

## SUARTS POLICY | HIGHER EDUCATION (HE) FUNDING

### This Union Notes:

1. May 1996: Conservative PM John Major commissions the Dearing Enquiry to outline options for HE development over the following 20 years.
2. July 1997: The Dearing Report is published and recommends that students should pay approx 25% of the cost of their education, but that grants should not be abolished. It justifies the introduction of student contributions with the idea of 'graduate premiums' - the extra money a graduate would earn over their lifetime because they have a degree.
3. July 1997: David Blunkett announces the introduction of means-tested tuition fees and abolishes grants.
4. January 2003: Labour publishes a White Paper including proposals for £3000 tuition fees
5. As a result of the 2004 Education Act fixed up front fees of £1200 per annum for HE in England and Wales were replaced with variable fees of between £0 and £3000 per annum with a fees loan available to be paid after graduating.
6. The top rate of £3000 can increase with inflation each year but cannot be raised in real terms without another Parliamentary vote.

### This Union Believes:

1. The threat of debt and high costs associated with studying puts some potential students off education.
2. Students currently pay fees which amount to around 45% of the cost of their education, this % would dramatically increase if the cap is lifted to £7,000, as has been discussed in government.
3. The government recently cut funding for ELQs (equivalent or lower qualifications) meaning people returning to HE who already have a qualification have to pay full fees, like international students. This adversely affects creative based institutions like Arts London, as a high proportion of ELQ students choose creative subjects.
4. The Dearing Report called for a regulated contribution from UK Business to the HE sector. In more than 10 years in power, the Government has done nothing to make this happen.
5. The government have committed to reviewing HE Funding in 2009, and have hinted that they will raise the 'cap' on fees however all parties remain extremely cagey about any details.
6. The senior management of some Universities are pushing HARD for the cap to be raised and even removed from Tuition Fees in HE.
7. Creative graduates are at the bottom of the 'graduate premium' scale, earning an average of £34,000 extra over their lifetime than someone without a degree.
8. That further increases in tuition fees could have a catastrophic effect on creative institutions.
9. The financial support currently available to students does not take into account the real costs of studying creative courses, and is not sufficient for students to live on.

### This Union Resolves:

1. Work with the National Union of Students and other bodies to campaign for a fairer HE Funding System.
2. Take a stand against raising or lifting the 'cap' on tuition fees.
3. Take the stance that those who make more money from their degree should pay back more.
4. Campaign for the high costs of Arts education and realistic rates of rent etc to be recognised and provided for as part of student finance arrangements.
5. Lobby the University to formally support students' stance against the current HE funding system and for a fairer one.

Date Passed March 2009 | Date Expires March 2012