

IFUT accuses Minister Quinn of ‘reckless endangerment’ of third-level education

The Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT) has said the Minister for Education, Ruairi Quinn, is pursuing a policy of ‘reckless endangerment of third-level education’ in his announcements in the Budget.

Commenting on the details, IFUT General Secretary, Mike Jennings said that the Minister “has reneged on a commitment to restore €25m in cuts imposed as a temporary measure for the current year.

“His comment that he is ‘satisfied’ that universities have ‘significant amounts of cash at their disposal’ and that he expects colleges to ‘deliver the same level of services by more prudent management’ flies in the face of the facts.

“Our universities are bursting at the seams, with more students than ever being taught by fewer staff, and with fewer resources.

“The Minister is continuing his assault on higher education which has seen continuing and persistent relative declines in funding and staffing under his stewardship.

“At first and second level increased teacher numbers and guarantees on the pupil teacher ratio are very welcome. Why is the Minister further slashing support for higher-level in a manner that will lead to even worse pressures and difficulties for lecturers in maintaining academic standards and will impact very negatively on students’ studies.

“Is the Minister attempting to find which straw will finally break the camel’s back?” Mike Jennings said.

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