



UNISON slams ConDem coalition's savage FE cuts

The ConDem coalition government has announced savage cuts to further education in England. The government is going to slash the FE adult budget in England by 25% between 2011/12–2015 (£1.1 billion). This budget covers both the money colleges get from government for learners and the running costs of the national FE funding bodies.

The coalition is also planning to cut the amount of money that colleges get for each young learner aged 16 to 19.

The planned ConDem cuts

What they have announced so far:

- Education Maintenance Allowance for poorer students – **axed**
- free tuition for learners age 24 and over taking first level 2 qualification (equivalent to five GCSEs grade A–C) – **axed**
- Train to Gain, the workplace training programme – **axed**
- fees for learners age 24 and over – **hiked**
- fee remission for learners age 24 and over on some state benefits – **axed**

These cuts will be introduced at different points over the next three years. The ConDems have also announced deep cuts to the devolved budgets for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. This will hit colleges in the devolved nations hard.

Devastating impact

The coalition cuts will have a devastating impact on our colleges and our communities. Some colleges could be forced to merge or close.

We will not stand by while this government tries to destroy our colleges and our vital public services. UNISON is leading a campaign to mobilise communities against the cuts. And we need your help.

What you can do

Find out how you can get involved in our campaign against the cuts by visiting unison.org.uk/spendingreview

UNISON's message for college principals

Colleges will not find out until next year exactly how big a funding cut they will be taking. So the full picture is not yet clear and colleges should not be rushing into decisions. We want to work with colleges through these difficult times to protect jobs and courses. We must work together to find alternatives to damaging cuts in the interests of learners.

NG COLLEGES

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---stop the cuts special---stop the cuts special---stop the cuts

Save the Education Maintenance Allowance



The ConDem government has announced plans to axe the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) for college students in England.

The EMA is a means-tested allowance of between £10 and £30, paid to 16 to 19-year-olds who stay on in education.

EMA was introduced to help with

the cost of books, travel, equipment or anything useful to continue learning. The payments are made with the condition that students attend classes regularly.

There are over 600,000 recipients of EMA in England alone who will see this allowance withdrawn and 80% of those will be the poorest

teenagers in our country from families with household income below £20,810.

The EMA is widely credited with helping to create a 30% increase in the number of young people going onto to college in the last seven years.

Axing it will have a devastating impact on learners and colleges. The National Union of Students (NUS) claims that 60% of students currently receiving EMA will be unable to continue in education without it.

What you can do

Sign the UNISON, UCU and NUS petition at unison.org.uk/furthereducation and join the growing campaign against the axing of the EMA, a campaign backed by unions, students, politicians and college principals.

Right to learn under threat

The government wants to axe the entitlement to free tuition for learners age 24 and over studying for their first full level 2 qualification (equivalent to five GCSEs grades A–C).

From 2012/13 these learners will have to pay 50% of the cost of their fees. Under the last government all learners over age 19 were entitled to free tuition for their first full level 2 qualification.

UNISON believes the axing of free tuition will deny many adult learners the right to a second shot at education. It will also be disastrous for our economy. If we fail to invest in workers' skills we will not be able to compete in a globalised economy. Our competitors understand this and are maintaining investment in

education. The government is also set to withdraw state funding for learners over the age 24 studying for a level 3 qualification (A Levels and equivalent vocational qualifications). Learners over the age of 24 will have to pay the full cost of courses with no government funding from 2013/14. They will be offered instead the option of taking out a loan. In the current economic climate with rising prices and falling wages many will be reluctant to take on this debt.

We can stop these cuts

We work in FE because we see colleges as a place where people can get a second chance at education. That second chance is now under threat and we must campaign

to defend it. It is not a foregone conclusion that these cuts will happen. The Labour government protected the rights for adult learners in legislation. The ConDem coalition will have to amend this legislation to get their cuts through.

That's where you come in

Tell your MP what you think of these cuts. UNISON is already talking to MPs and in the coming weeks we will be launching a specific campaign to defend the right to learn.

What you can do

Sign up to our email bulletins to get involved in the campaign unison.org.uk/news/maillinglist.asp

Families bear deficit burden

Low-paid working families will be hit hardest in cash terms by the ConDem coalition cuts according to a new UNISON report.

The cuts to public spending over the four years from April 2011 are set to be the deepest since the Second World War, our analysis shows.

Examining the impact of the spending review on different types of family, the report finds that lone parents will be hit hardest by the cuts, losing the equivalent of 18.4% of their income in service cuts (£3,121 a year).

The report also shows:

- a family with two school-age children on modest earnings will suffer service cuts equivalent to 13.2% of their income, or £2,631 a year
- a working lone parent with two children will suffer service cuts equivalent to 15.7% of their income, or £3,132 a year
- a pensioner couple will suffer service cuts equivalent to 16.2% of their income, or £2,226 a year.

The analysis also confirms that, contrary to the chancellor's claim that the cuts are fair, the higher up the income scale people are, the less they will lose from the cuts. UNISON research also shows that that the cuts will hit women and disabled people very hard.

“We are all in this together” – don’t believe them

The government’s claim that we are “all in this together” is nonsense. It’s those with the least, the most vulnerable in our society who are being targeted for the biggest cuts. We need to get this message out to our friends, family and colleagues to increase pressure on the politicians and speak out against the cuts.

What you can do

Tell everyone you know: “you didn’t create this deficit so why should you pay for the bankers’ greed and irresponsibility with your jobs and your local services”.

Get the full report from unison.org.uk/spendingreview



Train to Gain to be abolished

The ConDem coalition government is to abolish the workplace training programme, Train to Gain.

Train to Gain, introduced by the Labour government, provides products and services to help businesses train their staff in the new skills vital to our economic future. This programme was a key source of funding for many colleges.

Earlier this year the number of people gaining a qualification through the Train to Gain programme reached one million. The coalition plans to introduce a severely limited programme of support targeted at just small and medium-sized businesses that employ less than 250 staff. When businesses are cutting back on training UNISON believes it makes no sense for government to be cutting investment in workplace skills. It is short-sighted and will damage the economy and colleges.

Mobilising a Million Voices for education

Thousands took to the streets on 10 November to voice their opposition to the proposed cuts in education. UNISON members joined teaching colleagues and students from across higher and further education.

“This is just the start,” UNISON head of higher education Jon Richards said. “We intend to mobilise a mass campaign in every community against the increase in fees, the abolition of the Education Maintenance Allowance and the near privatisation of our universities and colleges.” “It was great so many UNISON members marched alongside students in opposition to the cuts,” he added. “More than 50,000 took to the streets of London: the message has gone out to the coalition, the campaign is on.”



“The deep cuts to further and higher education will have a devastating impact on colleges and communities and are only the tip of the iceberg. Our response must be to mobilise a mass campaign of peaceful protest to defend education.” UNISON is working on plans for the next stage of our campaign with colleagues in UCU and the National Union of Students.

What you can do

Sign up to UNISON's Million Voices campaign to get active against the cuts
unison.org.uk/million
Check out the UNISON FE web pages for more information
unison.org.uk/education/further

Thousands lobby parliament against cuts

Thousands of UNISON members took the campaign against the cuts to parliament on the eve of the comprehensive spending review. They joined mass crowds at a colourful rally and lobby organised by the TUC against public service cuts.

“We are here to stand up for our communities, for the elderly, for the vulnerable as well as for our members and their jobs and pensions,” UNISON general secretary Dave Prentis told the rally at Westminster Central Hall on 21 October. He said that in UNISON one million women are at the heart of our public services and the backbone of our community. They are under attack, not because of the economy but because of an ideology that sees public services as a problem.

He added “I am here to say to the spivs and the speculators, the bankers and the businessmen –



you made this mess, you clear it up. We will not let the government get away with taking a chainsaw to our services.

“We will speak up. We will form alliances. We will rise to the challenge. We will march in our thousands and we will vote in our millions. Strong, united, fierce in our defence of public services and those who provide them.”

Thousands of trade unionists and people who need public services lobbied MPs for an alternative to drastic cuts – although all Conservative MPs cancelled their appointments with lobbyists after Prime Minister David Cameron summoned them to a meeting instead. Other people emailed their MPs and more than half of MPs have already been emailed.

What you can do

Email your MP today and tell them what you think of the cuts to public services <http://action.unison.org.uk/page/speakout/cuts>



The alternative to brutal cuts

The ConDem government wants people to believe that public service workers and not the ConDems' mates the bankers and speculators, caused the financial crisis. They want us to believe there is no alternative to brutal cuts.

They are wrong on both counts.

Fact: You can cut the deficit without slashing public services and

damaging the economy.

Fact: The recession and deficit weren't caused by excessive spending on schools, colleges and hospitals.

They were a consequence of reckless borrowing and lending in the private sector, fuelled by the banks.

Fact: Even with the welcome increase in spending on public

services in recent years, the UK still devotes a smaller proportion of its national income to public services and social security than most other developed countries.

Rather than closing courses, libraries, care homes and slashing jobs the government should:

Act: Collect unpaid taxes – government's own figures estimate that there is £70 billion of unpaid tax.

Act: Introduce a "Robin Hood" tax on major financial transactions – £30bn could be raised every year by introducing a major financial transactions tax on UK financial institutions.

Act: Cancel Trident – £76bn could be saved over 40 years by cancelling the nuclear missile programme, Trident.

What you can do

Download our 'alternative budget' for the full facts <http://www.unison.org.uk/acrobat/18887.pdf>

Opposing the cuts

5 things you can do today

Help us build public support for an alternative to the cuts.

This government will only alter its course if the public says "no". The government and their friends in the media want us to feel powerless. But we are not. Nothing is inevitable. We can stop these cuts.

UNISON has more than 1.3 million members. Every one of us is part of our local communities providing vital services that people rely on – but using those services too. Our communities have the power to fight these cuts. Sometimes a campaign starts with small steps that we can all take – today.

1. **Tell your family, friends and work colleagues** about UNISON's 'alternative budget'. Explain that cuts to services will affect them. Download a copy: <http://www.unison.org.uk/acrobat/18887.pdf>
2. **Sign up to our million voices campaign** and get regular updates on how we are opposing the cuts and how your voice can be heard: unison.org.uk/million
3. **Keep up-to-date** – sign up for the UNISON email campaign updates at <http://www.unison.org.uk/news/maillinglist.asp>
4. **Ask your MP to speak out against cuts** – you can email them from the UNISON website <http://action.unison.org.uk/page/speakout/cuts>
5. **Recruit a colleague** – the more people in the union the better chance we have of defending jobs and courses. They can join online at: unison.org.uk/join

Paul O'Grady savages ConDem cuts

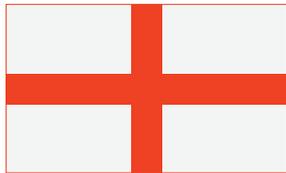
TV star, Paul O'Grady, ridiculed the ConDem's savage cuts on live TV in a breathtaking attack recently.

He lambasted Tory MPs who cheered the chancellor's statement to the House of Commons on spending cuts. Cuts that will see one million combined public and private sector jobs lost. Cuts that will see vital public services such as day care centres for the elderly, libraries and colleges shut.

Catch Paul on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JE88U5CocpM>

It's well worth a watch – spread the word and send the link to everyone you know (contains swearing).

English FE members accept pay offer



Members in English further education colleges have narrowly accepted the employers' pay offer.

A UNISON consultation saw members vote by 53% to 47% to accept the Association of Colleges' (AoC) final pay recommendation offer of 0.2% or £50 whichever is the greater.

"It is clear that the 0.2% pay offer is both an unfair and unreasonable response by employers to the commitment and dedication of further education staff," commented national officer Chris Fabby.

For employees on the minimum FE rate of pay, the AoC offer means a pay award of less than 3p an hour.

UNISON members in colleges are working flat out to help their communities recover from the recession. Many are taking on additional unpaid responsibilities as a result of job cuts in their own colleges. Low-paid members are struggling to cope with rising prices.

"It is clear, however, that UNISON members dedicated to their jobs, to supporting their students, are reluctant to take action that could cause disruption to their students," Chris Fabby added: "The very narrow acceptance of this pay offer should however be seen by government and employers as a warning. "Our members are reasonable people but their patience is wearing very thin."

All six recognised unions in English further education have now completed their consultations on the AoC final offer. UNISON, ATL, GMB and ACM members have accepted. UCU and Unite members have rejected the offer.

The unions are now seeking a meeting with the AoC to discuss a way forward.

Pay victory in Wales



UNISON members and officers in Wales have secured a 2.3% pay increase for college staff in 2010/11. This key victory follows months of campaigning and negotiating.

FE has its own separate pay negotiation machinery in Wales where talks take place between the unions and the employers body Fforwm.

The 2.3% increase in Wales is in stark contrast to the measly pay award put forward for college staff in England by the Association of Colleges (AoC).

We have put the AoC on alert in England that we expect catch up.

The cuts start to bite in Scotland



The future funding of further education in Scotland is not clear at the time of going to press. However, already colleges in Scotland are wielding the cuts axe in preparation for funding cuts. UNISON is awaiting news of the Scottish government budget plans. It is clear that there will be a funding cut for FE. There may also be a change in the way that students are funded within FE. On the 24 November UNISON was due to meet Michael Russell, cabinet secretary for education and lifelong learning in the Scottish government. UNISON will be strongly arguing that further education in Scotland must be funded properly to make sure that Scotland has an educated and skilled workforce.

6th form colleges pay update

The employers side have made their first and final offer of:

- an increase of 0.75% on all salary points for the year 2010/11.
- an increase in London weighting and fringe area allowances in line with the pay award, plus additional increases to allow for harmonisation of the allowances with that paid to teaching staff over a phased period.

In light of other recent public sector pay settlements, funding difficulties within many colleges and the continued uncertainty about future funding UNISON negotiators are recommending that members accept the offer.

Branches and college reps are asked to consult members in sixth form colleges by Friday 10 December 2010. For more details go to unison.org.uk/education/sixthform/index.asp

FE updates delivered to you

Sign up to the UNISON FE campaign email updates

unison.org.uk/news/maillinglist.asp

Join us on Facebook

facebook.com/home.php#!/group.php?gid=142274199135739

Dates for your diary

26 March 2011

Demonstrate against the cuts in London

Speak to your branch about mobilising for this march. Details will be posted on unison.org.uk

8/9 April 2011

UNISON FE and sixth form colleges seminar

Details on

unison.org.uk/education/further



**YOU LOOK AFTER
OUR SOCIETY**

WE'LL LOOK AFTER YOU

With politicians drastically cutting public spending, essential public service jobs are seriously under threat.

UNISON looks after more than 1.3 million people working in public services like police community support officers, nurses and social workers, as well as hundreds of other vital roles.

Our professional team of local advisors, legal experts and negotiators will provide you with help at work when you need it most.

Now is the time to protect yourself.

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voices
for
public
services

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the public service union

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UNISON EDUCATION, FREEPOST WC5652, LONDON WC1H 9BR

Please tick or fill in the boxes below

1. YOUR PERSONAL DETAILS

Mrs Ms Miss Mr Other

First name Other initials(s)

Surname/Family name Date of birth / /

Home address

Postcode

National insurance number (from your payslip)

How would you describe your ethnic origin?

Bangladeshi Asian Other Black UK
 Chinese Black Black Other
 Indian African White UK
 Pakistani Black Irish
 Asian UK Caribbean White Other

Please tick this box if you require materials in a different format (eg large print or Braille) — be sure to supply contact details below

Please give a telephone number/voice/text/email address for UNISON to contact you — indicate if work or home
 Contact tel/voice/text/email

2. YOUR EMPLOYMENT DETAILS

Employer's name

Your job title/occupation

Department/section

Workplace name and address

Postcode

Payroll number (from your payslip)

3. WHAT YOU WILL PAY — FROM 1 October 2003

Please tick the appropriate box for your earnings before deductions.

Weekly pay	Annual pay	YOUR SUBSCRIPTION—WHAT YOU PAY	per week	per month	Band
Up to £38.47	Up to £2,000	£0.30	£1.30	A	<input type="checkbox"/>
£38.48–£96.16	£2,001–£5,000	£0.81	£3.50	B	<input type="checkbox"/>
£96.17–£153.84	£5,001–£8,000	£1.22	£5.30	C	<input type="checkbox"/>
£153.85–£211.53	£8,001–£11,000	£1.52	£6.60	D	<input type="checkbox"/>
£211.54–£269.23	£11,001–£14,000	£1.81	£7.85	E	<input type="checkbox"/>
£269.24–£326.92	£14,001–£17,000	£2.24	£9.70	F	<input type="checkbox"/>
£326.93–£384.61	£17,001–£20,000	£2.65	£11.50	G	<input type="checkbox"/>
£384.62–£480.76	£20,001–£25,000	£3.23	£14.00	H	<input type="checkbox"/>
£480.77–£576.92	£25,001–£30,000	£3.98	£17.25	I	<input type="checkbox"/>
£576.93–£673.08	£30,001–£35,000	£4.68	£20.30	J	<input type="checkbox"/>
£673.08+	over £35,000	£5.19	£22.50	K	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please tick the appropriate box to indicate how often you are paid

Weekly
 Fortnightly
 Four Weekly
 Monthly

Please tick this box if you are a student member in full-time education (including student nurses or Modern Apprentices).
 Your subscription is £10 per year.

4. POLITICAL FUND

UNISON's Affiliated Political Fund (APF) is used to campaign for and promote UNISON policy and the need for quality public services within the Labour Party, locally and nationally, in Parliament and Europe. UNISON APF affiliates to the Labour Party.

UNISON's General Political Fund (GPF) is used to pay for campaigning at branch, regional and national levels of the union and for research and lobbying in Parliament and Europe. It is independent of support for any political party.

It is important that you indicate a choice of fund by ticking one of the boxes below.
 Your subscription shown above includes a political fund payment so you do not pay any more by being in one of the funds.

5. YOUR AUTHORISATION

- I wish to join UNISON and accept its rules and constitution.
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- I authorise deduction of the following Political Fund payment as part of my subscription: Tick one box only
 Affiliated Political Fund General Political Fund

Now please sign and date below

Signature

Date

OTHER WAYS TO PAY

direct debit

cheque

(please tick if appropriate)

If you have been a member of a trade union before, please state which one:

DATA PROTECTION

UNISON will process your membership information together with other information for administration, statistical analysis, conducting ballots and other statutory requirement purposes.

We may also send you newsletters, journals and surveys and let you know about educational and campaigning matters. We will disclose your information to our service providers and agents for these purposes.

If you do not want any mailings from UNISON besides those required by statute as shown in bold above, please tick this box.

We may share your information with organisations with whom we have a business relationship for your benefit. We, or they, may contact you by mail, telephone, SMS, fax or e-mail to let you know about goods, services or promotions which we think may be of interest to you.

If you do not wish to receive such information please tick this box.