

January 2026

KSU Insight & Policy Update



**Kingston
Students'
Union**

www.kingstonstudents.net

KSU activities in January

Refreshers' Week

Between 19th and 27th January KSU hosted a series of events welcoming January starters as well as continuing students returning from Christmas break.



Waste to Plate Food Hub

KSU is very proud to host Waste to Plate Food Hub at Social Space, Penrhyn Road on Mondays and Thursdays. Students can get bread and pastries for free, or pay £3 for £20 worth of food.



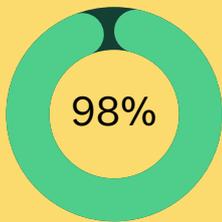
KSU insight this month



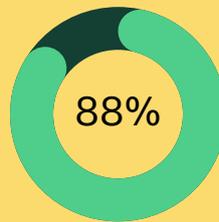
Academic representation in Term 1

- 35% of 891 course reps attended their Student Voice Committee (SVC) meetings.
- 90 reps attended Rep Fest on 9 December 2025.

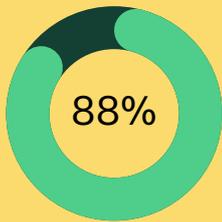
50 reps gave feedback on their experience in Term 1:



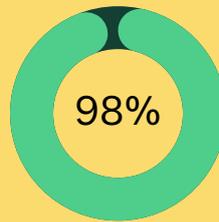
**Felt confident
representing their peers**



**Felt supported in their role
as a course rep**



**Felt that their first SVC
meeting
was beneficial**



**Felt that KSU represents
their academic interests
very well**



What's going on across the HE sector?



Student money and wellbeing

Blackbullion has published the [Student Money & Wellbeing Report 2026](#). Some key highlights:

- Based on a survey of 2,020 students across the UK.
- 88% of students are worried about money.
- Students report needing £919 a month to feel confident that they can complete their studies. Reported average monthly income is £505 - leaving a shortfall of £421.
- 63% of students say money worries are affecting their mental health.
- 61% of students are doing paid work alongside their studies.
- 75% of students say money affects their ability to socialise.
- The report recommends four key things for universities to consider:
 - Treat financial pressures as an academic risk
 - Move from 'support exists' to 'support is reachable'
 - Design system for exhausted users
 - Integrate financial and mental health triage

These findings are consistent with the results of our [cost of living research project in 2024](#), where 76% of students reported concerns about managing financially, and 66% said their mental health had been impacted by the rising cost of living.

KSU is continuing work on the recommendations from the cost of living report. Progress is regularly updated on the [Action Tracker](#) on our website.

Our ongoing research project, *Students Who Work*, further explores some of these themes.



What's going on across the HE sector?



UK to rejoin Erasmus+ programme in 2027

The Erasmus+ programme provides educational and training opportunities for British school pupils, students in higher or further education, apprentices, adult learners, and staff working in education, young people, youth workers and sports sector professionals.

Study abroad can improve graduate outcomes - Universities UK International report (2025) shows that students from less advantaged and underrepresented backgrounds who had studied, volunteered, or worked abroad consistently secured professional-level jobs at higher rates than their non-mobile peers.

The Government states that over 100,000 people in the UK could benefit from the programme in the first year alone. A UK national agency will be appointed to administer the programme.

To participate in Erasmus+, universities must hold an Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE), which deadline for application is on 24 March 2026.

SUs can also participate in Erasmus+ as organisations, particularly through the youth and cooperation strands. This could mean, for example, partnering with youth organisations or SUs abroad to host exchanges, or partnering with other organisations to produce outputs, models, tools, and organisational change.



What's happening in February?

KSU Elections

[Nominations](#) for KSU Elections are open. If you know someone who you think would be great candidates, please use this [form](#) to recommend them. The deadline to nominate is 1st March, with voting taking place 16-19th March.

LGBTQ+ History Month

KSU is hosting events to commemorate LGBTQ+ History Month. Event details and registration are available on our [website](#).

- 3 February - *Moonlight* Film Screening
- 10 February - Zine-Making Afternoon
- 16 February - Decolonising Gender & Sexuality Workshop
- 19 February - African Rainbow Family Bakesale Fundraiser
- 27 February - Glitterbomb: Let's go clubbing!

Kingston, Have Your Say! Week

Throughout the week commencing 9th February, we will be asking students what campaign they would like KSU to prioritise in 2026/27. Students can submit their responses on KSU [website](#) or in person when we have campus pop ups:

- 10 February - Roehampton Vale
- 11 February - Kingston Hill
- 12 February - Knights Park
- 13 February - Penrhyn Road

This Girl Can

Together with KU Sport and Active Lifestyle team, throughout the week commencing 9th February, KSU is hosting This Girl Can [sports activities](#) for women.

This Girl Can is a campaign that encourages women to be active in ways that work for them, regardless of age, background, or ability.

