Dear Presidents and Officers of Russell Group Student Unions, Associations and Guilds,

Thank you for your letter. The Russell Group and our universities are fully committed to ensuring the fair assessment of our students, while at the same time recognising that this year’s cohorts have faced a significant number of challenges. We know you share these priorities and would like to thank you for your continuing constructive engagement with our members on this issue to date. Your views and input are essential to our future strategy and planning.

We are pleased you agree that an individualised, algorithmic approach to no detriment policies this year is challenging and unfeasible. Instead, as you say, it is more appropriate for universities to have a range of policies and tools in place to ensure that all students are given a fair grade, reflecting their hard work and taking into account the circumstances they face this year so no one is unfairly disadvantaged because of Covid-19. Longer-term, our members must also ensure students leave university with strong qualifications that command the confidence and respect of employers and professional bodies.

In recognition of this, each of our members is putting in place a range of fair assessment policies and mitigation measures to achieve these objectives. In many cases, the development of these steps is taking place with student union involvement.

Each university will take its own approach depending on its particular structures and assessment processes. However, all have been working closely with students to develop their fair assessment policies and will continue to do so.

If any of your members have concerns or questions, I would encourage them to speak to their universities about the fair assessment package that is being put in place.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you and your members for their hard work and commitment during what continues to be a challenging year for us all in the university sector.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Tim Bradshaw
Chief Executive, Russell Group