

To the Senior Management Team of the University of Bath

Over the past two months, the University of Bath has engaged the student body, through the Students' Union, in a consultation regarding a potential change to the academic year. To facilitate this consultation, we have consulted with all of the subgroups of the union by attending Executive meetings, General meetings and other student forums such as Academic Council. Additional to this, all students have been informed of the suggested changes via all student emails and have been given the opportunity to take part in an all student poll that was open between 10th and 12th March.

Despite initial concerns about the consultation process that were raised by the student body, the Students' Union is happy that, thanks to the extension granted by the University, all students have had the opportunity to make further comments and that enough information has been collected for a representative and informed student submission to be made.

The information that has now been submitted as part of the consultation includes over 1,300 respondents to the poll, over 1000 qualitative comments through this poll, over 100 submissions to academicyear@bath.ac.uk from the student body and the opinions of those who represent our diverse student body through all of our student groups and academic council.

In particular, the poll has highlighted that the current academic year is extremely popular among students (scoring 4.5 out of 5), particularly how it has facilitated the excellent employability of our students, the inclusion of Inter-Semester Break which provides a substantial separation between the two semesters and how the variety of options available to most students offers a unique selling point of our institution.

The University as part of the consultation, put forward a suggestion of how an alternative academic year may look like, which raised some concerns with students. Overall this shape scored 1.6 out of 5 in our poll with some of the main concerns focusing around the possibility of extending the final term and the effects this would have on the cost of living and placements, the removal of January exams and how this would be mitigated (especially in some departments that favoured summative assessment) and the effects of longer holidays on international students.

There were three student student-led suggestions formed as part of this process which were also put forward to the student body. These focused on the concerns raised by students, such as the points above, and looked to mitigate these. These three suggestions all received approximately 3 out of 5 in the poll.

Considering all of this information that has been collected in the consultation process from students, some of which has been discussed in this letter, the Students' Union cannot support any change to the academic year which looks like the structure initially suggested by the University in the consultation. We would actively support action which maintains our current academic year structure, including opposing major changes to the academic year that will negatively impact the student body.

The Students' Union recognises that there are potential benefits for students to a minor change in the academic year. We will be open to discuss these minor changes with the University and we would be happy to support a change based upon the merits for the institution and the student body, taking into consideration the view in the previous paragraph.

Going forward, we believe that engaging in discussions about how the University wants to progress, with the input of the student voice, is vital and would be happy to take part in those discussions taking into account the view that we have stated above.

The Students' Union Officers, on behalf of the student body.



University of Bath Students' Union
Claverton Down
Bath
BA2 7AY

Tel: 01225 386612
Fax: 01225 383800
Email: union@bath.ac.uk
BathStudent.com