

IFUT welcomes new Cabinet Minister for Higher Education

Decision addresses the 'Cinderella' status of the sector

Sunday June 28th, 2020

The Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT) has warmly welcomed the creation of a new Department of Higher Education, Innovation and Science in the new government.

Joan Donegan, General Secretary of IFUT, said the creation of the new Department reflects a decision by the government to address the fact that, over the past decade, higher education and research had very much become the 'Cinderella' within the overall education system.

"This major deterioration in funding and focus on the sector seriously jeopardised the future of a quarter of a million higher education students as well as the future of our economy and society generally."

"IFUT very much looks forward to working with new Cabinet Minister Simon Harris and his officials to assist in the rebirth of higher education and to enable lecturers, researchers and students and teaching staff to achieve and deliver their full potential."

"State funding per student to third-level institutions is now 40% below what it was a decade ago. This financial model had become unsustainable and can now be effectively addressed."

"It was noticeable that the manifestos of all the political parties in the general election last February uniquely supported development of long-term funding initiatives for the sector."

"We now have an excellent opportunity to make real progress on this front, drawing on the Recommendations of the 2016 Cassells Report and the more recent work of the Oireachtas Education Committee on the issue," Joan Donegan said.

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