

# FOOD POVERTY POLICY

Title:	Food Poverty	Date of Group Chat:	20 <sup>th</sup> April
Proposer name:	Izzy Woodcock		
Seconder name:	Mary Copsey	Role:	Vice President Business and Law faculty

## Union Notes:

The NUS Poverty commission 2018 reported that:

1. Average student income is not sufficient for students to pay living costs including heating and food. [1]
2. Working class, single parents, part time students and students from poorer backgrounds have been disproportionately affected by rising tuition fees and reduction in maintenance grants (1)
3. Dropout rates are highest among working class students, with a third of part time students leaving before their final year. (1)

### National Student Money Survey

- 1) The Average student receives just £540 a month from their maintenance loan which falls £267 a month short as living costs are £807 a month. [2] We know that this can negatively impact student's financial wellbeing and their general health, with student living costs on the high and student income on the low leaving many students facing hardship. Further studies suggest that students may face will explore new lengths to gather free food whether that be a raise of engagement to events that offer free food or picking food off trees and for many this maybe their main meal [4].
- 2) Two-thirds have a part-time job alongside a degree and 50% say their studies suffer as a result most of these students work to provide an income to fund their studies and provide for their living costs.

The Cuts against outlined in current against education cuts policy [3]

"6. That the current student financing system is not fit for purpose."

"7. That all students should be given adequate finance to support not only their tuition but also their living costs"

The students' union currently offer 'food bank vouchers' on a case-by-case bases and have provided food parcels for students in urgent need of support.

### Hidden costs students face at university

Hidden course costs at university can add to the financial pressure on students at university which, ultimately could create educational barriers if the costs are linked to course resources or compulsory add-ons in order to complete that module or course. Students particular in AHSS have continually expressed the need for financial support due to the added costs on arts supplies and students across all faculties have raised printing costs can leave students at a disadvantage.

### Student funds

The hardship fund could potentially support students who experience financial hardship at university, if students meet the requirements however does not act on reactive bases where as a food bank or food voucher could support a student at feeding them in that moment of crisis.

[1]<https://www.nus.org.uk/en/news/press-releases/poverty-commission-press-release/>

[2]<https://www.savethestudent.org/money/student-budgeting/what-do-students-spend-their-money-on.html>

[3]<https://www.angliastudent.com/pageassets/represent/thegroupchat/april19/GC1719-Policy-submission-Against-cuts-to-education.pdf>

[4] <https://metro.co.uk/2019/03/01/broke-university-students-pick-fruit-campus-trees-keep-starving-8790072/>

## Union Believes:

1. Social welfare is a priority and no student should have to choose between education and eating.
2. The poverty of a student should not put a student at an educational disadvantage
3. Inequality in education due to food poverty is unacceptable
4. Eating cheap processed food alternatives affects mental health negatively and in turn a student's wellbeing.
5. We believe that the university should provide adequate finance support also includes nutrition support.
6. We recognise that food poverty is a national issue and feel strongly that ARU should investigate into supporting students that encounter financial hardship.
7. All course costs should be clearly outlined and not hidden
8. The university should consider reducing food waste and offer that to hungry students.

#### Union Resolves:

1. To lobby the university to consider the costs of living and food prices keeping in mind the detrimental impact on students' health and well-being.
2. To monitor that the university maintains in providing a bursary aid in student hardship
3. to lobby against hidden course costs
4. To lobby the university in providing a sustainable way in decreasing food poverty at this institution.
5. The Student Union will continue to hand out food bank vouchers to students in crisis.
6. to lobby student services to provide nutrition advise as poor diet can negatively impact student wellbeing and negatively impact their performance in education.

#### Policy Summary:

This policy outlines the stance the student union will take to combat the food poverty crisis- Your background should not reduce your ability as a student to be able to get an education.

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