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5 **AYY's policy paper on tuition fees**

6 With the legislative change (HE 77/2015) enacted on January 1, 2016, Finnish universities must charge students
7 from outside the EU/EEA countries in foreign-language programmes tuition fees of at least 1,500 EUR per year.
8 Universities must have a grant system. Universities themselves shall make decisions on the size of the tuition fees
9 and their grant system. As a promoter of student interests, AYY shall participate in the planning of the Aalto
10 University tuition fee and grant system based on the following advocacy goals.

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12 **1. Education leading to a degree should be free for everyone.**

13 AYY thinks that the legislative change is poorly considered and supports free education and undoing the law.
14 Funding higher education is primarily the responsibility of the government. In order for Finnish universities to
15 retain their level of internationality, the education of students from outside the EU/EEA countries should be
16 supported from public funds also in the future. High-quality education can also be free of charge. The expenses of
17 university education must be transparently declared and its funding must be dictated by the national funding
18 model for universities. Tuition fees are determined by national educational policy decisions, not by the university's
19 brand building needs.

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21 **2. Internationality at Aalto University must not suffer because of tuition fees.**

22 The most essential goal of Aalto University's tuition fee and grant system should be to ensure that the university
23 draws talented students from around the world irrespective of their financial means, and that each Aalto student
24 learns to operate in a multicultural environment as part of their degree. AYY's goals for internationalisation at
25 Aalto University have been defined in a separate policy paper.

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27 **3. The effects of tuition fees must be critically evaluated, and the system must allow changes 28 to be made as needed.**

29 Before the implementation of the tuition fee system, indicators and processes must be defined for monitoring the
30 development of applicant numbers and the amount of students who have entered the university and received a
31 grant. An agreement has to be made on how and when the effects shall be surveyed on university level. The
32 evaluation of financial effects must fully take into account the expenses caused by the collection of tuition fees and
33 increased marketing needs. Practical decision-making in the tuition fee system must be kept as close to the
34 programmes as possible, so that the programmes can react to changes in the student amount.

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36 **4. Degree quality must be high without exception.**

37 Aalto University offers high-quality degree education that gives the student excellent skills for acting as an
38 independent expert in their future career. The university must give the student a quality guarantee – a promise
39 that studies can be finished flexibly within the target time, teaching is high-quality, diverse and inspiring, student
40 instruction is adequate, and student support services are easily available and relevant. The degree and student
41 guidance provide a strong basis for entering working life. The student must not suffer if their studies are delayed
42 due to overlap, poorly estimated course workload, poor administration, weak instruction or poor communication
43 by the university or third parties. Paying students must also be able to do their thesis outside the university and
44 engage in multidisciplinary studies.

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46 **5. Student equality must not be compromised.**

47 The system must be based on an equal scientific community where investments must be made in the education of
48 all students irrespective of their financial means. The quality of study programmes and services, such as study
49 counseling, must not depend on whether students are paying tuition fees or not. Student services and teaching
50 must be developed broadly throughout the university and for all students.

51 The implementation of tuition fees must not affect student selection or approval of study attainments, and those
52 liable to tuition fees must not be treated according to different criteria. Student selection and approval of study
53 attainments are based on openly defined academic merits, and fees cannot be used to compensate for a lack of
54 merit. The academic and language skills of students selected for Aalto University must be sufficiently high to make
55 studying relevant and meaningful for everyone

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57 **6. The grant system must not undermine the university's basic funding. The grant system**
58 **must be transparent and predictable.**

59 Funding of the universities should be independent of the tuition fees they collect. The grant system must be
60 implemented primarily in the form of fee waivers granted by the university. Any profits received from tuition fees
61 must be spent on the development of teaching and student services and on waivers.

62 The waiver system must be based on predefined standards, and applicants must be made aware of the criteria for
63 receiving waivers and grading. Predictability of tuition fees and the waiver system is important, and the fee must
64 not be raised or the waiver reduced from the level given to the student when the application was accepted.

65 Using development cooperation funds to cover tuition fees set by the universities themselves or to fund brain
66 drain is not acceptable. Tuition fees must not lead to development cooperation funds being spent on the funding
67 of the higher education system.

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69 **7. As a representative of student interests, AYY participates in the creation and development**
70 **of the tuition fee and grant system at Aalto University and on national level.**

71 AYY actively monitors the work on quality and the development of internationalisation at the university as well as
72 the effects of tuition fees on them. The data produced will be used to support advocacy work both within the
73 university and on national level. In issues related to tuition fees, AYY acts as a representative of student interests
74 within Aalto University and relative to interest groups, and as an active opinion leader in national-level discussion
75 and political decision-making.

76 AYY seeks both independently and through Aalto University to promote the integration of international students
77 into the university community and society and to make authority processes smoother.

78 AYY acts as an advocate of the interests of individual students in disputes related to tuition fees and promotes
79 the creation of an independent and transparent system for the resolution of disputes and the realization of a
80 student's due process.