

Should the University of Leeds introduce flexible payment plans for international tuition fees?

Presented by Katrina Liu

What is the Problem?

The University currently provides only two options for tuition fee payments:

1. Upfront payment for the whole academic year, to be paid before the start of first semester
2. Two instalments to be paid upfront for each semester (50/50 model)

International students already pay a much higher tuition fee rate annually than home students.

BChD Dental Surgery (2026)

Home students: £9,750 per year

International students: **£52,350** per year

BEng Civil Engineering (2026)

Home students: £9,750 per year

International students: **£32,750** per year

Date	GBP to CNY Conversation Rate	How much ¥ a student would need to pay a fee of £15,000
01/08/2024	1 GBP = 9.2250 CNY	138375¥
02/09/2024	1 GBP = 9.3563 CNY	140344.5¥
01/10/2025	1 GBP = 9.3384 CNY	140076¥
01/11/2024	1 GBP = 9.2074 CNY	138111¥
02/12/2024	1 GBP = 9.2021 CNY	138031.5¥
01/01/2025	1 GBP = 9.1329 CNY	136993.5¥
03/02/2025	1 GBP = 8.9552 CNY	134328¥
03/03/2025	1 GBP = 9.2588 CNY	138882¥
01/04/2025	1 GBP = 9.4007 CNY	141010.5¥
01/05/2025	1 GBP = 9.6898 CNY	145347¥
02/06/2025	1 GBP = 9.7523 CNY	146284.5¥
01/07/2025	1 GBP = 9.8474 CNY	147711¥
01/08/2025	1 GBP = 9.5787 CNY	143680.5¥
01/09/2025	1 GBP = 9.6595 CNY	144892.5¥
01/10/2025	1 GBP = 9.5979 CNY	143968.5¥
03/11/2025	1 GBP = 9.3550 CNY	140325¥
01/12/2025	1 GBP = 9.3433 CNY	140149.5¥

- Fees are also impacted by international exchange rates which change throughout the year
- Flywire 3% admin charge for international bank cards
- Some students could be charged an extra £1000+ annually
- To obtain a UK bank account is a lengthy and stressful process
- Government soon will introduce levy on international tuition fee + every year increase of tuition that align with inflation rate

Sri Lankan student could be deported from UK after one-day student fee delay

Coventry University reported Navodya De Silva, 25, to Home Office after £8,000 arrived late, causing termination of visa



📷 'If I go back to Sri Lanka with no degree, having lost my father's life savings, my life will be ruined,' De Silva said. Photograph: Christian Sinibaldi/The Guardian

EXCLUSIVE

Swansea University: Nigerian students thrown off courses after fees paid 'hours late'

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- The lack of flexible payment options puts both emotional and financial pressure on international students
- Students have faced expulsion and even deportation due to payment delays beyond their control
- *e.g. fleeing conflict, financial crises, death in the family*

What is my idea?

1. University of Leeds should consider offering more flexible payment options for international students

For example:

- Quarterly Installments
- Monthly Instalments
- Two payments during each semester (2 in Term 1, 2 in Term 2)

2. The University must hold consultations with students to ascertain what options would be the most beneficial

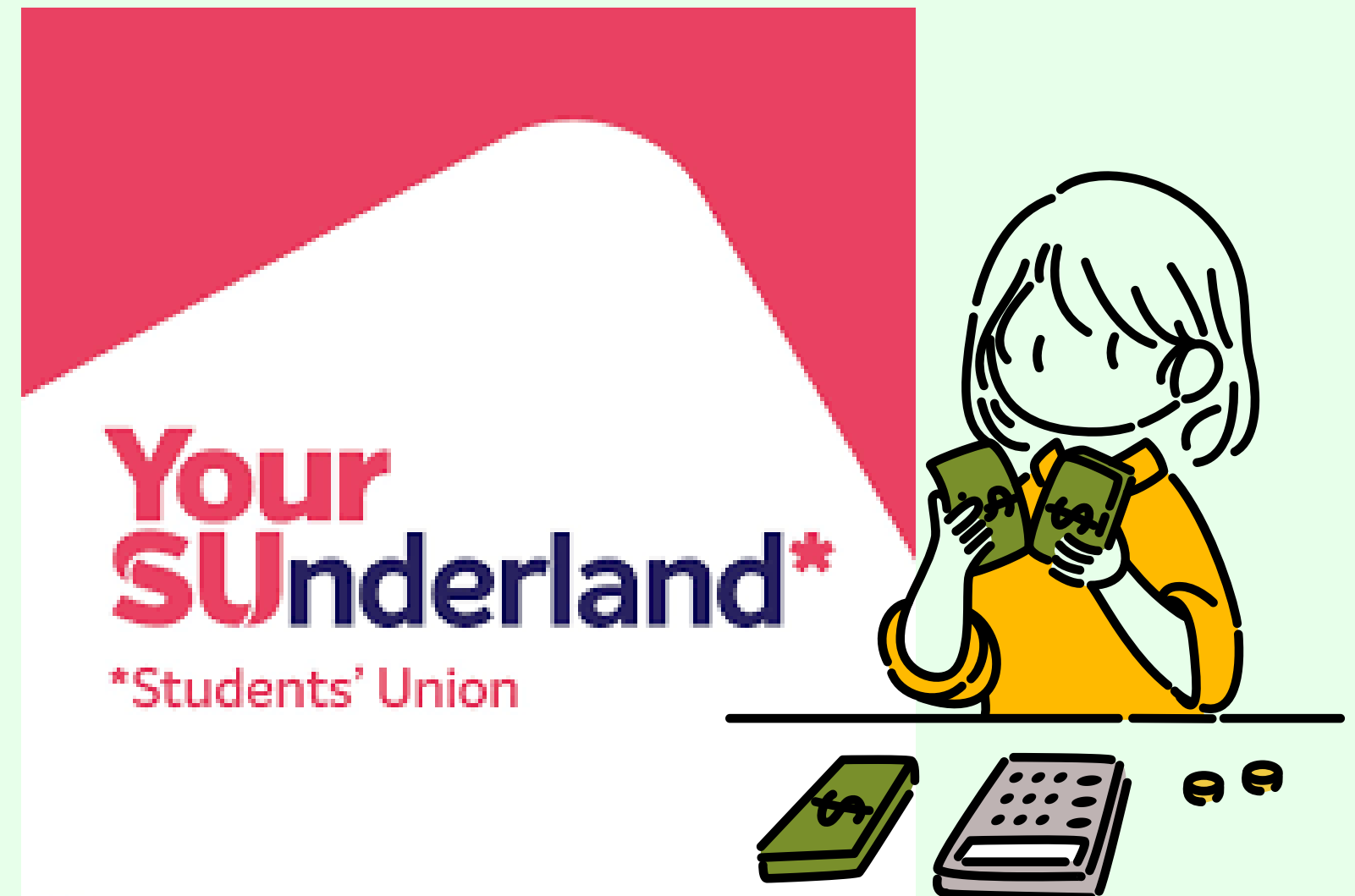
***Tuition fees will still be paid in full** - but this will hopefully reduce financial and mental stress and increase student voice in the area of tuition fee repayments - opening up further conversations about financial support*

Where this has worked at other Universities?

- “Student-friendly” tuition fee payment plans at the **University of Sunderland**
- Commitment to more manageable payment plans such as five-instalment plans for eligible undergraduate and postgraduate students

Benefit?

- Less students withdrawn/dropped out from studies
- Significant decrease in student tuition fee debt profiles
- Students felt more in control of their finances
- Ability to focus more on academics with reduced stress



To access the five-instalment plan you must meet the following criteria:

- ▶ If you're a student starting a new course, you must pay a £3,500 deposit (£2,000 for EU applicants) or 50% of overall fees for the academic year for students from India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, and Bangladesh before Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) stage
- ▶ You must have paid 50% of overall fees for the academic year prior to enrolment
- ▶ The remaining 50% will be paid in five equal monthly instalments. Each instalment must be paid by the instalment due date to avoid action being taken on your account.

How this could work logistically

This is just one example!

If this idea passes we would be **asking LUU to lobby the university to increase flexibility and student voice** in the student tuition fee process as a whole

Why is it important to vote YES?

- Reduce financial pressure and stress on students
- Better student wellbeing
- Help students manage unexpected financial difficulties
- Help students from different financial backgrounds access education more fairly
- Encourage a more supportive and adaptable approach to student finances
- Prevent unnecessary disruption to study caused by payment timing