

## **#HallamSafetyNet Open Letter From SHSU Student Societies**

**To the Vice-Chancellor and Board of Governors of Sheffield Hallam University,**

The students of Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) are disappointed to see that the current 'No Detriment' policies implemented by SHU to address the crisis around Covid-19 fail to meet our needs and, rather than alleviating anxiety, are causing anxiety. The current policies are arbitrary and it is feared will lead to unfair outcomes for some students. In particular, we demand a safety net be implemented to ensure that all students are protected from the potential damage that government emergency measures will do to our academic achievements.

We call on SHU to ensure that for all students their overall grade for the 2019/20 year is not lower than their average from the first semester so long as they secure at least 40% in each. This will give students the reassurance that our grades are not adversely affected as a result of the Covid-19 crisis and still allows students with the means to improve their grade, the motivation to do so.

To mitigate against the damage to student's mental health and wellbeing, urgent measures toward a universal 'No Detriment' policy extending to the whole student body would be warmly welcomed.

By adopting this policy, SHU would be marking itself out as a progressive university with students' interests at the heart of its decisions whilst maintaining academic rigour. Finally, it would bring us in line with many of the UK's top universities who also recognise the challenges facing students in this semester, unique in modern times.

**Signatures:**

#HallamSafetyNet Open Letter for Student Societies responses

Timestamp	What is your full name? (as you would like it to appear)	What is the full name of the Society/Organisation you represent?	What is your position within the Society/Organisation?	Please write your reasons for signing this letter.
16/04/2020 17:10:46	Joshua Clancy	Anime Society	President	I believe Hallam has not meet our needs as students, have have thrown us to the side without a second thought and tell us to just get on with the work. Being a 3rd year my self in a video game course how am i to make games with out the equipment at university? i feel like i have been massively dicked over.... and thats just me, there are hundreds of students in the same place as me and Hallam dont give a damn
13/05/2020 13:00:17	James Hudson	Architecture Course and Society	Member	I agree 100 percent with everything in this email. The no detriment policy currently is miles behind most of the top university's policies which means other university students are getting a much better advantage to us in terms of final grades which is completely unfair.
13/05/2020 13:00:21	Hannah Rashid	Architecture Society	Member	I feel that the pandemic has horribly disadvantaged many students from poorer backgrounds as well as students with issues at home and the university has not done enough to help.
16/04/2020 17:05:51	Abbie Smyth	Business and Management Society	Vice President	BAMSoc believes that all students have been adversely affected by COVID-19 in some way, and that this should not reflect through their grades. A no detriment policy will allow students to have a confirmed grade which they will not go below, based on their previous work, with is especially imperative to final year and postgraduate business students.
16/04/2020 12:25:31	Samantha Cooke	Disney Appreciation Society	President	Many society members have learning contracts due to anxiety or mental challenges. We are dealing with massive amounts of stress: we can't see our friends, have accommodation worries and some have ill family members. Extensions just extend the stress. Like many students across the country already have, we deserve to know COVID-19 will not impact our grades, not the current approach which many students (and staff) are able to determine how their grades will be worked out
19/04/2020 19:08:18	Luca Szentmiklósi-Tóth	Event Management Society	President	I would like to support the third year student as the president of the event management society!
19/04/2020 19:01:53	Xena Abbey	Events Management Society	Equality and Diversity Officer	To ensure all students have a chance to succeed with no issues from corona
13/05/2020 12:28:10	Kirsty Owen	Fashion Design	Member	Many of my cohort don't have the resources we need to finish our degree to the standard we would have had we been at university. Our course is very practical and requires at the bare minimum the use of a printer for creating our sketchbook work and portfolio. Alongside this, many of our marks come from experimental practises with materials through sampling, which often requires a sewing machine +/- other specialist equipment that many of us also have no access to.
14/05/2020 23:18:29	Hannah Brown	Feminism Society	Treasurer	Students deserve the safety net of their predicted grades without the negative effects of the pandemic. Some students are key workers, carers, disabled, have a lack of funding, can't access the books or adequate study space they need, are suffering from worsened mental health issues due to isolation, etc. These students, and all others, do not need the added anxiety that their grades may suffer, when this situation is completely out of their control.
14/05/2020 00:14:38	Kate Duhig	Film Society	Equality and Diversity Officer	The only fair way to grade this year and ensure no one is disadvantaged by the pandemic would be to give everyone at least the grade they achieved in semester one. I personally know many hard workers who have been deeply affected by the virus, and they deserve the grades they earned in semester one.
13/05/2020 12:32:36	James Collier	Film Society	Member	My reasons as well as anyone else's are as stated above, and painfully obvious. I want the guarantee of my overall average not being lower than my average for Semester 1. This owing to the circumstances of the coronavirus and the strikes that you've also not reimbursed students for, you should be ashamed and I hope you take the appropriate actions now to redeem what little respect you may still have.
13/05/2020 15:18:33	Zenith Shah	Finance, Account & Banking Society	President	During these unprecedented times, the university is neglecting the wellbeing of students without providing a safety net. Many students may not have the access to resources being at home, or may live in a much stressful environment than others. As well as this the mental wellbeing of students is extremely vulnerable during the pandemic.
15/04/2020 21:09:50	Charlotte	FMC	President	Not having access to the library and face-to-face teaching makes it difficult to concentrate and work to the normal standard. A lot of out members are in final year and are extremely worried about grades.
13/05/2020 12:54:15	Danyal Mahmood	Geography Society	Ex Equality and Diversity Officer	Not being able to go in regular walks and social events effects people and means not only are people trying to get good grades they are dealing with many other things as well!
13/05/2020 14:28:01	Sam Mason	Geography Society	Member	Everyone should have the opportunity to succeed. With reference to the current policy it is an satisfactory policy, however not all students have access to facilities at home and this does not make it fair. Myself as a student with a specific learning disability I have found it very difficult to alter my way of working at home especially with younger siblings around. The safety net would ensure people would gain the same fairness throughout especially on different courses.
19/04/2020 19:09:02	Kaz Gipson	Hallam Mature Students	President	The universities approach to dealing with delivery of content and support during the current time is extremely poor. We have received little to no support in most of our modules, and a lack of a safety net could be detrimental to some students if they cannot access the help and support they may feel they need to reach their full potential.
13/05/2020 12:52:20	Stephanie Libby	Hallam Safety Net campaign	general member	I am signing on behalf of my society because the measures put in place by the university do not go far enough, there are students suffering and Hallam can ease that, they need to do so NOW
13/05/2020 12:27:55	Ashley Commins	Hallam Student's Union	member	1) Students should not face lower academic outcomes as a result of the pandemic 2) Students should not have to deal with additional stress and pressure from struggling to attain the same outcomes in circumstances that make this even more difficult
18/04/2020 14:11:32	Matt Langham	Hallam Tories	Chair	It is the most obvious and fair thing to do.
16/05/2020 19:49:32	J Knight	Hallam Union Pole	Events and Comps Officer	We believe the efforts SHU has so far made to aid students have not been sufficient, and they have been explained poorly and without clarity. Many students are confused as to the nature of what is in place to help them, and that the direction SHU has pursued has been detrimental to students.
16/04/2020 13:43:41	Albert Weber	Hospitality Society	President	It has been a difficult year for all and grades should be detrimental due to lack of teaching or face to face contact.
13/05/2020 13:17:02	Jordan Garcia	Jordan Garcia	Student	As President of an academic society (Hospitality Society), I am representing the interests of our Society members and the wider student cohort within hospitality-related disciplines. From conversations with the Committee and our members, I speak for the students when I sign this letter to instigate a No Detriment policy. Due to the obvious impacts of the current situation, students are aware of other universities offering a No Detriment policy, and call on Sheffield Hallam to follow suit.
13/05/2020 12:30:28	Emilia Ashton	Languages Society	President (Academic Year 20/21)	Because I think all courses should give equal opportunity for success, and I don't think what we have at the moment is enough.
13/05/2020 12:21:40	Tommy Atkins	Law and Advocacy	President	The lack of safety net at Sheffield Hallam University affects many languages students will be. Especially many final year language students who have worked hard for the last 4 years for the current crisis to affected their whole degree classification due to many students final degree classifications being based on their final year performances. SHU's lack of policy and support makes it extremely worrying for those who continuing their studies in September which are rumoured could be online.
13/05/2020 13:57:56	lizzie gould	leadership team sheffield hallam	member	I've never seen our members more stressed. After two huge strikes this year, we're disappointed the university hasn't done more to help. The current policy feels as if they don't care.
13/05/2020 21:47:43	Pippa Doolan	Literature Society	Member	unfair discrimination of exam results
13/05/2020 12:21:37	Beth McEwan	Marketing	Events	I believe a safety net policy is vital.
13/05/2020 14:20:38	Sophie Pearce	Marrow	President	We need a safety net, it is so hard to work not in a library. Impossible.
13/05/2020 12:36:52	Jessica Harvey	Mathematics Society	President	"To justly earn" a degree would only stand if the only graduates we are set to be competing against to get prosperous highly looked upon job roles were from SHU. We will be competing against graduates in a competitive field where our module percentages are hugely important. Against safety-net supported graduates from Imperial College London, Uni of Sheffield, Nottingham, Oxford or Liverpool to name a few. SHU students will be compared to these advantaged graduates for the rest of their careers.
13/05/2020 12:30:53	Conner Eyes	Men's Football	Social Secretary	To support the campaign
13/05/2020 13:16:32	Anthonia Ormeiza	MSc Computing	Course Rep	A detriment policy is needed. COVID will play a massive impact on my second year grade.
14/05/2020 15:30:25	Asonye	Nigerian Student Association	Member	As an international student who has greatly been disadvantaged during this period following two strikes, I speak for students on my course who are facing mental and financial difficulties being distanced from their families and their jobs. It will make a world of difference should we not have to worry about our grades too given our previous proven performance.
13/05/2020 13:42:17	Joseph Pote	Occupational therapy/?	?	To help students suffering from Anxiety and struggling with their mental health during Covid-19.
13/05/2020 12:26:50	Megan Dickson	Paramedic Society	Member	I can't see any reason why you wouldn't adopt a safety net approach when other universities are taking this direction. Not only would it offer piece of mind to students, it would remove the potential headache of sorting out students that may fail the year they are currently in.
18/04/2020 14:33:12	Lewis Bell	Physics	President	This is not normal university so our grades should reflect the situation we are in
15/04/2020 21:35:13	Rowan Charlotte Purvis	Rock Society	President	Any and all communication from the university has been vague and confusing when what we need is clarity. Even if there is no change to the no detriment policy (which I firmly believe there should be) there should at least be black and white clarification on what measures are actually in place.
13/05/2020 13:15:47	Mollie Thompson	Rock society	President	Because the current 'no detriment' policy is anything but that. Instead of taking the current circumstances into account, it's placing the blame on students who often don't have access to equipment needed for their course. The University should be ashamed.
13/05/2020 12:22:33	Sam Moody	Sheffield Hallam	Student	Even though I have not been personally affected as I am a first year student, I have multiple friends who have been drastically affected by the closure of university due to COVID-19. I have friends completing engineering masters, film and media degrees and illustrations degrees. All of which are in their final year which is the most crucial time in their degree. They have not had access to specialist equipment which is essential to their final project.
16/04/2020 16:55:52	Nemo Abdelrahman	Sheffield Hallam Palestine society	President	Because it isn't much to ask. That's literally it.
18/04/2020 18:29:43	Ben Baldwin	Sheffield Hallam Politics Society	President	We're signing this policy because the current policy put in place only protects level 4 and year zero students, while everyone else has to struggle with the unreasonable working conditions that we're under now. We didn't sign up to OU we signed up for face to face taught lessons and that's not what we're getting so we should be marked accordingly.
				Students from disadvantaged backgrounds will lack the resources they need to do as well as they would under normal circumstances i.e a computer, adequate internet connection, a quiet place to study. The safety net will restore the equal opportunity for everyone to do as well as they can. The current policy is at the lecturers discretion & open to wide interpretation. There are no guidelines for lecturers as to what constitutes a lower than expected grade.

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16/04/2020 13:25:35	Harriet Hamber-Stott	Sheffield Hallam Students Union Sub Aqua Club	President	Our members and other students need the knowledge that their hard work is protected in these uncertain times. Anxiety levels are high and this would help alleviate pressure
15/04/2020 22:39:19	Clare Brown	Sheffield Hallam University Labour Society	President	The current policy is anxiety-inducing, stressful, and unfair. A safety net for all students is the only practical and fair solution.
18/04/2020 14:48:06	Emma Trueman	SHSU Lit	President	With a committee of final years, and many final year members, we feel it important that a safety net be put in place to secure our grades. We have worked so hard all year, with supporting all the strike action as well as the heavy head of our dissertations too. It would be unfair to not have our best, and deserved, grades shown as the end result due to all of this.
16/04/2020 18:40:21	Beth Sager	SHSU Photography Society	President	As a creative society with many members on a creative course, we have seen first hand how the university and current policy is simply not doing enough to support students. A lot of students rely on university equipment (e.g computers, borrowed laptops, specialist software, photography/filming equipment) and work spaces which means that those without access to any of these cannot complete their degree at all.
13/05/2020 17:52:47	Georgina Clark	Shu law and advocacy society	Member	All law students have core modules on their courses that are required for a qualifying law degree. If a student fails one of these modules, they are not able to retake it and this would be detrimental to their future. Given the UCU strikes and COVID-19 and the way that both of these monumental and unprecedented events have affected all students, it stands to reason that students of all courses, especially those with modules required for future careers, should be protected with a safety net.
13/05/2020 14:04:07	Phoebe Stubbs	SHU Tabletop Gaming Society	Equality and Diversity Officer	Every other university around the country has implemented a safety net policy for its students. By implementing a safety net for its students, SHU would be showing that it cares about the mental wellbeing of its students by allowing us all guaranteed progression onto our next year if study.
14/05/2020 01:33:04	Dee Leon	The Law and Advocacy Society	Equality and Diversity Officer	I have Asperger's, these circumstances cause acute anxiety. I live alone and have no company. I have an eating issue, and eat very little. These circumstances have put me at risk and thereby the impact upon my studies is substantial. I don't require any further detrimental impact upon my mental health due to my grades not reflecting my abilities and causing further impact, if my academic progression reflects negatively in a manner that does not reflect my ability outside of these circumstances.
13/05/2020 12:27:17	Caitlin O'Neill	Tourism society	Equality and diversity	In such strange times, a large safety net is a must to ensure the mental well being of all students.
13/05/2020 12:36:27	Simon Williamson	True Crime Society	Treasurer	My education has suffered due to the pandemic. I am a good student, but I can't help but think my grades will slip. It would undo all the work I've put in during the past 4 years.
13/05/2020 13:18:46	Alice Mackenzie	Uni Boob Team	Marketing Office	After speaking to other students it's clear that having a safety net policy would be reassuring to all of us.
13/05/2020 13:04:48	Elli Cordas-Cousins	Women's Rugby Union	Vice-Captain and Secretary	I have just finished my final year of university and unfortunately it has not been the end I have always wished for. It has been clouded by confusion and worry because of the uncertainty created by the COVID19 pandemic. I understand this is out of the Universities control, however as our support resources have been minimised and in some cases taken away, for example use of study spaces, it has been difficult for many of us to achieve our full potential.