

MOTION: FIGHT FOR EDUCATION

Education is under attack on an unprecedented scale.

The Browne Review has recommended removing the cap on University tuition fees, tightening up the student loans system and creating a two-tier system. University funding is to be cut by 40% with no more funding for teaching in the arts and humanities. Business Secretary Vince Cable expects universities to collapse.

College funding will be cut by 25%. The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) that acts as a lifeline for many students will be scrapped, along with the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision vital to so many communities and FE lecturers face a pay freeze and attacks on their pensions.

These attacks would mean the end of post-16 education as a public service.

This is part of an agenda to make ordinary people pay for the deficit incurred bailing out the banks. Resistance to austerity is taking off across Europe with general strikes in Greece, France, Spain and other countries. In Britain we have won victories against education cuts at KCL, UCL, Tower Hamlets College and the universities of Leeds and Sussex, through campaigns of protests, industrial action and student occupations.

Our task is to build this resistance. From this conference we resolve the following:

- We will take every opportunity to oppose the government's austerity agenda and challenge its vision of an education system dominated by the market. We will produce a **manifesto** on how our education should be funded and what it should look like.
- We will push for the largest possible turnout from our student unions and trade union branches for the **national demonstration on November 10th**.
- We will support, build and encourage action against education cuts through **protests, occupations and industrial action**. We will build solidarity with these struggles through inviting strikers, occupiers and others to speak at our meetings; organising petitions, collections and solidarity demonstrations and occupations.
- We will coordinate our resistance at a national level. We will produce and distribute without delay a **national bulletin** carrying reports and announcements from this conference and developing local struggles. We will elect a **steering committee** of 10 workers and trade unionists and 14 student activists which will meet regularly to coordinate the campaigns of the Education Activist Network.
- We will build a **day of action on Wednesday 24th November** – the day the Commons will vote to raise tuition fees, as well as the general strike in Portugal. Where possible this should include mass walkouts from universities and colleges into demonstrations and protests.
- We recognise the attacks on education as part of a broader assault on jobs and services. We recognise the need for solidarity with other sectors. We will mobilise for the TUC national demonstration in Spring 2011, support industrial action against cuts and austerity and add our voices to the **call for a general strike**.
- We will hold Education Activist Network **meetings this term**, and hold three **regional conferences** (South, North and Scotland) in February 2011 to launch the manifesto and organise further resistance in the Spring term.