

REFERENDUM NOTIFICATION - RESULT

BY ORDER OF THE RETURNING OFFICER (on 27 January 2023)

Referendum Result

A Students' Union Referendum took place from Tuesday 24 January (8.00 a.m.) to Thursday 26 January (8.00 p.m.) with polling taking place on the Students' Union website, to determine the opinion of the membership on the following questions:

Proposal 1 - QUB Should Pay Its Fair Share towards Students' Cost of Survival

In the current economic situation, the already vulnerable state that students are in has worsened.

Queen's needs to address this economic crisis seriously and give students what they need for basic survival.

Students **demand** that:

- QUB works with Translink to subsidise the cost of transport for students.
- QUB works with local eateries to subsidise the cost of food for students.
- QUB works with placement institutions to provide bursaries for placement students and cover placement travel costs.
- QUB to extend its staff Cost of Living payment to all student workers.
- QUB to work with energy distributors to provide a discount for students.

If these demands are not met, the Students' Union may use radical political action to challenge senior University management, which may include demonstrations, acts of civil disobedience and accommodation rent strikes, until these demands are met.

AGREE 1819 98.0%

DISAGREE 37 2.0%

1872 students voted in this Referendum, representing 7.56% of eligible voters.

16 students recorded an abstention and therefore did not agree or disagree with the proposal.

The proposal is carried and is deemed to be a valid expression of the views of the members of the Union.

A full copy of the proposal is available from the Returning Officer, or from the Students' Union website. (<http://www.q-su.org/>)

Proposal 2 – Oppose Increases in Student Tuition and Accommodation Fees

The University has recently approved increases to international, postgraduate and GB tuition fees – to take effect in the next academic year.

The University has also approved increases to QUB Accommodation Fees from next year.

Students **demand** that:

- Increases to Student Tuition and QUB Accommodation Fees be reversed now, especially as students struggle to survive financially during a cost-of-living crisis.

If these demands are not met, the Students' Union may use radical political action to challenge senior University management, which may include demonstrations, acts of civil disobedience and accommodation rent strikes, until these demands are met.

AGREE 1660 96.2%

DISAGREE 65 3.8%

1754 students voted in this Referendum, representing 7.08% of eligible voters.

29 students recorded an abstention and therefore did not agree or disagree with the proposal.

The proposal is carried and is deemed to be a valid expression of the views of the members of the Union.

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Proposal 3 – QUB Should Invest its Substantial Financial Assets in Student-Owned Co-Operatives

Students are suffering in this cost-of-living crisis, exposed and vulnerable to exploitation from those profiting from the difficulties of others. Landlords can increase rent, energy companies can raise prices, food suppliers can charge more for basics necessities. Their profits increase while students suffer.

Energy, food, and housing resources are not controlled institutions that prioritise student welfare.

Students **demand:**

- That QUB use its substantial financial assets, investments, and estate (property) to help build resilience to student vulnerability by establishing assets that help provide energy, food, and housing to students.
- These assets should be democratically organised and run by students to ensure student welfare is prioritised.

QUB should **prioritise** the following actions:

- The University and partner with co-operative investors to buy properties off landlords in Belfast that have had their HMO licenses revoked and create student co-operatives from them.
- Use the land held by QUB to host democratically owned food production (greenhouses, gardens, etc.) for use by students.
- Use the buildings owned by QUB to host democratically owned food storage and distribution (food banks) run by students.
- Use its access to resources and institutional wealth to create democratically owned energy production facilities that can subsidise energy costs for students.
- The Students' Union to administrate and coordinate the democratic decision-making and administration of these co-operative resources.

If these demands are not met, the Students' Union may use radical political action to challenge senior University management, which may include demonstrations, acts of civil disobedience and accommodation rent strikes, until these demands are met.

AGREE 1479 95.2%

DISAGREE 75 4.8%

1652 students voted in this Referendum, representing 6.67% of eligible voters.

98 students recorded an abstention and therefore did not agree or disagree with the proposal.

The proposal is carried and is deemed to be a valid expression of the views of the members of the Union.

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