



Defending our pensions to protect education

For every teacher, lecturer and leader, educating our students is the most important aspect of our working life.

And it's for this reason that the unions representing teachers, lecturers and leaders are united in protesting against the government's pension proposals to make us pay more, work longer and get less in retirement.

We know that these proposals will mean **we will no longer get the brightest and best graduates to come to work in our schools, colleges and universities** as they will find better rewarded jobs elsewhere. Graduates already face huge student debts, so won't be able to afford nearly 10% pension contributions.

It will be students who suffer from a lack of new talent.

We know also that these proposals will mean **teachers, lecturers, heads and managers will consider leaving their jobs** as they've already had their pensions' value cut due to a change in the pensions indexation, and there are further proposals to change the way that pensions are calculated, reducing pensions even more.

It will be the students who suffer from the loss of experienced staff.

We also know that increasing retirement age to 68 and even later means those who stay in the profession will be too physically and mentally exhausted to keep up with pupils young enough to be their grandchildren.

It will be the students who suffer.

We understand our campaign comes when everyone is taking a hit to their pockets. But school, college and university staff have already taken a share of cuts with a two-year pay freeze, redundancies and the same VAT and fuel increases as the rest of the population.

Our pensions are not gold-plated – the average is £10,000 – and the government's proposals could amount to a 30% cut over the course of retirement. It's a short-sighted plan as it will lead to the government having to pay out more in benefits to pensioners. It's a short-term plan to raise money to plug the gap left by the budget deficit as the pension scheme has been shown to be healthy.

School, college and university staff are increasingly frustrated that after months of talks with government ministers, a petition to Downing Street and sending thousands of letters and emails to MPs, the government is refusing to budge on its proposals to make us pay more, work longer and get less in retirement. We believe stronger protests are necessary.

The education of our students in the long-term is paramount. We ask for your support for our campaign over the coming months.

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