

Edinburgh 13.2°C

[Change location](#)



heraldscotland
The Herald | **sundayherald**

hs

News

Politics

Sport

Business

Comment

Arts & Ents

Life & Style

Goir

[Referendum News](#) [Viewpoint](#) [Factfile](#) [Other Political News](#)

[Book](#)

TEXT SIZE



SHARE



Tweet

1

University experts: Scotland could not charge rUK students tuition fees if it becomes independent

Tuesday 24 June 2014

Scotland could not charge students from the remainder of the UK (rUK) tuition fees if it becomes independent and stays in the European Union (EU), according to university experts.





Scotland currently gives fee-free education to Scots but charges students from England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

However, Edinburgh University researchers investigating attitudes to tuition fee policies found that "respondents believed that this arrangement was unlikely to continue if Scotland became an EU member state following a vote for independence".

They interviewed 50 higher education policymakers and other stakeholders in Scotland and the rest of the UK and 148 young people aged 14 to 19 in schools in Scotland and the north of England. Experts also analysed data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency.

"If the UK Government was to reconsider its policy on charging tuition fees, of course the Scottish Government would reconsider in light of any changes."

Scottish Conservative education spokeswoman Mary Scanlon said: "This is yet another example of experts lining up to dismiss more claims from the SNP's white paper.

"We've always known that European law could not be clearer on this issue.

"An independent Scotland would not be able to discriminate between different national groups and that has been confirmed in this in-depth study.

"It also seems Mike Russell's warning about a flood of students from the rest of the UK fleeing here to avoid paying student fees is completely wide of the mark."

Liberal Democrat education spokesman Liam McArthur said: "There are currently over 4,800 undergraduate students from the rest of the UK paying fees to study in Scotland.

"Even if there was not a significant increase in students from the rest of the UK in the event of a vote for independence, there would still be a significant funding gap to fill.

"You don't need a degree in maths to see that these sums just don't add up."