Dear Rt Hon Rachael Maskell/ [insert name of MP in constituency where you are registered to vote],

 I am studying at York St John University at the present time, and I am writing to you about the future of my University. Staff have been informed by the University that a saving of £7.8 million needs to be made this year. The University are therefore seeking to make around 30 posts in teaching and administrative support redundant this Summer. This comes on top of NOT appointing 61 staff roles which were made vacant through people leaving the University over the past year. Other cost saving measures will make life harder for me and other students like me, such as the £700k cut to student housing subsidy that will come into effect in time for the next academic semester. There will also be a cut to library budget of £120,000 this will involve the Library opening hours being reduced. My overall concern is what will be left of my University experience, and how will students from poorer backgrounds be able to make it through the three years of their degrees with affordability of housing being made even harder to reach than it is now.

I am aware that Universities all around the country are trying to save money now that they may not be able to recruit so many international students, following the narrow minded hostile environment policies of a Conservative government determined to reduce the number of people coming into Britain from abroad, regardless of their skills, abilities or potential to contribute to the British economy. But I worry that York St John does not appear to be in as grave an economic position as other Universities. Indeed their forecast for international students, **even factoring in a 20% drop** in international recruitment remains at the same level by 2026/27 as the number they forecast for the current academic year (2023/24).

Meanwhile, subject areas that are not diminishing in student numbers are being lined up to lose staff. YSJ Lecturing staff suggest this will lead to some degree subjects no longer being viable to run. I don’t want my degree to become unviable, I don’t want to see my Lecturers exhausted by trying to cover colleagues the University realistically can’t do without who are being lined up for redundancy. What are my student fees paying for if I can’t expect the necessities like affordable accommodation and teaching delivered by specialists in their fields, as well as adequate library resources, and other enrichment activities such as trips that were all promised as part of the Higher Education experience that I expected. The cost of which experience, for the many who cannot afford to pay off fees straight away, will be paid back across the course of most if not all of our working lives!

Please intervene in this situation by doing two things. Firstly please challenge the next leader of the country in the House of Commons to acknowledge the funding model of HE in Britain is now broken. Marketisation has been tried, it has not worked. Let us now return to an improved model of funding which will ensure generations of people from all social classes can aspire to a University education.

Secondly as students of York St John, we ask you to contact the Vice Chancellor of York St John Professor Karen Bryan (k.bryan@yorksj.ac.uk). Can you express our concerns to her while the University managers still have the opportunity to reverse some of the most damaging proposals for cost saving? The consultation window with Trade Unions closes on June 21st. But apparently staff are being asked to decide if they want to opt for Voluntary redundancy by June 10th. Higher Education is now at breaking point. Please act on our behalf. We are the next generation of workers, and we wish to recoup the best of what the Higher Education sector has given us for the sake of our degrees and the degrees of those who come after us.

Yours Sincerely,

[your name]