

1605 No to the Marketisation of Education (The Future of Undergraduate Funding)

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Union notes:

1. The current government policy is for a market for fees with a cap of £9000.
2. The Liberal Democrats reneged on their General Election promise, signed by all their Members of Parliament, to vote against any rise in fees.
3. Several Vice-Chancellors have called for the cap on tuition fees to rise further, or for the cap to be removed.
4. Several political and media commentators have speculated that the lifting of the cap in its entirety could form part of the next Conservative Party manifesto.
5. The General Election is to be held on 7th May 2015, representing an opportunity for a new deal for students.

Union believes:

1. Higher Education should be treated as a right and not a privilege.
2. That the marketization of higher education is a disgusting notion which attempts to determine a student's standard of education on their ability to pay and not their ability to learn.
3. Access to education should be equal for all people. Regardless of any artificial distinctions between them, such as class, place of birth, race, gender and sexual orientation.
4. That the threat of £9000 fees and huge levels of debt puts students off University regardless of the actual mechanics of repayments.
5. That a return to £3000 fees, or a reduction to £6000 fees, is unfeasible and still a poor solution to the issue of student funding.
6. That none of the major political Parties are set to offer a free education policy alternative to a system based fundamentally on fees and debt.
7. In a fair system of living loans and living grants that cover the costs for students and ensure no student has to live in poverty.

Union resolves:

1. To replace the policy 'No to the Marketisation of Education' that was outdated and set to lapse with this policy.
2. To always campaign aggressively against any further marketization of Higher Education.
3. To campaign and support any campaigns to ensure a fair system of living loans and living grants.
4. To lobby the University to support the notion of lessening the burden of Higher Education funding on students whenever they are consulted on the future of undergraduate funding.
5. To support campaigning efforts encouraging the main political Parties to offer free education.

6. To continue to support campaigns for free education at a local and national level as appropriate, such as providing transport for the Free Education Demo on 19th November in London.
7. To review our Higher Education funding policy after May 2015 in light of the General Election result and government Higher Education funding policy.