Policy Proposal: Oppose the Marketisation of Higher Education

Name of Proposer: SU President

Name of Seconder: Education Officer

Sheffield Students’ Union Council Notes:
1. We’ve had a long-standing, principled opposition to the marketisation of Higher Education (HE).
2. One form of marketisation is the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), of which the National Student Survey (NSS) is a component.
3. In 2017, the weighting of the NSS data in the final TEF calculations was halved and a link to fees was severed.
4. The 2019/20 TEF review is an opportunity to fundamentally reconsider the use and application of TEF.

Sheffield Students’ Union Council Believes:
1. Marketisation has no place in HE.
2. TEF doesn’t monitor teaching quality or identify excellence.
3. If a University aspires to excellence, TEF metrics will follow.
4. The NSS, despite its significant flaws, is useful in supporting staff and students in understanding issues within programmes, when used by Academic Reps.

Sheffield Students’ Union Council Resolves:
1. To lobby the University to remove incentivisation around completing the NSS.
2. To work with the University to choose optional NSS questions, on issues of importance to students.
3. To lobby the University to include Academic Reps in developing their action plans for NSS results, and to stop using the NSS in recruitment of UK undergraduates.
4. To lobby the government (with the University) to fundamentally reconsider use and application of TEF.
5. To continue to oppose HE marketisation.