



Most UK students unaware of tuition fee hike

Description

The University of Leeds According to research by [Save the Student](#), almost 80% of students are unaware of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) – a higher education bill currently passing through the UK government – and 87% don't know the effect it will have on tuition fees.

Save the Student is a popular money-saving website aimed at providing students with financial advice. In a survey which asked over 2,000 students what they think about the Teaching Excellence Framework, the vast majority were completely unaware of the bill.

What is the Teaching Excellence Framework?

The government scheme, designed to assess and grade university teaching, has the potential to change higher education in the UK dramatically and it's therefore vital that students understand what's happening. Institutions deemed as being 'exceptional' will be allowed to leapfrog the already contested tuition-fee threshold of £9,000 per year and to charge students more, in line with inflation.

Liverpool University Universities are assessed based on their dropout rates, graduate employment figures and scores from the National Student Survey – ironic, since this will mean students who rank their institution highly may then face higher fees. Those universities who score the most highly, which seem certain to include the country's most prestigious institutions, will then be able to charge more money. There are therefore concerns that this will have the knock-on effect of further dissuading those from lower socio-economic backgrounds from attending. Meanwhile, less established institutions, which are often located in lesser-developed areas of the country where there is a great need for higher education options and, indeed, graduates, may be penalised by the TEF. The risks here are that higher education in these areas becomes less accessible and negatively affects communities that are reliant on the economic benefits of a university.

The highest-ranking universities will be able to increase their fees for both new and current students, resulting in those already at the university seeing their tuition hiked. Some institutions are already

advertising higher fees; despite the fact the bill hasn't even been given full parliamentary consent yet.

Kings College

What do students think of it?



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Only 21% of respondents had heard of TEF and only 8% knew what it involved. However, once the survey had informed students about TEF, the vast majority of respondents felt it would be bad for students and for institutions.

Three-quarters of students now say they will oppose TEF and almost 40% said they'd boycott the National Student Survey as a result, the next edition of which opens in January 2017.

Why don't students know about it?

Considering some of the high-profile student protests this bill has caused, it's worrying that so few students seem to be aware of the Teaching Excellence Framework and its potential implications.

One student said:

Universities should be offering a gold standard of education for the price they currently charge, TEF should benefit the students by letting us know we're going to receive that. What it shouldn't be doing is giving universities a chance to extort their already financially vulnerable students.

Governments certainly tend to be good at burying bad news, but should universities also be

responsible for keeping students informed? Jake Butler of Save the Student thinks so:

“These figures clearly show there’s been a shocking lack of communication from the government and universities when it comes to informing students about what the TEF is and how it’s likely to affect them.”•

Find out more about the bill, [here](#).