

No Tuition Fees in Scotland

✘ Scottish students studying north of the border will not pay tuition fees no matter what happens elsewhere in the UK, Education Secretary Michael Russell vowed today.

Mr Russell made the promise before attending a joint NUS Scotland and University and College Union (UCU) Scotland rally outside the Scottish Parliament in protest at the Westminster Government's decision to treble tuition fees for those studying in England.

It follows the announcement that a Scottish Government Green Paper on the future of higher education funding will be published next Thursday (December 16).

In recent months, MSPs have twice voted in support of the Scottish Government's opposition to tuition fees and against the need for an independent review.

At the rally Mr Russell said:-“The long term challenges and pressures on university funding are clear, made all the worse by the £1.3 billion cuts to the Scottish budget.

“The changes likely to be agreed at Westminster today will shift the primary burden for higher education from the state to the student.

“We have spent the best part of a year at the centre of a debate we initiated aimed at finding a uniquely Scottish solution to how higher education will be paid for in the future. Throughout we have made it clear we are willing to consider all sensible ideas, no matter how radical or innovative, except for one – tuition fees.

“When we publish the Green Paper next week it will include a range of options but they will all be guided by one defining principle – the state will remain the primary provider of

education in Scotland.”