

Textbooks should not be a luxury



1) University students did not pay tuition fees before 1998. There are an estimated 4m people in England who benefited from this. The current value of that free tuition is an estimated £110bn.



2) In contrast, students from lower-income households will in future graduate with debts of approximately £50,000 - and without receiving any maintenance grants.



3) Current students living away from home and outside London can receive maintenance loans of up to £8,200 in 2016-7.



4) But official estimates argue that maintenance loans will be insufficient in many cases. The university of Oxford, for example, estimates that a frugal lifestyle will cost students £8,727 during term-time alone in 2016-7.



5) 8 out of 10 university students from lower-income households have had to cut their spending on at least one measure we probed on, such as travel back home, society/sports membership, heating, or study time because of part-time work.



6) Most importantly, 4 out of 10 have had to cut back on university textbooks.



7) A £250 Reading List Scholarship funds a deserving student's textbooks for their first year ...



8) ... giving them some financial and emotional breathing space, as well as a welcome addition to their CV.



9) We would like to have a Reading List Scholarship in every state-funded Year 13 in England. The estimated cost of this is £800,000, or 0.0007% of the value of the free tuition others have enjoyed.

