in campaigns and initiatives that promote equity, access to education, and student welfare where these activities align with the interests of Salford students.

1.3 Sustainability initiatives should be supported, encouraging students to engage in environmentally responsible practices. Awareness of sustainability issues and support for projects that reduce the environmental impact of student activities should be promoted. Engagement in the programmes of Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS) develops students, the Union, the University and the region.

### 2. Transport Policy

2.1 The Union believes that safe, affordable and accessible transport options are crucial for students, recognising the importance of reliable transportation for academic and social engagement. Collaboration with local transport providers to offer student discounts and improve service routes is necessary.

2.2 Sustainable transport initiatives, such as cycling and walking, should be promoted to reduce the environmental impact of student travel. Development of safe cycling infrastructure and pedestrian pathways as well as cycle storage and maintenance facilities on and around campus is essential.

2.3 Public transport services should be frequent, reliable, and safe. Efforts to address any issues related to safety and accessibility on public transport should be prioritised to ensure that all students can travel without concern.

### 3. Health Funding and Services

3.1 Comprehensive healthcare services, including mental health support, sexual health services, and general medical care, should be accessible to all students.

3.2 Efforts should be made to secure funding for student health services, ensuring they can meet the demand and provide timely care. Initiatives to increase awareness of available health services and reduce stigma around seeking help are supported.

3.3 Partnerships with local healthcare providers should be established to offer convenient services to students.

3.4 Preventative health measures, such as vaccination campaigns and health education programs, should be prioritised to promote overall student well-being. Initiatives that encourage healthy lifestyles and informed health choices should be supported.

### 4. Crime and Safety

4.1 Student safety is paramount. Measures to reduce crime and enhance security on and around campus should be supported, including collaboration with local police and the University’s security services.

4.2 Safety awareness campaigns should be conducted regularly to inform students about how to protect themselves and their property. However, these campaigns should not patronise students.

4.3 Improved lighting and security infrastructure on campus and in student residential areas should be advocated to deter crime and increase student safety. Installation of CCTV and emergency call points is necessary.

4.4 Issues of harassment or discrimination within the student community should be addressed, ensuring a safe and inclusive environment for all students. Initiatives that promote respect and understanding among students are not just important for students but contribute to society’s overall health

### 5. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

5.1 Promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion is essential in all activities and policies. Salford SU and the University of Salford are committed to treating all students equally, regardless of their background. Creating an environment where all students feel valued, supported, and they matter as individuals, is a priority.

5.2 Educational and extracurricular activities must be accessible to all students, including those with disabilities. Provision of reasonable accommodations to ensure full participation of all students should be guaranteed.

5.3 Recognition of previous education and competencies for refugees and immigrants is essential. Educational institutions should provide adequate guidance and counselling to support students in making informed decisions about their education and career paths. Policies facilitating the integration of refugees and immigrants into the education system are supported.

5.4 Creating a culturally diverse and inclusive campus environment is essential. Initiatives promoting cultural exchange and understanding should be encouraged. Organising events and activities that celebrate the diversity of the student body is essential, as is championing that diversity.

5.5 The Union supports the continual development of inclusive policies and practices within the University, ensuring that all students have equal opportunities to succeed. Promotion of diversity in recruitment, admissions, and retention strategies is essential.

5.6 Addressing systemic inequalities and advocating for social justice are important. Efforts should be made to raise awareness about issues such as racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia and other forms of discrimination, including antisemitism and islamophobia. Initiatives promoting equity and inclusion both on campus and in the wider community are vital for both students and society.

5.7 Safe spaces on campus where students can gather and discuss issues related to equity and inclusion should be created. These spaces should be accessible and provide a supportive environment for dialogue and action.

5.8 Students should be supported to organise around their identities and to advocate for their rights, supported by their Union.

5.9 Deficit models of liberation, where the victims of discrimination must change are rejected by the Union, in favour of a model which focusses on structural inequalities and centres the experiences and judgement of victims of discrimination within any solutions.

## Research and Research Students

##### This area focuses on the unique needs and experiences of research students, including mental health support, professional development, and fair working conditions. It aims to ensure that research students are supported throughout their studies and have access to the resources and opportunities they need to succeed.

### 1. Support for Research Students

1.1 The Union believes that the University of Salford should support the unique experiences of research students, recognising the potential for isolation and the importance of mental health support. A good practice guide for doctoral studies should be maintained, outlining the university's vision and expectations for research degrees. Inclusion of mental health resources and support networks for research students is essential.

1.2 Supervisors should be limited to a manageable number of supervisees to ensure quality guidance and support. Doctoral students should have the right to refuse additional assignments not directly connected to their research if they impede their primary objectives. Clear guidelines on the roles and responsibilities of supervisors are essential to ensure consistent and effective support for research students.

1.3 Opportunities should be provided for doctoral students to develop skills in leadership, teamwork, project management, teaching, and supervision. Doctoral studies should include broad and flexible modules to develop general competences. Integration of professional development opportunities within the doctoral curriculum is supported.

1.4 Viva panels should provide feedback to both students and supervisors, including independent members to ensure impartiality. Research students should be encouraged to participate in professional development activities and gain experience as academics through teaching and supporting undergraduate courses. These experiences are essential for preparing research students for academic and professional careers.

1.5 The University should adhere to fair working conditions for research students employed to teach or support academic delivery, ensuring they are remunerated appropriately, and their work does not impede their research progress. Alignment of these policies with those of the University and College Union (UCU) is essential to ensure consistency and fairness.

1.6 Publicly funded research should be recognised as a public good, contributing to knowledge-based governance and a knowledge-based economy. The University should encourage private sector funding of research and development, ensuring it aligns with national development plans and agreements. Efforts to increase funding for research activities and promote the value of research to society are supported.

1.7 Students should be integrated into research groups early in their studies, with clear communication about research activities and opportunities for involvement. Transfer of knowledge to the private and public sectors should be actively promoted, with efforts to establish collaborative projects and partnerships. These collaborations enhance the impact and relevance of research. The link between undergraduate study, local business and community partnerships and research activity is mutually beneficial.

1.8 Policies that support the professional development of research students, including access to funding, mentorship, and networking opportunities, should be pursued and developed. Research students should have opportunities to present their work at conferences and publish in academic journals, with support provided to navigate the publication process.

1.9 Inclusion of research students in decision-making processes related to research policies and practices is essential. This includes representation on committees and advisory boards that influence the direction and priorities of research activities.

1.10 Comprehensive resources and facilities should be provided to support research students' work. Access to laboratories, libraries, and other research infrastructure, as well as funding for research materials and travel, is essential.

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