Resolution: Quality doesn’t grow on Fees

NUS UK are deeply concerned by the latest reforms announced by the UK government in their recent Higher Education Green Paper, whereby they propose to link the measurement of quality with the further marketization of our education system.

Higher Education in the UK has been subject to a number of tuition fee reforms over the last decade, resulting in a failed market with the average graduate now leaving education with over £50’000 worth of debt.

Now the UK government are pushing ahead, despite overwhelming opposition from the sector, with proposals to introduce a new metric for the market- through the teaching and excellence framework (TEF).

This framework will include a number of tiers of teaching quality, within which if institutions demonstrate they meet the relevant metrics, will be able to increase the tuition fees they charge accordingly. These metrics are vague and based on measurements not directly linked to quality. Not only will this push the next generation of students into unimaginable levels of debt, but will dramatically shift the UK Higher Education sector’s approach to teaching quality.

The student movement has always been at the forefront of campaigning for enhanced quality within higher education, but when politicians crassly use the quality of the teaching a student receives as a mechanism to increase tuition fees as a market driver, we have to challenge whether their interest is really in the student experience.

ESU has a proud tradition of fighting for free education, and in a time where students in the UK, and elsewhere, are facing attacks to their right to affordable education, NUS UK calls on our colleagues in the European student movement for solidarity and support in opposing these proposals. ESU calls on the UK government to reverse the further marketization of higher education and to consider models of publicly funded education instead of loading the poorest students in society with higher levels of debt.

Proposed by: ___NUS UK_______________________________

Seconded by: FEF, FZS, ISHA, UDU, UNEF, ISO, SKONUS, SFS, SYL, CREUP, SAMOK, FAGE