

# POLICY PROPOSAL

TITLE: BATH SAYS 'TEF OFF'

Policy number 2016/17-8

Passed on 8th December at policy round

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## INTRODUCTION

*The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) is a new government scheme that it claims will assess and improve teaching quality in universities. While we welcome any measure which encourages better teaching and student engagement, we do not believe the TEF is suitable for such a task. In fact, it will achieve the opposite, and is actually a 'Trojan horse' to increase our tuition fees. We call on University of Bath's Students' Union to actively oppose the TEF and Bath's participation in it, and instead to consider collaborative means of improving teaching standards.*

*The TEF is a flawed and dishonest policy, to the detriment of our education, and should be opposed.*

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## REASON FOR CHANGE

### Considering that the TEF

1. Is a means for the government to raise tuition fees and increase debt for further generations of students.
2. Claims to measure teaching quality, using spurious metrics that have no relation to teaching quality, including graduate employment data and scores from the National Student Survey (NSS).
3. Introduces a new level of bureaucracy which takes resources away from teaching, at a time when universities have under-invested in teaching staff and resources.
4. Has been heavily criticised by university managers, academics, students and the National Union of Students.

### Bath Students' Union recognises that

1. The concept of the TEF is fundamentally flawed.
2. The TEF will incentivise universities to focus on meeting arbitrary metrics and progressing in league tables, rather than focusing on supporting excellent teaching.
3. As part of last year's policy mandates, it must join campaigns against the wider marketisation of Higher Education, which includes the TEF.
4. The TEF rankings will reflect the pre-existing social hierarchies of the university student population, thus reinforcing educational inequalities among Higher Education institutions
5. The use of graduate employment destinations as a metric penalises subjects in which students go on to take lower-paying, but socially beneficial, jobs.

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## THE PROPOSAL

### Bath Students' Union will

1. Mandate the Education and Postgraduate Officers to campaign against the TEF in any recognisable form and to communicate with students what forms of opposition they have engaged with thus far and in the future
2. Mandate all Officers to support (via social media promotion, attendance, where possible, of related student-led discussions / events, and through principled support) calls for the university to oppose the TEF and to support students in their calls for opposition also
3. Use consultations on the TEF to highlight its flawed nature and worst aspects, and to voice the views of students and academics about the TEF at every possible opportunity