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Supporting the Liberal Democrats [1]

Written by **Anton Howes** [2] | Friday 3 December 2010

Whilst the government's reforms of tuition fees may be generous (for instance, by increasing the repayment threshold from £15,000 to £21,000), the latest proposals fly in the face of any claims to "fairness". Welsh students are apparently to receive all the benefits of a more lenient repayment system, but without experiencing the higher tuition fees. This means that they will benefit just as much as English students from lower annual repayments, but will be able to repay their debt significantly faster. If any policies can be described as "unfair", surely they are those that discriminate against certain sectors of the population by law. In this case, this is grossly "unfair" to English students in that they will receive a less generous deal than Welsh students.

Whilst the coalition government appears to be presenting the proposals along similar lines to those I have proposed in previous blogs, they have missed a golden opportunity with regard to this new innovation. If the government had kept tuition fees at the current level in Wales whilst preventing them from benefiting from the increase in the repayment threshold, we may have seen protests in Wales against keeping the system the same rather than changing it. Protests in Wales demanding the same overly generous repayment deal that English students will get would have flown in the face of the National Union of Students that has been misleading students with regards to increased student debt.

On a more positive note, students have started to organise themselves against socialist misinformation. A fast-growing Facebook group of students in support of the general thrust of the coalition's reforms ? Students FOR Tuition Fees Reform [3] ? has been set up in the past few days, already expanding to well over 500 followers. Hopefully, more students will bother to read the coalition's proposals and reject NUS scare-mongering as a result of it. Perhaps Liberal Democrat MPs may take heart from the fact that some students have bothered to listen to them and vote for the reforms. It is up to those of us who favour these reforms to show our support by "liking" the Facebook page, writing to Liberal Democrat MPs, and showing them that not all students will protest a fall in their annual repayments that improves university standards.

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