

# Young people not in Higher Education

*Passed at June 2019 national meeting*

While by now around 50% of young people are university graduates and having a degree is more and more unlikely to be a signifier of social class, there are still differences when it comes to the experiences of young people with and without university education. People, especially young people without university degrees remain underrepresented in the organised left due to a number of reasons.

With the decline of unions over the past few decades, many young people do not have a direct experience of the organised left up until they enter higher education, which in turn shapes the demographic, as well as the politics and internal culture of these spaces. Many of these informal traditions especially create further barriers to entry for those who aren't/weren't students - such as meetings following the blueprint of university seminars and lectures as well as debating, which requires routine and confidence that is often built in higher education. Especially the debate format also relies on previous theoretical knowledge and reading which often, without access to a well-stocked library, would come at an extortionate cost.

While I believe we need to shift our focus on engagement from ways that implicitly or explicitly prioritises students, we should also not presume there are no overlaps in experience of these groups - many students are also workers in precarious employment, deal with much the same issues when it comes to housing, and young people of diverse backgrounds have been taking part in the Youth Strike for Climate.

I argue that we should be prioritising these areas of common ground when it comes to our work with youth movements, as well as to aim and make our political spaces more accessible.

Proposals:

- Prioritise and increase involvement and support for campaigns around precarious employment, the struggle for equal minimum wage and tenants' rights
- Continued support for youth strikers
- Create an accessible digital collection of useful reading on the website
- Encourage and support the political education of new members on branch level