

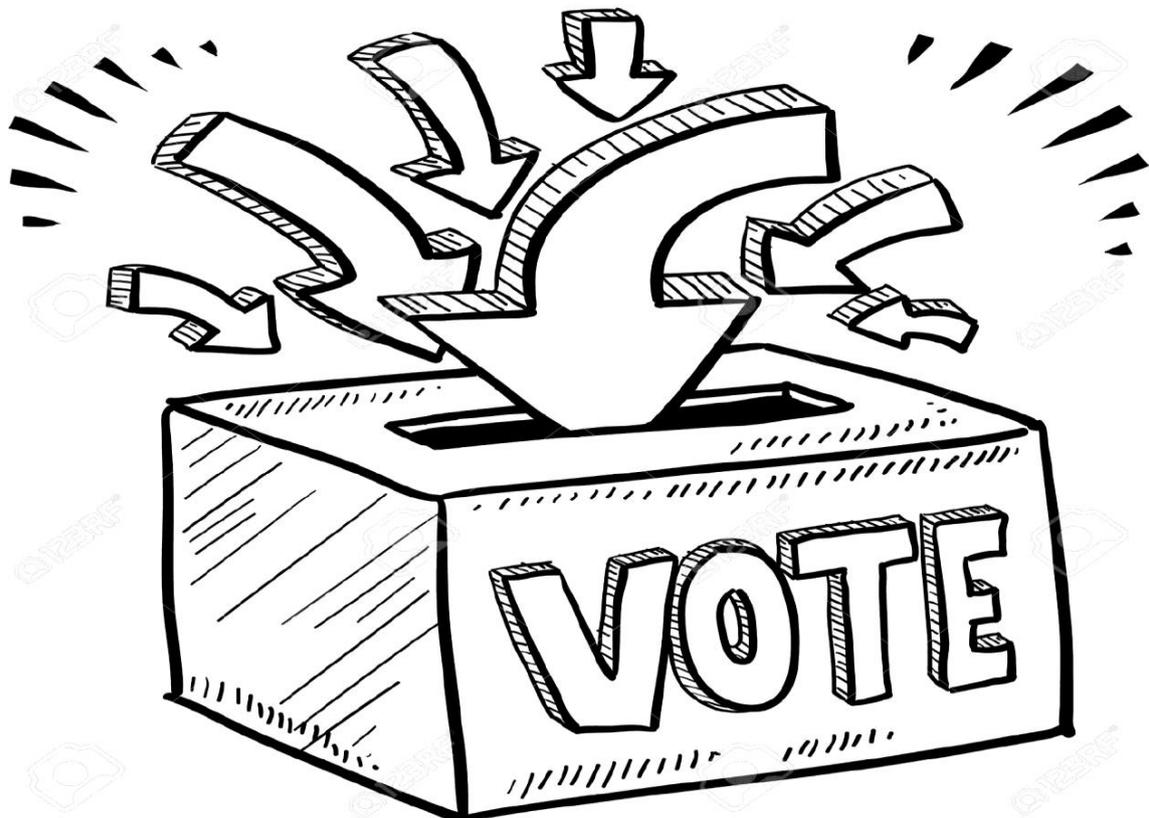
In this edition... Pay and conditions dispute...Teaching time and
KIS...NSS...Updates...Anti-casualisation...Starbucks outlet...

To strike or not to strike?
Do you support an assessment boycott?

Do you want action on casualization and the gender pay gap?

Vote by 11th November!

On Monday October 24th you received an email from UCU called 'UCU consultation on higher education pay'. PLEASE VOTE IN THE BALLOT ON NEXT STEPS IN THE PAY DISPUTE. It is vital that the final decision is guided by the views of the membership.



UCU have been in dispute with the University and College Employers' Association (UCEA) since the spring of this year. UCEA have made a final offer of a 1.1% pay increase for many grades, with more substantial uplifts for lower grades. This pay increase has been imposed at this institution, before the dispute is formally resolved. Members may

have seen the Vice Chancellor's video congratulating us on our hard work, but not mentioning his own pay increase of 19.6% to £268,000.
<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/features/times-higher-education-pay-survey-2016>

This dispute is not only about pay however, as UCU has also been campaigning on anti-casualisation and the gender pay gap. UCEA has committed to addressing these issues with joint research with the trade unions and NUS and a firm action plan. At the latest meeting of the Higher Education Committee (HEC) the decision was taken to pause the dispute and conduct an indicative ballot of members. Do please vote in this ballot as it is important that UCU's negotiators know what members think.

KIS and the four hour teaching block

It appears that 4 hour contact time is likely to with us for the foreseeable future as current module revalidations are based on 48 hrs which is generally being interpreted as 4 hours contact per week. However, it appears to be the case that 3 hours contact time and 1 hour synchronous activity is acceptable so it may be worth thinking about developing activities etc. relating to the 4th hour.

What can members do?

Remember:

Contractually, you should not teach more than 18 hours in a week

Legally, employees are entitled to 20 minute break in any 6 hour working period. Make sure this is observed as an absolute minimum.

The University has a 'duty of care' to its staff. This may be somewhat vague but if you have inadequate breaks or time between classes let you UCU rep. know.

Reps will attempt to resolve problems with the Deans, as HR has largely 'washed its hands' of concerns and stated that difficulties which arose from longer teaching blocks are a Faculty-level responsibility. Therefore, we need to press Deans if oppressive working practices are in place. At least one Dean has approved VL support for a member who would be otherwise teaching 8 consecutive hours.

Please do inform reps. of excessive consecutive teaching hours as it would be useful for UCU to develop a clearer picture

NSS

UCU and the NUS disagree with the use of the NSS and other consumerist "satisfaction" surveys. UCU's position is to argue for:

- a policy of 'student engagement' based on students as partners in the learning process, including revised student feedback mechanisms and proper collective student representation
- a staff entitlement to high quality training, support and professional development
- a promotion system that genuinely recognises and rewards good teaching
- a research assessment system that values research on the scholarship of teaching as well as subject-specific journal articles

- a sector-wide conversion of hourly-paid teaching posts on to full-time or part-time, fractional contracts –
- a demand for smaller class sizes in higher education.

Academics are undertaking an anonymous survey of senior management practices to challenge the narrow metrics of the NSS: <https://smsproject.wordpress.com/> .

UCU nationally have received reports at UCU Congress and via union surveys of universities using 'poor' NSS scores as a 'bully's charter' to intimidate staff, suspend student recruitment and eventually cut courses. Your UCU reps want to know if you feel victimised or blamed for things beyond your control.

And now for the good news...

As a result of the 'review' of professors, none were subject to compulsory redundancy, although some left the University. Professors who are not management are currently working on becoming a bargaining unit, represented by UCU.

Your Faculty reps have been busy providing members with casework support and guidance on workload. Where there have been unresolved disputes about workload allocations, these have been taken to Workload Review Committee where a UCU Rep helps to reach a resolution. Please contact your rep with any concerns about your WLA.

Spot the U-turn...

Senior management do sometimes change their minds, although they may not like to admit it.

- Not so long ago senior management imposed the restructure into 4 Faculties, insisting that 4 Deans and only 4 Associate Deans in each Faculty would be the required management structure. FoSS is currently advertising for the 2 senior posts of Head of the Business School and Head of Social Sciences, which seem remarkably like Associate Dean posts. There has also been slippage on numbers of ADs, with 5 in FEHW.
- UCU raised concerns about Mauritius for many months before the concerns were acknowledged. The VC recently announced the closure of the Mauritius campus.
- the VC told UCU that it was not good practice to name a building after a living individual. Nonetheless, MU has 'Lord Swraj Paul' emblazoned on it in huge letters.
- when admin was taken out of faculties and moved into a central service, UCU warned that this would not work. With effect from 1stOctober, Faculty Registrars and all the admin staff were restructured back into being located in faculties and managed by the Deans.

Starbucks outlet and other priorities

Members at city campus will have seen the new Starbucks outlet, the latest outpost of Seattle's finest tax-avoiding company. The University has paid tens of thousands to have the outlet constructed according to the company's specifications. Our UCU member who is on the Board of Governors asked whether the University had considered having an independent outlet that would contribute to local regeneration. The University said that students wouldn't use it because they only respond to brands. Members might be able to think of other priorities for the money spent on fitting out the Starbucks outlet and ponder whether the University should be supporting local business rather than multi nationals.

Anti-casualisation – watch out for news of the regional days of action later this month.

Who are your Faculty reps for 2016/ 17?

Please contact your Faculty rep if you have any issue that you want to discuss confidentially.

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| Faculty of Arts Anne-Marie Beaumont (Walsall) Frances Clarke (Walsall) John Clementson (City) | Faculty of Education, Health and Well-being. Michael Welsh (Walsall) Veronica Grant (City) Dave Ormerod (City) Matthew Murphy (City) |
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| Faculty of Social Sciences Mike Cunningham Lee Crofts Jennifer Hulme Whyeda Gill-McClure | Faculty of Science and Engineering Sue Gill James Vickers Adrian Priest Anthony Hatfield Paul Barrow Janine Fletcher |
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UCU Negotiating Committee in 2016/17

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| <u>Chair:</u> Catherine Lamond (FEHW) <u>Vice Chair:</u> Ben Andrews (FEHW & Academic Related) <u>Secretary:</u> Kate Lees (FEHW) <u>Green rep</u> Aidan Byrne (FoArts) | Pauline Anderson (FoSS) Paul Barrow (FSE) Andy Cramp (FEHW) Lee Crofts (FoSS) Mike Cunningham (FoSS) | Stuart Farquhar (FoSS) Sue Gill (FSE) Jane Harvey (FEHW) Mike Haynes (FoSS) Penny Welch (FoSS) |
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UCU City Branch Officers and other representatives

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| Chair: Mike Cunningham Vice Chair: Mike Haynes Secretary: Aidan Byrne Treasurer: Alan Apperley | Membership: Karin Dannehl Equality: Penny Welch Health and Safety: vacancy Black members: TBC Auditors: Chris Fullwood and John Dale |
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UCU Walsall Branch Officers and other representatives

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| Chair: Jane Harvey Vice-chair: Vacancy Secretary and Membership: Ben Andrews | Equality: Jane Harvey Health and Safety: Vacancy |
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Other staff reps

Anti-casualization: Alan Burns

Disability: Veronica Grant

UCU Negotiating Committee November 2016