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Response from the University of Derby to the recent open letter from the Union of Students.

We thank the Union of Students for their recent open letter and appreciate the opportunity to respond to the questions raised. I hope this provides some reassurance.

We have been open about the significant financial pressures we, and many other universities are facing, linked to the well-documented challenges in the higher education sector, including rising costs, years of frozen tuition fees, and reductions in international student income. These pressures mean we must take difficult but responsible steps to ensure the University remains financially sustainable and able to deliver high-quality education and research into the future.

We recognise that this is a worrying and unsettling time, especially for those colleagues who are at risk of redundancy and their students. Our commitment to supporting our colleagues and our students through this difficult period is unchanged.

Throughout this period, our commitment remains the same: to be transparent with colleagues and our students, to protect the academic experience of our students, and to work constructively towards solutions that are realistic and sustainable.

Learning and teaching

Each year we review our portfolio to ensure our programmes have relevance and demand from both students and industry. When it is decided that a programme is to be closed, the University's commitment (via our Student Protection Plan) is to ensure that all registered students are able to complete their degree as per the parameters of their registration.

Students at all levels of study will not lose their course or their support during their time with us but it may be the case that supervisors or tutors could change, as they might if a staff member left the University for their own reasons.

The University will be proactive in advising students of any changes to their teaching and support staff. I can confirm that the accreditation of our programmes will not be affected by these proposals.



Raising concerns

The processes by which students can raise concerns have not changed and can be found on our [website](#). Please also continue to speak to your Union of Students so they can best represent and support you.

The University operates a thorough internal three-tier Student Complaints scheme with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) as the fourth and final external stage.

Equality Impact Assessment

As part of this process, the University has conducted an EIA, which relates to the proposals, and this has been shared with relevant parties as part of consultation.

Student support

Some staff who provide services that are accessed through the Student Hub are affected by the proposals, but the services will continue with delivery proposed in more efficient ways. The intention over time is to grow the range of services that can be accessed through the Hub.

Communication and engagement

We will continue to engage with the relevant unions and other representatives, including the Union of Students, and with all staff and students openly and respectfully. We remain committed to continuing open and constructive dialogue. We will also continue to explore every reasonable option to reduce or avoid compulsory redundancies, while ensuring the long-term financial health and stability of the University.

You are at the heart of everything we do as a university and we are committed to maintaining our excellence in the student experience.

Kind regards,

Professor Keith McLay
Deputy Vice-Chancellor

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