

1633 Access is not the only issue

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Union Notes:

1. The Institute for Fiscal studies has researched what happens to young people from different backgrounds once they arrive at university.
2. The research explores socio-economic differences in drop-out, degree completion and degree class.
3. They conclude that large differences in university outcomes between individuals from different socio-economic backgrounds can be explained by the fact that they arrive at university with very different levels of human capital.
4. Those with similar grades from higher socio-economic backgrounds are 3.4 percentage points less likely to drop-out, 3.7 percentage points more likely to graduate with a first or 2:1 and 5.3 percentage points more likely to graduate than those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Union Believes:

1. It is a scandal that individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to drop-out and less likely to graduate with a first or 2:1 than individuals from higher socio-economic backgrounds.
2. The UK press is obsessed with application and access figures for poor students- but not completion or success rates.
3. This means all the expenditure tends to be on tempting poor kids into Uni- and they're then left high and dry with inadequate support when they get to uni
4. UEA's access agreement is all about application and access with little on success and drop out.
5. More should be done to improve the skills of individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds.
6. Too often Universities blame the school system but Universities should shoulder some responsibility.
7. If those from poorer families are more likely to experience unexpected challenges that make them more susceptible to dropping out, universities like UEA should increase the support available.

Union Resolves:

1. To lobby for issues of drop-out, retention and success rates to be a key consideration in the University's access agreement and widening participation strategy

2. To lobby the University to review academic, induction and financial support for poorer students
3. To work with NUS to lobby the Government's access regulator (OFFA) to look at issues of drop-out, retention and success rates rather than just application rates