This Students’ Union notes:
1. Education is a Human Right.
2. People from lower socio-economic groups are under-represented in Higher Education.
3. A 2010 Sutton Trust survey found that fee increases deter secondary school students from progressing to university whilst having an even greater impact on Mature and Part-Time students.
4. A lack of funding for postgraduate education is an additional barrier to students from lower socio-economic groups progressing further in HE and careers.

This Students’ Union believes:
1. Higher Education should be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
2. All students should have the same opportunities to succeed.
3. The University of Sheffield and its students have a responsibility to help young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds gain access to Higher Education.

This Students’ Union resolves:
1. To engage directly with local schools, the LEA, The Department of Life Long Learning and the University to instigate mentoring schemes and other outreach activities.
2. To share good practice with the university’s Widening Participation Research Unit.
3. To lobby the university to close any attainment gaps between students from different backgrounds.
4. To proactively support widening participation students during their time here.
5. To campaign for a national bursary scheme.
6. To campaign for more postgraduate funding options.
7. To campaign for HE information and guidance, outreach and mentoring programmes, to be provided to from primary school level up to mature student level.

POLICY HISTORY:
Originally passed by Referendum in March 2011 (4459 votes for; 237 against; 977 abstentions) and renewed temporarily by SU Council in October 2013. The above revised policy was agreed by SU Council in December 2014.

This policy is next due for review in November 2017.