

Dear Vice-Chancellors

The Coalition Government's higher education policy ensures that undergraduate students will commonly leave university with debts of over £40,000. This debt is being imposed on graduates without a democratic mandate and by politicians who have typically benefited from free higher education. As such it represents an indefensible intergenerational unfairness. The privatisation of university funding risks transforming the collaborative relationship between students and educators into a cold commercial transaction between consumers and service providers. We find it inconceivable that academic principles of cooperation, critical thinking and pastoral care could survive this process intact.

We believe that the response from Vice-Chancellors to these damaging reforms has thus far lacked coordination and purpose. Given that these reforms fundamentally alter the character of higher education, we feel it is incumbent on you, as Vice-Chancellors, to fulfil your roles by definitively communicating your position to the staff and students for whom you are responsible.

Therefore we, the undersigned, call upon all university Vice-Chancellors to issue a press release or statement, publicly clarifying their support for, or objection to a) the imposition of debts of over £40,000 for new undergraduates and b) the removal of public funding for undergraduate teaching. It is our hope that by providing a clear and unambiguous statement of your positions regarding these changes, university administrators, staff and students can engage in greater and more productive dialogue on the future of higher education.

Yours sincerely,