



# VISION STATEMENT

<b>Candidate's Name</b>	Komal Ashfaq
<b>Candidate Team Name</b>	
<p><b>Re-elect Your Students' Union President</b></p> <p>Dear Students,</p> <p>My name is Komal, I am a Psychology graduate and your current Students' Union President.</p> <p>I ran for President last year because I did not want to leave university without trying to change the things that made student life harder than it needed to be. I am standing again because there is still unfinished work, and because stability matters when it comes to delivering real change.</p> <p>As President, I have focused on listening to students, challenging decisions that harm them, and pushing for practical improvements. If re-elected, I will continue to lead with honesty, accountability, and integrity.</p> <p><b>My Priorities as President</b></p> <p><b>1. Cut the cost and exhaustion of commuting</b></p> <p>For many students, commuting is expensive, draining, and isolating, often forcing people to work unsustainable hours, and compromising their wellbeing and studies.</p> <p><b><u>What I've already started:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Running a pilot of a rest space in the Union for students with long or early commutes</li> <li>• Lobbying the Mayor of Greater Manchester and working directly with Transport for Greater Manchester to make commuting more affordable, reliable, and safe</li> <li>• Pushing for students and graduates to be recognised in regional transport strategies</li> </ul> <p><b><u>If re-elected, I will:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use evidence from the pilot to push for more permanent rest spaces across campus</li> <li>• Continue lobbying for a discounted, integrated public transport pass across all transport modes</li> <li>• Create a student car-share programme to help students from similar areas share travel and reduce costs</li> <li>• Lobby for student parking passes and free or reduced-cost parking for students</li> </ul>	



## **2. Make the university accessible in practice, not just policy**

Students are not one homogeneous group, and support cannot be one-size-fits-all.

### **What I've already started:**

- Working with disabled and neurodivergent students to set up a recurring space in the Union to connect and share lived experiences
- Lobbying the university to provide support for neurodivergent students through the diagnostic process
- Raising awareness of barriers such as stigma and inaccessible systems and buildings

### **If re-elected, I will:**

- Ensure this space becomes permanent and properly supported
- Push for improved accessibility across physical buildings and university systems
- Reduce stigma around seeking support through student-led education
- Work with the university to provide clear resources on students' workplace rights and support access to employers that play to students' strengths

## **3. Reduce financial pressure for students locked out of existing support**

Many students fall through the gaps of current funding systems, including international students, carers, parents, and those facing legal or financial barriers.

### **What I've already started:**

- Lobbying for increased number of instalments in payment plans after Nigerian students shared the impact of exchange rate changes

### **If re-elected, I will:**

- Continue pushing for flexible payment plans for international students
- Lobby for bursaries and grants to be paid to eligible students without them needing to fill lengthy forms and provide extensive evidence
- Push for flexibility in attendance rules during religious and cultural festivities, for students who want to travel to celebrate with their family, or with students with caring responsibilities.

## **4. Hold the university accountable to its ethical commitments**

MMU has an amazing Ethical Investment Policy. Students deserve confidence that it is being upheld in practice.

### **What I've already started:**

- Lobbying to amend the policy so exclusions are enforceable, for example by including clear percentage thresholds for income from arms
- Lobbying for clear, enforceable definitions that asset managers need to follow
- Working with student societies and groups on this collectively, especially by advocating for students who are directly affected by the arms trade

**If re-elected, I will:**

- Continue this work to ensure companies students oppose are meaningfully excluded
- Work with societies to build people-powered democracy, expanding how students influence decisions beyond elections
- Push for the Union to adopt clear ethical standards, including Ethiscore thresholds when choosing who we work with

**My Commitment to You**

I do not believe in symbolic representation or quiet compromises.

I believe in listening to students, acting on what I hear, and being accountable for results. If re-elected, I will continue to report openly on progress and challenges, and represent students' interests, even and especially when it is uncomfortable.

Together, we can keep building a university that supports its students properly and acts with integrity.

Komal Ashfaq

Students' Union President