

No to the Marketisation of Education (Free Education for all)

Proposer: David Sheppard (Academic Officer)

Seconder: Richard Reynolds (SSF Faculty Convenor)

This Union resolves:

1. To uphold the policy that supports free education for all (passed by Union Council 24/4/08).
2. To send to the National Union of Students [NUS] Annual Conference the policy attached below.

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Conference Believes:

1. Fees affect all students.
2. Fees for international students are completely uncapped by government.
3. Many institutions have already started budgeting for the cap to increase.
4. Chief among the arguments in support of the new system was that it would widen access to education; estimates vary but broadly show this has not happened.

Conference Further Believes:

1. That Higher Education [HE] should be paid for out of general taxation.
2. That the current NUS policy is short sighted and concedes the powerful moral case for free education for all.
3. Higher Education should be treated as a right not a privilege.
4. Access to education should be equal (and free) for all people, regardless of any artificial/irrelevant distinctions between them, e.g. class, place of birth, race, gender, sexual orientation etc.
5. On a pragmatic level, a campaign to maintain the status quo of capped fees will not be successful. A campaign for completely free education for all may not be entirely successful but will re-orientate the debate in the right direction.
6. Where public money is needed to fund HE it should be raised through general taxation, not fees on students.
7. Variation in fees, on any basis, is unacceptable and goes against the principles of equal opportunities.
8. Education has many positive side effects and should be seen as a good in its self. Campaigning for free access to education should be led by our belief in education for its own sake.
9. Government attempts to justify HE in terms of social mobility, economic benefit or creating "good citizens" are sometimes true but miss the central point of education (see CFB 8).
10. Mass action best demonstrates the strength of student opposition to fees.

Conference Resolves:

1. NUS should fight to restore a strong campaigning national student voice for free education.

2. NUS should campaign both locally (through Constituent Members) and nationally for free education for all. In this campaign it should work with other groups that hold similar beliefs.
3. Every available opportunity should be taken by members of the National Executive Committee to speak for free education, lobby politicians & HE sector leaders and press release to local, student and national media.
4. That while this should not become the only campaign the National Union works on it should be considered to be a top priority.
5. NUS should oppose any private sector control over education provision.
6. To organise with student activists, constituent members and other external organisations protests, meetings, rallies etc in favour of free education. These shall include at least one national demonstration, in London, as close to The Palace of Westminster as possible.

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Received:	A resolution from D Sheppard (Academic Officer) and R Reynolds (SSF Faculty Convenor)
Noted:	D Sheppard, for the motion, noted that this was a proposal to send the same policy of Free Education For All, passed by Council last April, to NUS National Conference as a resolution. He argued that any fudge over Free Education, no matter how it may be packaged, would be immoral. There were no speeches against the resolution.
Resolved:	To approve the resolution by a substantial majority.