

SUARTS POLICY | The abolition of materials & exhibition related fees at UAL and the financial transparency of and accountability for said fees:

This Union Notes:

1. This Union Believes that in addition to paying course fees, arts students have to invest in expensive equipment and their own materials. As a result they face a higher level of student debt than the national average, yet are at the bottom of the graduate league tables for projected lifetime earnings. In view of this it is fundamentally wrong for UAL to saddle arts students with even greater debt by charging them materials fees and forcing them to contribute towards costs associated with staging exhibitions.
2. Materials Fees for some UAL courses are set to rise at the beginning of the next academic year.
3. There is evidence to suggest that these materials fees are not being spent on *materials*.
4. End of year exhibitions attract substantial interest from the industry, the media and potential students. As such, they provide UAL with an unparalleled opportunity to raise its profile, publicise and market itself and to derive lucrative revenue streams by exploiting the work of its current students. Nevertheless, students on some courses are being charged fees related to end of course exhibitions, which they are not told about when being interviewed for and enrolling upon courses.

This Union Believes:

1. Materials are defined primarily as consumables used solely and directly by students for the purposes of carrying out course related work and secondarily as consumables used by tutors solely for the purposes of directly teaching their students. Nothing else can reasonably be defined as materials within this context. Thus the spending of materials fees on anything that does not meet this definition is wrong and may be unlawful.
2. Charging students for any costs associated with course related exhibitions within UAL is wrong. Failing to inform students of these charges during interviews and at the time of enrollment is also wrong and may constitute mis-selling.

This Union Resolves:

1. Elected Sabbatical officer to meet with Paul Feld to research further.

Date Passed May 2009 | Date Expires May 2012