

York St John Students' Union  
Lord Mayor's Walk  
York  
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www.ysjsu.com

Wednesday 1 April 2020

Dear ,

As the lead representatives for students at York St John Students' Union and the University of York Students' Union, we are writing to you to raise our concerns regarding the lack of support that is being provided for students in private rented accommodation in York.

Many students struggle financially, and this pressure has been exacerbated due to the uncertainty caused by the outbreak of COVID-19 (Coronavirus). The next student loan will not be received until mid-April and many students are facing financial insecurity because they work in the hospitality and retail industries. Furthermore, some students are unable to work due to social distancing and self-isolation measures that the Government has enacted.

This has created an incredibly uncertain and stressful environment for students, leading them to feel anxious about being able pay their rent. Due to these being extraordinary circumstances, we have a series of measures that we wish to be supported by City of York Council:

- We advise that City of York Council ensure short term measures, such as payment plans or deferment of payments, are implemented for students studying in the 19/20 academic year, who are due to be released from their contracts in 2020.
- We call on City of York Council to work with private landlords and letting agents via the Residential Landlords Association to create mitigating circumstances that will ensure that should a student tenant no longer wish to live in their home, and decide to vacate the property early, they will face no financial implications in doing so, as per force majeure.



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- We ask that City of York Council to consider supporting Student Nurses, and other Health Sciences Students with accommodation and hardship loan support to enable them to engage with NHS frontline activity, without being put in financial hardship.

In writing this letter, we are not just voicing our own concerns. Our remits enable us to represent, collectively, over 30,000 students. We speak for them, their stresses, their worries and their uncertainty at this unprecedented time. The recommendations outlined in this letter are of mutual benefit to all stakeholders and we believe them to be the most appropriate way to ensure that this short- term problem is resolved swiftly and efficiently.

We believe a joint approach between City of York Council, York St John Students' Union and the University of York Students' Union to be the way forward.

We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours Sincerely,

**Kirsten Jolley**

President of Wellbeing and Diversity, York St John Students' Union

**Steph Hayle**

Community and Wellbeing Officer, York University Students' Union

**Signed**

Tim Holmes – President of the Students' Union, York St John Students' Union

Jenny Marchant – President of Education, York St John Students' Union

Samara Jones – President, York University Students' Union

Maddi Cannell – Sports President, York University Students' Union

Ollie Martin – Student Activities Officer, York University Students' Union

Giang Nguyen – Academic Officer, York University Students' Union



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