



LEEDS BECKETT STUDENTS' UNION

making students' lives better

POL-2015/16-013

Proposed: Jay Malpass-Clark

Seconded: James Starnes

Passed: December 2015

Expiry Date: December 2018

QUALITY DOESN'T GROW ON FEES

Union Notes

1. That the Higher Education Green paper was released on 2nd November 2015 in which further key areas were mentioned beyond the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) that needed examination.
2. That these recommended changes to Higher Education are viewed as the biggest changes to Higher Education since 1992 when Polytechnics were given university status. These key areas are as follows:
3. The Office for Students: HEFCE & OFFA are to be merged to create a new body that will work in the interest of students.
4. Widening Participation: There will be additional targets for widening participation and a new Social Mobility Advisory Group.
5. Private Providers: A private provider could get degree awarding powers in less than four years and university status in less than five.
6. Student protections: There will be increased protections for students if a course or institution fails.
7. Students' Unions: A question is asked about how we can improve our transparency and accountability.
8. Sharia compliant loans: After years of joint work between NUS and FOSIS, the government are introducing Sharia compliant loans.
9. Research: HEFCE will no longer allocate research funding and

Union Believes

1. That the merging of two government bodies (HEFCE - Higher Education Funding Council - England

& OFFA - Office for Fair Access) into the Office for Students needs to be scrutinised to make sure that it is a move that benefits students and does not create further barriers.

2. That we welcome the additional widening participation targets. We welcome the formation of a Social Mobility Advisory Group however any further development in Widening Participation must not treat social mobility as just a KPI (Key Performance Indicator) and work to actually address WP for the outcome of positive and lasting social mobility in the UK.
3. That the introduction of private providers being able to become universities is wrong and goes against the public good seeking only to meet market good instead.
4. That we welcome further protections for students if a course or university fails, particularly for the student to be able to claim a full refund.
5. The mention of Students' Unions being more transparent and accountable asks questions of that statement's motives [and we have concerns that it is the first step in attempts to restrict the activity of Students' Unions as has happened to Trade Unions](#). If it in anyway restricts the ability to represent students or limit the student voice then it must be contested.
6. We welcome the [introduction](#) of Sharia compliant loans. We hope that this eventually goes further towards ensuring that university is open and all inclusive.
7. It is unknown at this time whether research funding being allocated to universities from outside the government is a positive or negative thing. More will have to be known before it can be decided.

Union Resolves

1. To adopt the position that the quality of a student's course will not rise upon the increase of their student fees and to actively oppose any future change from the HE Green paper that goes against this stance.
2. To affiliate to the NUS 'Quality Doesn't Grow on Fees' campaign
3. To actively oppose the continued privatisation of Higher Education and the ability for any private provider being able to become a university with ease in addition to them being able to gain full degree awarding power within 4 years.