

YouGov Survey Results

Student Fees

Prepared for Daily Telegraph

Sample Size: 2412

Fieldwork: 16th-17th December 2003

%

Some people say that in recent years UK universities have been 'chronically underfunded'. From what you know, do you believe they have, or have not, been chronically underfunded?

Yes, they have been	44
No, they have not	31
Don't know	26

If extra money is put into universities, should all the extra money come out of general tax revenues, or should those who go to university make some contribution, at the time or later, to the cost of their university course?

Should come out of general taxation	29
Students should make some contribution	65
Don't know	6

If those who go to university are required to contribute to the cost of their course, what form should their contribution take?

Fees paid 'up front' at the beginning of every academic year	9
Fees repaid over a period of years after students have graduated and are earning a salary	44
No fees, but an additional tax levied on all students after they have graduated, with the money raised in this way going to universities	38
Don't know	8

At the moment, a typical student pays £1,100 a year in tuition fees 'up front', and borrows money to live on. As a result, graduates today typically leave university with debts of around £10,000. The current proposals are for tuition fees to rise, but that no fees need be paid 'up front'. As a result, a typical graduate would leave university with debts of £15-20,000, to be repaid over a period of years, and once they have started to earn a reasonable salary. Would you regard this as...

A crippling financial burden	54
A good investment in their own future	40
Don't know	6

It has been suggested that the number of students going to university should be increased until roughly half of all young people have some experience of higher education. In your view, how desirable is it that this 50 per cent target should be achieved?

Highly desirable	11
Somewhat desirable	33
Somewhat undesirable	28
Very undesirable	19
Don't know	9

An alternative proposal is that all tuition fees should be scrapped and, at the same time, the 50 per cent target should also be abandoned. The money saved from abandoning the target would be used to meet the cost of scrapping all tuition fees. Do you support or oppose this proposal?

Support	51
Oppose	26
Don't know	23

There are well over 100 universities in the UK. From what you know, do you believe that all of them are, or are not, of equal quality?

Yes, are of equal quality	4
No, are not	86
Don't know	9

Do you believe that there will ever be a time when they are all of equal quality, or are some of them bound to remain better than others?

Could be of equal quality	6
Some bound to remain better	92
Don't know	2

How important do you think having top-class universities is for Britain's future economic success?

Very important	60
Fairly important	33
Not very important	4
Not at all important	1
Don't know	2

It is suggested that different universities should be free to charge different fees for different courses. From what you know, do you think universities should be free to vary their fees in this way, or should all universities charge the same fees for all their courses?

Should be free to vary their fees	48
Should charge the same fees for all courses	44
Don't know	7

Imagine a situation in which a university has two applicants for the last remaining place on a particular course. Both applicants have identical A-level results. One applicant comes from a middle-class family and has attended a fee-paying public school; the other comes from a working class family and has attended an inner-city comprehensive school. Do you think the university should...?

Admit the middle-class applicant from the fee-paying public school	3
Admit the working-class applicant from the inner-city comprehensive school	29
Toss a coin to decide who to admit	50
Don't know	18

