



**FSU**  
FREE SPEECH UNION

THE FREE SPEECH UNION  
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Rt Hon Nadhim Zahawi MP  
Secretary of State for Education  
Department for Education  
20 Great Smith St  
London  
SW1P 3BT

20<sup>th</sup> June 2022

**By email only**

Dear Secretary of State,

**Subject: Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill**

I am writing to convey my appreciation to you and the Minister for Universities, the Rt Hon Michelle Donelan MP, for introducing two vital amendments we campaigned for to the Higher Education Bill – namely, making sure academics are entitled to the more robust protections in the Bill for academic free speech if they're speaking outside their "field of expertise", and making sure security costs cannot be cited to achieve "no-platforming by the back door".

I was also pleased to see Ms Donelan confirm in the House that temporary and visiting academic staff will be shielded by the Bill's additional protections, another thing we've been campaigning for.

As you know, the Free Speech Union wholeheartedly supports this vital piece of legislation. The attacks on free speech at universities are profoundly at odds with the British values of tolerance, fairness, open-mindedness, and intellectual freedom.

Following the unacceptable intimidation you experienced at Warwick University, you said the chilling "crushing of free speech needs to be countered". We wholeheartedly agree. While we may disagree on certain points – we are a non-partisan organisation – we are united in our common belief that freedom of expression must be protected and promoted at all costs. We will continue to work alongside you and your ministers to achieve exactly that. Freedom of speech is the foundational value on which all our other freedoms depend.

Yours sincerely,

Toby Young  
General Secretary  
The Free Speech Union  
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Cc: The Rt Hon Michelle Donelan