



Date: Monday 6th February 2023

Timing: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Topics: Mental health, universities, students, safety, welfare, legislation, campaign, petition, suicide, Government

From now until 19th March 2023, #ForThe100 is calling for people of the UK to sign a petition to Parliament and the Government requesting statutory legislation to make universities accountable for how they treat their students.

#ForThe100 is a movement launched in support of families of students who died by suicide at university, combatting the lack of any statutory obligation for higher education providers to care about their students.

It is estimated that around 100 university students are lost to suicide every year across the UK. This campaign believes the focus should be shifted away from student-blaming, and towards university management. Safer systems and practices are needed, supported by a statutory requirement to exercise reasonable care and skill when teaching students and providing support services.



Video warning: sensitive content <https://youtu.be/3txGE3R8OZQ>

One parent, whose son tragically took his own life at university writes:

“No general statutory duty of care exists in Higher Education. Yet, a duty of care is owed to students, and the Government should legislate for this. HE providers should know what their duty is. Students must know what they can expect. Parents expect their children to be safe at university.”

Upon receiving over 10,000 signatures, HM Government responded:



“Higher Education providers do have a general duty of care to deliver educational and pastoral services to the standard of an ordinarily competent institution and, in carrying out these services, they are expected to act reasonably to protect the health, safety and welfare of their students. This can be summed up as providers owing a duty of care to not cause harm to their students through the university’s own actions.”

#ForThe100, in reply, say that “Making bland statements about unwritten law helps nobody”. It only serves to perpetuate the myth. Student rights should be determined by Parliament, not left hanging on a ‘wing and a prayer’.

#ForThe100 also believe that this dodges the question. The duty of care being called for is similar to that prevailing under employment law; that universities should have a statutory duty of care to protect their students from reasonably foreseeable harm, caused either by direct injury, or by failing to act. In work, or in education, 18-21 year olds are vulnerable enough to warrant this duty, and since providers are happy to take their fees, they should also take on this duty of care.

This is not just about suicide prevention; everybody will benefit from improved decision-making within the sector.

This campaign needs 100,000 signatures by 19th March 2023 for the petition to be considered for debate in Parliament. To find out more about the campaign and to sign the petition, visit: <https://www.forthethe100.org.uk/>

[ENDS]

Notes to editors:

- #ForThe100 would welcome the opportunity to discuss the campaign in more detail.
- For media enquiries please email Jacob Nomafo in our communications team at media@forthethe100.org.uk
- For legal enquiries please email Georgina Calvert-Lee georgina@bellevuelaw.co.uk or phone (0)20 3432 2110
- #ForThe100 is in partnership with [The LEARN Network](#)
- For further information about the campaign, please visit <https://www.forthethe100.org.uk/> or follow us on social media:

[Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [TikTok](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

