

You Said We Did: 2025/26 Category B Review

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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Consultation Process	2
Student Academic Representation Policy	3
Student Protection Plan: Policy on Refunds and Compensation	4
Policy on the Recording of Taught Sessions and other Teaching and Learning Activities	5
Graduate Teaching Assistant Guidance	7
Conclusion	7
Future Action	7

Introduction

The aim of this report is to brief colleagues and students on the outcome of the 2025/26 Category B Consultation conducted by Teaching and Learning Delivery's (TLD) Policy team. This report will give insight into the consultation process, provide quantitative and qualitative analysis of comments, and raise awareness of the key amendments.

Consultation Process

It was agreed at AQSC that the following four documents would be reviewed under a ‘Category B’ consultation for the 25/26 academic year:

- Student Representation Policy
- Policy on the Recording of Lectures and other Teaching and Learning Sessions
- Policy on Refunds and Compensation (Student Protection Plan)
- Guidance on Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) and Postgraduate Researchers

Category B Consultation means that these documents were expected to only need minor updates that would not significantly change or impact current practice.

Timeline

Before the documents were sent out for consultation, the TLD Policy Team transferred all four of the documents onto a student-friendly template. The team worked closely with the Students’ Union (SU), who heavily updated the Student Representation Policy to reflect current practice. This included it being **renamed to the Student Academic Representation Policy**.

Consultation opened on January 30th 2026 for 6 weeks, closing on March 13th. Colleagues were invited to respond via their Faculty consultation, or individually through the TLD online policy consultation form, which is also available for students. The Policy team also liaised with the SU who held their own consultation to ensure the student voice was present in the consultation process.

What You Said

Total Comments Received: 276

Figure 1: Number of Cat B Comments by Document

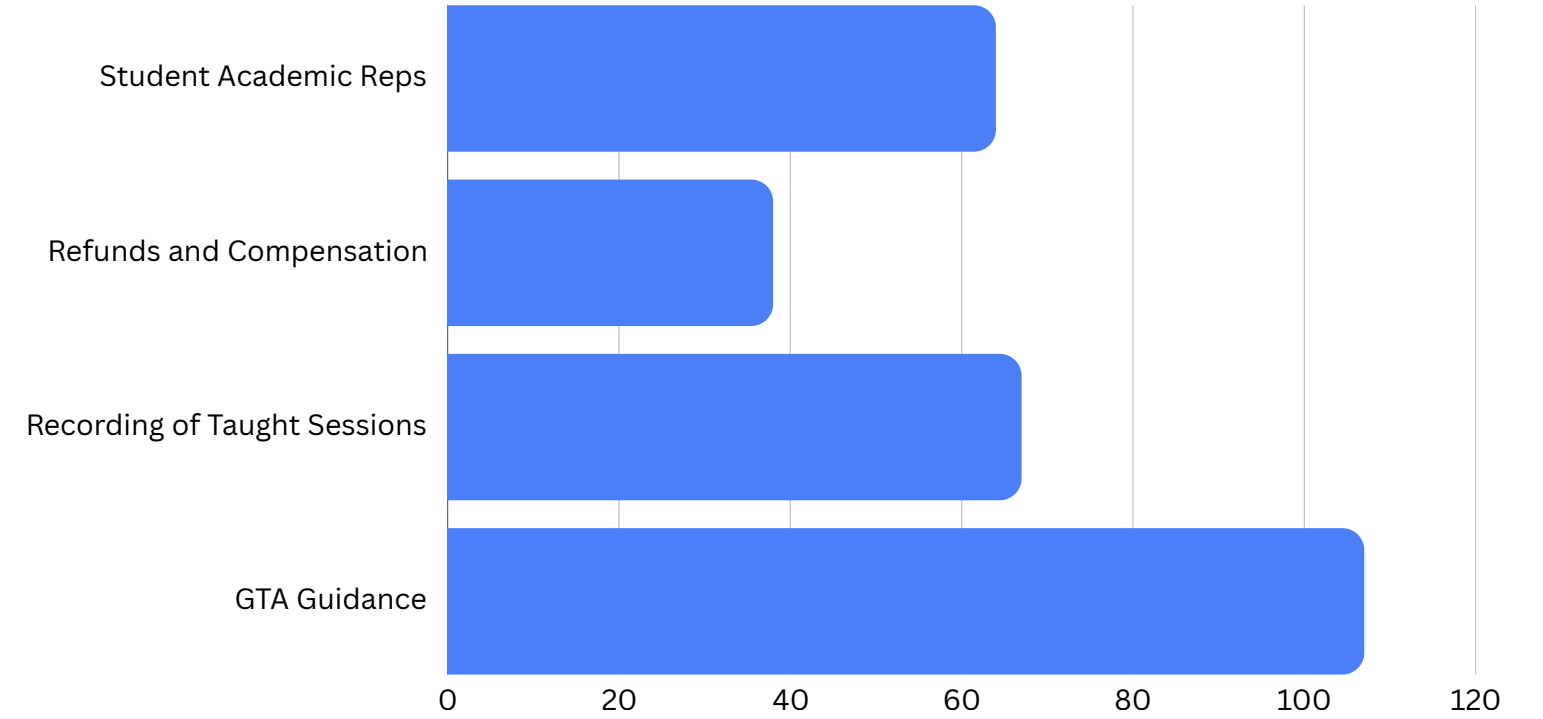


Figure 1 shows this year’s policy consultation received a good level of engagement across the Faculties and SU. It is worth noting that the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health (FBMH) did respond to the consultation, but to say they were happy with the existing documents and had no specific amendments to request, which is why they are missing from the various charts below.

The policy comments form received no comments from individual students, and individual staff comments were taken from either the team inbox or from direct discussion. This suggests there is still a need to promote our form as a method of providing feedback to both staff and students and increase awareness of it as a channel for contributing feedback. Conversely, this may also suggest that staff and students are happy to be represented through their Faculty / Union consultation process. This report will now consider each document individually and provide a consultation response, highlighting any significant updates.

1. Student Academic Representation Policy

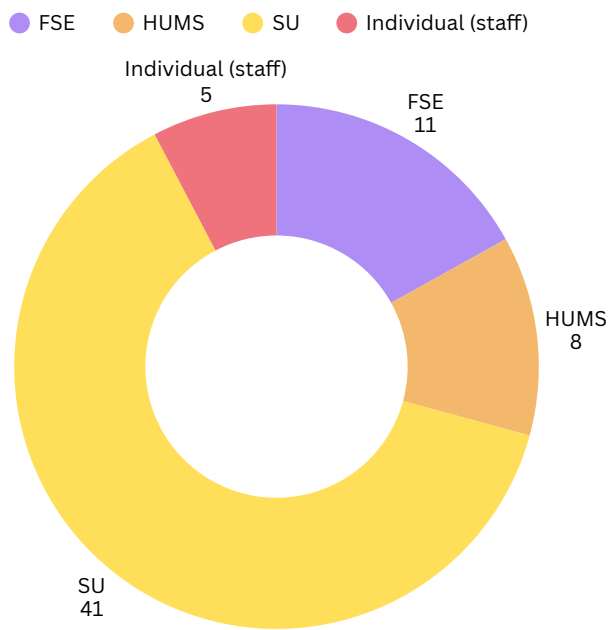
View the updated Policy for September 2026 implementation [here](#).

We'd like to thank the SU for all of their hard work collaborating on this document with our team.

Quantitative Analysis

As Figure 2 shows, the majority of the comments received came from the SU, reflecting the positive impact of the student voice in policy consultation and the collaborative nature of the ownership of this policy. The Faculty of Humanities (HUMS) and the Faculty of Science and Engineering (FSE) provided a similarly small number of comments, which aligns appropriately with a Category B consultation. For each of the 67 comments, an individual and considered response was given that resulted in action or provided the rationale as why the feedback could not be actioned.

Figure 2: Consultation Comments by Area



Qualitative Analysis

The majority of comments were minor in nature, resulting in amendments that focused on further clarification and detail on particular areas, including conduct and discipline (section 7.0) and closing the feedback loop (section 9.0), as well as further restructuring for improved readability.

“ I don't think this policy indicates what should happen if a student reps attendance is very low - should they have a warning then removal as a rep? ”

– Consultation Comment

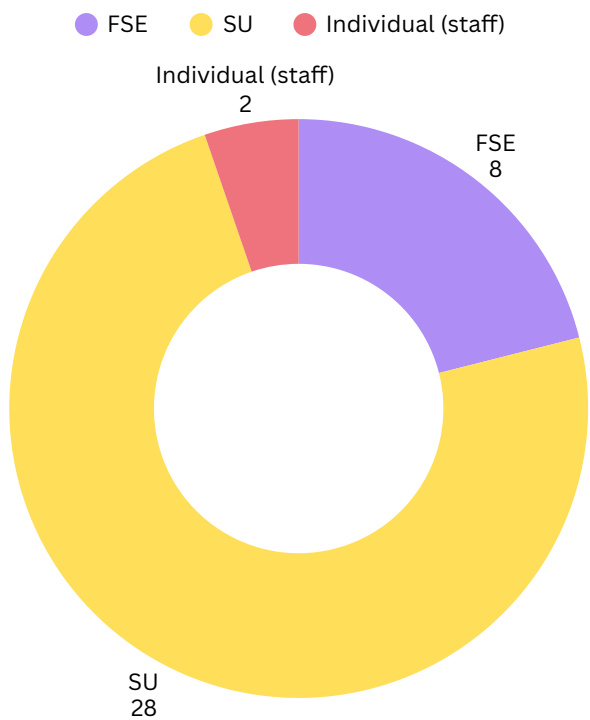
2. Student Protection Plan: Policy on Refunds and Compensation

View the updated Policy for 2026 implementation [here](#).

Quantitative Analysis

Figure 3 shows a total of 38 comments for the Policy on Refunds and Compensation, which is within an expected range for category B. The SU submitted the majority of comments for this policy, suggesting greater issues with student comprehension than staff, who across the three Faculties submitted very few comments (0 from both HUMS and FBMH). For each of the 38 comments, an individual and considered response was given that resulted in action or provided the rationale as why the feedback could not be actioned.

Figure 3: Consultation Comments by Area



Qualitative Analysis

Consultation comments revealed that the original structure of the Policy resulted in ‘considerable repetition’, and the ‘core’ of the policy was somewhat lost. The Policy team therefore restructured the policy to remove the repetition and improve the flow of the document. Several comments requested further consideration for the student experience. The team has therefore added clearer signposting to sources of support, and a new clause (6.03) to ensure that particular care is given to identify students that may require personalised support in the event of a withdrawal. This promotes consistency between this document and the proposed new collaborative provision procedures, and is compliant with [OIA best practice guidance](#) (July 2025).

“Support and advice” are vague and could be more clear.
– Consultation Comment

”

3. Policy on the Recording of Taught Sessions and other Teaching and Learning Activities

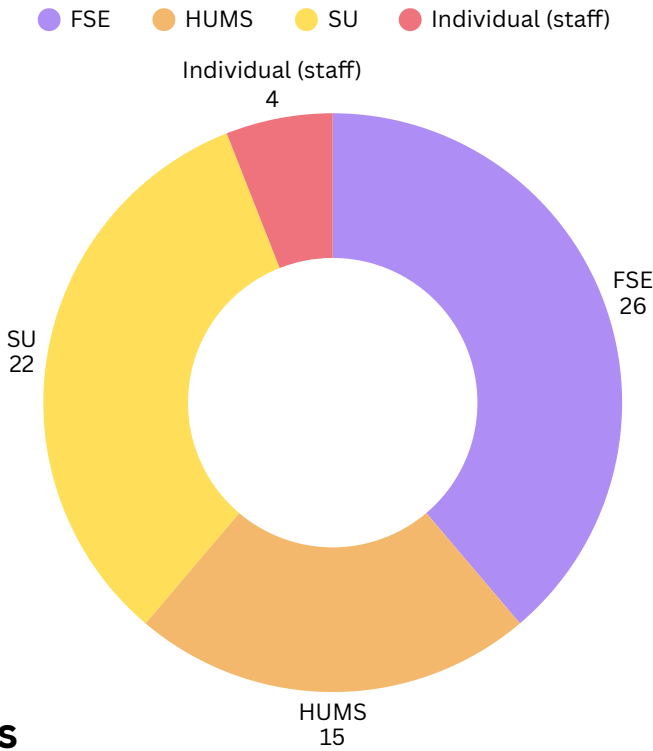
View the updated Policy for September 2026 implementation [here](#).

Please note the previous title of this document was Policy on the Recording of *Lectures* and other Teaching and Learning Sessions. The title was updated to ‘Taught Sessions’ to better reflect the variety of learning formats at the University.

Quantitative Analysis

Figure 4 shows a total of 68 comments with a relatively even spread across FSE, HUMS and the SU. The total number is within an expected range for a category B consultation. For each of the 68 comments, an individual and considered response was given that resulted in action or provided the rationale as why the feedback could not be actioned.

Figure 4: Consultation Comments by Area



Qualitative Analysis

Similarly to the Policy on Refunds and Compensation, consultation comments suggested that the structure of the Policy was causing confusion amongst both staff and students, with needless repetition. The Policy was therefore restructured, and large sections of repetition from the University’s Intellectual Property (IP) Policy were removed and signposted to, helping to maintain a singular point of truth across University documentation. The restructure also reduced the volume of internal cross referencing of different clauses, which students in particular had found unwieldy.

Regarding the content of the document, the team was pleased to see that students found the content was effective and informative. Whilst constructive feedback is always useful and appreciated, it is also beneficial to know when things do work well as they are.

“...the content of the document is overall easy to understand and covers the majority of the key issues relevant to this area.”
– Consultation Comment

Constructive feedback on the content of the policy was focused into a few areas:

Academic Freedom/Freedom of Speech:

Concerns were raised about the exercise of academic judgement and freedom of speech in determining when recordings are/are not made available to students. In contrast to this, staff consultation comments raised concerns about a potential ‘chilling effect’ on student participation if careful consideration is not given before recording significant student interaction. To balance these considerations, reference to the University’s Policy on Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech is now referenced throughout the document.

“**This policy must be balanced with the University’s duty to promote freedom of speech and academic freedom...**

– Consultation Comment

”

Pedagogy and Recordings:

Consultation feedback requested clearer articulation of the University’s pedagogical position on creating recordings, citing concerns in academic literature regarding the impact on both learning and attendance. A statement (1.1.1) that recordings are a supplementary teaching tool and should not be used as a substitute for attendance has been added to the policy. A new section on accessibility highlights the importance of recording taught sessions where possible to ensure disabled students are not disadvantaged, referencing the 2010 Equality Act and best practice guidance from JISC. This section also responds to queries regarding staff training by signposting existing University guidance on producing accessible recordings, thereby reducing unnecessary pressure on the Disability Advisory Support Service (DASS) arising from the current policy wording.

“**Could include/strengthen the notion that recordings are not a substitute for interactive learning design and community building...**

– Consultation Comment

”

Further amendments:

Consultation comments were also received from members of the AI Policy working group, citing the need for synergy between this policy and the AI in Teaching and Learning Policy, particularly regarding recording group work conversations. Once both policies are approved, the TLD policy team will insert the appropriate signposting between each document.

Consultation comments from staff and the Students’ Union highlighted concerns that there is no guidance for managing when a student makes a request for an amendment for a recording to be made. 3.3.3 has been amended to state that request should be considered in line with the policy, and that the staff member should communicate the reasoning to the student. It is likely that more detailed guidance and a process for managing and recording such requests is required will be required when the policy next undergoes a major review.

Following advice from DASS, the section (2.5) on recordings required for assessment and/or professional accreditation has been removed as this is currently not compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and the [EHRC advice note \(2024\)](#). This area is likely to require future development in relation to how competence standards are differentiated from methods of assessment which may be reasonably adjusted.

Finally, to ensure the policy is compliant with GDPR, and in line with guidance issued by UCU, the use for lecture recordings to support University disciplinary procedures has been removed, as this use would not be in line with the legitimate interest of delivering teaching and learning.

4. Graduate Teaching Assistant Guidance

The Guidance for Graduate Teaching Assistants received over 100 consultation comments. The volume and nature of these comments demonstrate a serious disparity between the current guidance and current practice. This resulted in the Policy team recommending at TLSC and AQSC that the Guidance should be upgraded to a Category A (requiring major amends) review in the next academic year (2026/27). This recommendation was approved, and so quantitative and qualitative analysis of the comments will be shared following the next round of consultation on the document. Staff and students can be reassured that all comments received during this year's consultation will be fed into the Category A review, so the Policy team would like to thank those who took the time to contribute to the consultation of this document.

Conclusion

The value of consultation

Consultations conducted by our team rely on the invaluable feedback both colleagues and students take the time to submit. Our team would like to thank everyone who contributed to this review. The amendments to the documents from this review will improve the student experience at the University of Manchester. Interpretation and implementation of the documents by University staff will be more consistent across the University.

Future Action

When documents are not officially out for consultation, staff and students are still encouraged to submit any feedback using our [policy comments form](#). These comments are RAG rated and stored to be used when our documents are next up for review, and any more urgent comments are considered carefully.

Please check [our website](#) and the [TLD Bulletin](#) for all the latest updates and news. You can also find all of the documents that we own in one place with summaries and 3 key things for each document.

You can also contact our team directly at: teaching-policy@manchester.ac.uk.