

# Financing Higher Education

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This book tells the story of the UK higher education debate, illustrating a head-on collision between the economic imperatives of student loans with regulated market forces and the political imperative of 'free' higher education. It also tells the story of the partnership of an economist and a political professional. The first part of the book contains selected writing from the late 1980s about two key elements in the puzzle: the proper design of student loans (writing which was picked up and promptly implemented in other countries), and the role of regulated market forces, an area which remains a political minefield in most countries. The book traces those twin elements through the 1990s and into the 2000s, culminating in important - and perhaps path-breaking - legislation in 2004. It offers lessons both about policy design and about the politics of reform.

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