

# **STUDENT FIGHTBACK!**

## **BUILD ON MANCHESTER RENT STRIKE AND A-LEVELS VICTORIES**

**NATIONAL MOVEMENT NEEDED TO FIGHT FOR FREE AND QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL**

### **SOCIALIST STUDENTS SAYS;**

- Scrap tuition fees and end the market model – government investment for free, high quality education for all
- No cuts on campus – end low pay and privatisation. For a united student and staff struggle for the resources we all need
- Take the wealth off the 1%, fight for socialism

**COME TO SOCIALIST STUDENTS CONFERENCE  
SUNDAY 28 FEBRUARY**

Visit [socialiststudents.org.uk](http://socialiststudents.org.uk) or text 07749 379 010 with your name & college/university for more info

**Young  
Socialists**

[youngsocialists.org.uk](http://youngsocialists.org.uk)



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**S**tudents have been lied to. We were told to move onto university campuses and into halls of residence on the promise of real life teaching and real life freshers and social events. Vice chancellors guaranteed students over the summer that very little would be different for us this year.

But within a matter of days of term starting, it became clear that none of this was true. Students were lured to the campuses and then locked down, just so university management could get our fees and rent. We've suffered the consequences of these lies as we've been left by management to virtually fend for ourselves, with the mental health of many suffering.

We're fighting back however. At Manchester, hundreds of students mobilised in protests to remove two metre high fences which were set up by management around Fallowfields student halls to pen students in.

On a number of campuses, students have been organising campaigns to protest against the conditions we've been forced to endure this term, including demanding fee refunds.

The pay-out worth £12 million won by students at Manchester University for 30% rent reductions next term following a rent strike and occupation shows that when students organise, we can win. Imagine if the Manchester students were linked up with students on every campus across the country to organise coordinated actions. On that basis we would have the potential to win not only rent reductions but fee refunds – a step on the road to ending student fees.

### **Build on the rent strikes**

Rent strikes, alongside mass protests, occupations and walkouts, are an important tool in the arsenal students have at our disposal to fight for an education system run in our interests. Socialist Students supports rent strikes and calls for them to be democratically organised, with elected rent strike committees set up to spread the campaigns and democratically

discuss the tactics and programme of the movement.

The victory at Manchester University is just the start however. Following this victory, students at Manchester and across the country will be faced with more of the same problems next term.

We need to build a national student movement to extend this victory onto every campus – for affordable rents, but for free education as well. That's what Socialist Students is fighting to achieve.

To win all of this will mean taking decision-making on campuses out of the hands of the vice chancellors and management who have made one disastrous decision after another for students and staff alike. Their priority is carrying through the Tories' agenda of cuts, privatisation and attacks on our education, not standing up for what we need.

That's why Socialist Students is campaigning for united student and staff struggle, including the establishment of campus councils of war made up of campus trade unions, workers and students.

By bringing together students, staff, and campus unions, we could discuss what resources we need to build an education system run in our interests, how best to fight the Tories for those resources and make the decisions about the day to day running of the universities.

Students haven't been the only ones to suffer. Campus staff have been at the sharp end of the bosses' attacks, which include vicious cuts to jobs, wages and conditions, often through outsourcing.

In the last 3 years, university staff have turned towards their trade unions, such as the UCU, which has taken multiple rounds of industrial action to battle against those attacks. On a number of campuses, the UCU is balloting yet again for industrial action against the threat of even more job cuts.

Thanks to the broken tuition fee funding model, our universities are

facing a funding crisis. Management will seek to solve this crisis by carrying through further attacks to the jobs of staff and our quality of education.

This illustrates why democratic staff and student control of our universities would need to be accompanied by a complete break with the market model of university education. This means scrapping tuition fees, reversing the underfunding and privatisation of our campuses, and replacing fees with full government funding for free and high quality education for all. Socialist Students stands for the building of a mass student movement which can link struggles on campus locally into a national movement to fight for free education.

### **Capitalism to blame – fight for socialism**

While the billionaires have increased their wealth over the course of the pandemic, capitalism is unable to provide young and working class people with the basics – a free education, decent jobs, and a future.

Capitalism is a system in crisis. Winning free education will take building a democratic and united student and workers' movement to challenge capitalism itself. That's why we fight for a socialist alternative to capitalism – to take the vast wealth and resources in society into democratic public ownership, to meet the social needs and wants of the majority in society.

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