



Last summer the government increased registration fees for students by 69%, this amounted to nothing more than an **introduction of fees through the backdoor**. It now plans to either introduce fees or student loans by September. Either way, the government plans for free third-level education to be a thing of the past from next September. This will mean **thousands of students dropping out of college, poverty conditions for those remaining and thousands of young people being denied access to college**. We cannot lie down and accept this attack on education. We have to be willing and able to take **serious mass action against fees and demand free education for all**.

The CFE has been one of the most formidable opponents of fees and cutbacks in education since the summer. It has organized **numerous on-campus demonstrations in UCD making it a place of hostility to visiting government figures. The CFE has blockaded the Minister for Education in college buildings for hours; organized a successful occupations of the N11 motorway, the Departments of Finance, Education and Transport; carried out a successful sit- down protest outside Dail Eireann**. All this brought invaluable media and public attention to educational inequality and the danger of fees.

We believe education is a right and not a privilege. We believe in **free and equal access for all, regardless of socio-economic status, to primary, secondary and third level education**. We recognize that the present education system does not offer this and call on all students to secure your right to a free and accessible education of the highest standard. **We must shift focus away from responding to the government's agenda, and force them to respond to ours, an agenda where educational opportunity is not mitigated by your economical and social background**. Educational inequality is not something that magically appears in third level but is evident **throughout the education system**. The points system illustrates this. Where students with unequal resources are pitted against those who can afford private tuition and attend exam factories on Leeson Street. Students are forced into a rat race for a limited number of college places because the government are unwilling to adequately fund the colleges.



The Campaign for Free Education is an organization set up last summer by students in UCD to fight the reintroduction of fees by getting students involved in collective mass action against the government. It is now essential that students, both in secondary and third level form an network to mobilise opposition against this government. The years of complacency, respectability and negotiation in the student movement must end, and action must begin. **We need to show the government how serious we are on this issue, through a campaign to mobilise students and involve students in actions such as blockades, mass occupations, school and college strikes and more, which directly affect and upset the government.**

If you want to get involved or set up a group in your school or college **contact Caoimhe 0877564750 or James 0857198001 (antrophe@hotmail.com)**

<http://www.freeeducation.cjb.net>



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