

# JOIN SOCIALIST STUDENTS

No to cuts, fees and privatisation  
Reinstate EMA

## WALK-OUT MARCH 14 defend education

Austerity: cuts, privatisation and pain – that is the ConDem’s plan for our education. Young people have already been made all too aware that we have a government for the 1%. The tuition fee hike and EMA cut provoked mass outrage - anger brought spectacularly to the streets in 2010’s enormous student movement. Now we have another 18% cut to university funding in England, as well as a whole swathe of plans for privatisation and marketisation set to take effect. The question facing our movement today is how we stop these attacks.

### **White Paper Dropped: Government in retreat?**

The government’s white paper for higher education was designed to dismantle university education as we know it. They want to allow unrestricted expansion of private universities, while maintaining a cap on places for those still publicly owned. They want private companies taking over services on our campuses and running our universities on the cheap. All this comes along side the tripling of the fee cap and swingeing cuts. The government policies will see students paying more - if they can afford to get to university at all - and getting a worse education despite this.

Clearly under pressure from student protests and mass strikes by workers, the government has now dropped its white paper. But many of the attacks contained within it can be carried out without the need for any legislation. So we’re not off the hook! We have to fight to defend our education.

### **NUS calls walk-out - build for mass action**

The National Union of Students (NUS) is organising a week of action from 12th- 16th March and a national student walk-out on March 14th. Now we need to make sure that this action is as wide spread as possible with students walking out from schools, colleges and universities across Britain. NUS must place as central to this walk-out the demands of the student movement thus far: for free education and the immediate reinstatement of EMA. Socialist Students is organising on campuses across the country

to put pressure on NUS to make good on its promises and organise a fight back that can win. But even if NUS fails to do this, it will still be necessary for students to be taking action, with or without NUS support. Like in the student movement of 2010, we will fight to defend our futures even if our official ‘leaders’ refuse to support us.

On March 28 another round of strike action by public sector workers defending their pensions is likely. On this day NUS should mobilise mass student solidarity on the picket lines and at rallies, calling on all students to take part in the strike. While very important, student action alone will not be enough to stop the higher education slaughter. So unity with workers, particularly when they strike, is key.

### **Fight for the socialist alternative**

One of the reasons for the NUS leadership having been so reluctant to call action is because they are tied to the politics of the Labour Party. It’s the bankers, big business and the rich whose system is now in crisis. The Tories, Lib-Dems and even Labour all act on their behalf! In fact the Labour Party, the so called ‘opposition’, has spent the first month of 2012 aligning itself with the Con-Dems, promising more of the same pain if they were elected.

In Socialist Students we reject all of the capitalist parties. They tell us that ‘there is no alternative’ to our suffering. But we say they’re wrong. There is an alternative. Our alternative is a society for the 99%. Our alternative is that we take the enormous wealth and power, currently concentrated in the hands of the 1%, and use it to fund free, high quality education, to create jobs and provide services and to build houses for the masses. Our alternative is a society where the big corporations that dominate our economy are nationalised, with workers, consumers and wider society democratically controlling production and distribution of goods and services – not the blind market. Our alternative is a democratic socialist society, the only alternative that can give young people the future we deserve.

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