

University of Bath University and College Union

Annual General Meeting 1.15 pm Tuesday 8th December 2015

- 1 Welcome and apologies for absence

28 members present
12 apologies for absence received and noted
- 2 Minutes of AGM held on 8th December 2014 agreed as a correct record.
- 3 Reports from branch officers noted
- 4 Creation of a Branch Negotiating Committee and role of Branch Negotiating Committee Secretary.

The branch is represented on two committees that negotiate with the University:

Joint Union Negotiation and Consultation Committee (JUCNC) meets 5/6 times a year with HR and reps from UNISON and Unite.

Joint Academic Negotiation and Consultation Committee (JACNC) meets twice a year with the VC, HR and other senior managers.

The Branch Negotiating Committee would be made up of those members who represent the branch at either or both of these meetings.

The Secretary to the Branch Negotiating Committee would:

- ensure that the branch is represented by trained and accredited representatives at all meetings of the JACNC and JUCNC
- liaise with HR about the agendas for these meetings
- maintain all records of local negotiations between the branch and the employer.
- where necessary, seek advice from UCU nationally or regionally about any negotiations that take place.

The meeting agreed to create a branch negotiating committee with a secretary as outlined above.

5 Election of officers for 2016

President	Michael Carley
Vice-president	Chris Roche
Treasurer	Tim Barrett
Secretary	Hedley Bashforth
Membership secretary	Katy Jordan
Recruitment officer	Kim Luetchford
Health & safety convenor	Michael Carley
Casework coordinator	Cynthia Spencer
Learning rep	Theo Papadopoulos
Environmental rep	Hartmut Logemann
Pensions rep	James Davenport

Meeting agreed a proposal from Chris Roche to discontinue a number of ad hoc posts that have been created over the last few years (anti casualization rep, campaigns officer, student liaison rep, young members/early careers rep)

Meeting also agreed a further proposal from Chris Roche that up to 10 ordinary members be elected to the branch committee to represent particular groups of members identified by job or by protected characteristic, and that one of the members representing a protected characteristic also act as Equality Officer.

The following groups of members to be represented among the 10 ordinary members.

Postgrad rep
Postdoc rep
Academic-related and professional services rep

Women and non-binary members rep
BME members rep
LBTBQ members rep
Disabled members rep

One of the above will also act as Equalities rep

Nour Alhusein nominated as postdoc rep.
Harry Pitts nominated as postgrad rep

6 Local subscription rates.

Meeting agreed to maintain local subs at the following rates:

Earnings	Current monthly sub	New monthly sub
£60k+	£1.20	
£40k+	90p	
£20k+	60p	
£10-£20k	30p	
£>10k	10p	

7 The Green Paper on HE.

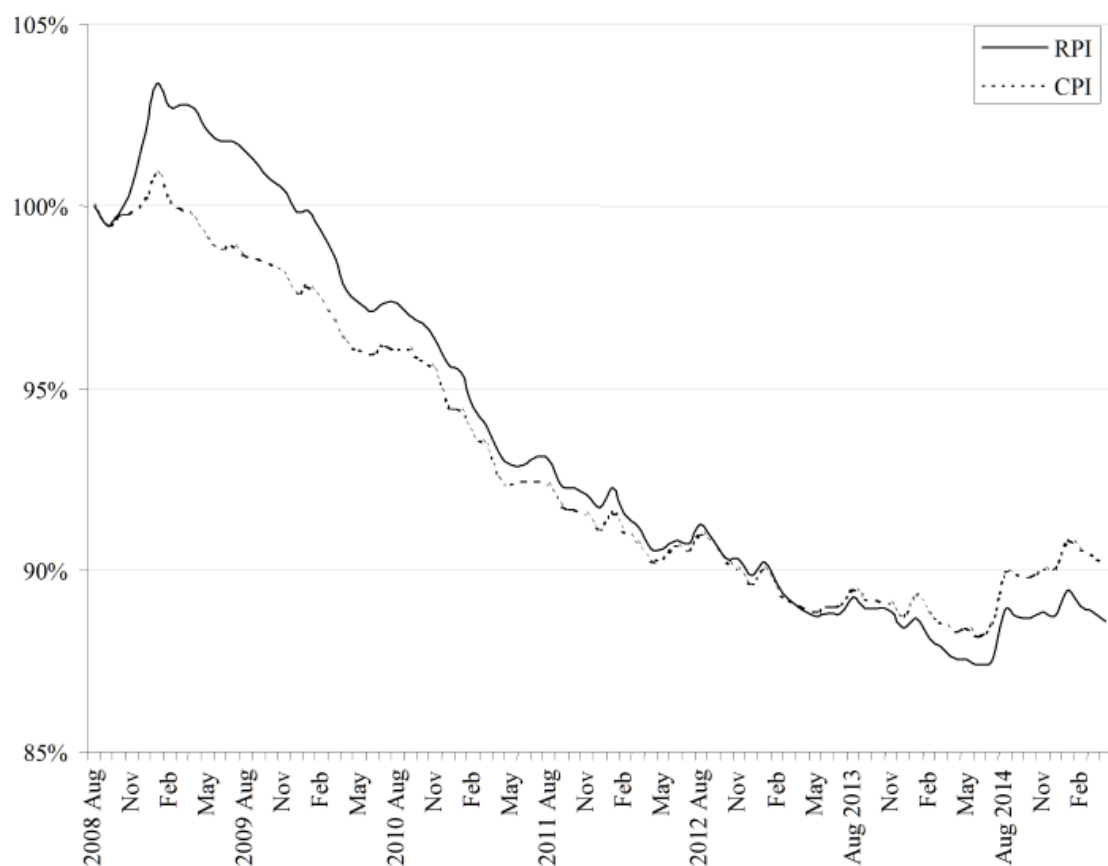
Jamie Melrose (Bristol UCU) joined us for a discussion of how UCU should respond to the proposals in the Green Paper (TEF, increased tuition fees, 'provider exit' etc etc.). Agreed to work with Bristol UCU on a response to consultation on the Green Paper and on campaigning against TEF and the other proposals to extend the neoliberal assault on higher education.

Report from Branch Secretary to AGM 2015

This has been a quieter year for UCU, following two years of national disputes over pay and pensions, supported by various forms of industrial action. The underlying problems that led to the disputes of 2013/4 have not gone away, and it is likely that if we are to prevent further erosion of our terms and conditions of employment we will have to take further action. The conditions for action are changing as the Government is trying to place further restrictions on trade unions, but we have the experience of joint action with other trade unions from 2013/4, and the Students Union has shown greater willingness to work with us. The Government's attacks on universities look set to continue, with further marketization and increases in tuition fees, and UCU will need to work with others to defend the principle of an open, accessible and publicly funded university system.

Pay

After using joint strike action to secure a 2% pay rise in 2014, we did not follow this up in 2015, so were left with just 1% (increased from original offer of 0.9%) for the current year. This means that the value of our pay is still 15% lower than in 2009. This fall is shown in the graph below, which tracks the falling value of pay in universities.



It is clear enough that without further action in 2016, the value of our pay will continue to fall.

Living Wage/Low pay

The UNISON Living Wage campaign continued, again with UCU support, and a very lively lobby of University Court by students and staff in March (which forced University Chancellor Prince Edward to enter the meeting through a back door) led to some concessions to low paid staff, who are mainly represented by UNISON.

We secured another win on holiday pay for hourly paid staff on the casual pay scales. One of our postgrad members discovered that the University had been robbing thousands of such staff their full holiday pay entitlement over a seven year period. Back pay to the tune of £100,000 was paid to those who are still working here, but those who have left were not paid.

Pay inequality

For the fifth year running we wrote to members of the University Remuneration Committee asking for information about how the pay of the University's high earners is calculated, but once again received no satisfactory reply. Students turned their attention to the question of pay inequality at the University, specifically the Vice Chancellor's salary, which at £400,000 is extraordinary even by the standards of Vice Chancellors. 'I'm worth it' she told the Independent in July. Students organised a Vice Chancellor's Day Party (attended by many UCU members) to mark the date in January when the VC would have earned what somebody on the Living Wage would earn in a year. Any VC Party Day in 2016 will have to be a couple of days earlier following the decision of the Remuneration Committee to award a further 10% pay rise to the VC for 2015.

USS Pension Scheme

At the start of the year we were still in dispute with our employer about the proposed changes to the USS pension scheme. From 2016 people will pay higher contributions and the creation of a Defined Contribution element to the scheme is the beginning of a transfer of risks to scheme members. UCU did secure some significant improvements, which will protect most members (earning less than £55K), but the prospect of further detrimental changes in 2017 remains strong. This is because the methodology used to value the scheme's assets is flawed. UCU has argued that the changes going through now are unnecessary because the scheme's assets are being undervalued for political reasons. Many employers already share this view, and have said so to the employers. Body UUK. Local branches have been asked to work with seek some agreement with their own employer to increase the pressure on UUK, and we have tried to do that at Bath. However the VC, who is a member of the board of the USS pension scheme, has refused to discuss the matter on the grounds that she has a conflict of interests. We dispute this, but even if it is true, the University and not the Vice Chancellor is our employer, and we are

continuing to press for a joint review of the USS funding methodology with our employer.

Grade 6 staff

Bath has more staff stuck on point 29 of the pay scale than other universities, and UCU has taken up their case. Our agreement with the employer states that Grade 6 academic-related staff can have a normal expectation of progression to Grade 7. This matter is under negotiation.

Hourly paid staff

Following the Vice Chancellor's statement that she wants the University to use fewer casual contracts than is currently the case, UCU has been in negotiation with the University about a new deal for hourly paid staff. We have requested information on this matter and on the Grade 6 matter. This information is necessary for us to engage in meaningful process of collective bargaining. If the employer continues to deny us access to information we require (and are entitled to) for collective bargaining purposes the branch will have to decide how it will respond to that.

Other matters taken up by the branch in 2015 (not including individual casework)

Manvers Street relocation. 150-200 staff are faced with a move to Manvers Street. Some have already been relocated. The University rejected our demand for an equality impact assessment on the effects of moving large numbers of staff to new premises in Manvers Street. Some staff facing relocation have raised concerns about the appropriateness of the premises, the facilities available and the effects on their work and UCU has supported them in making representations to senior managers.

Probation Limits on workloads for staff on probation.

Problems with the University Safeguard system, which holds sensitive and private information about individuals.

Successful opposition to loss of intellectual property rights and control of **recording of lectures**

Stress risk management: an issue close to Marie Morley's heart, and her efforts paid off when an internal audit revealed that the University's procedures often make situations worse. Managers who have the responsibility of dealing with cases of stress among their staff often feel unsupported (and stressed) because of the lack of support they receive to do this.

Opposition to proposals to change the **academic year** (students also opposed, proposal withdrawn)

Support for Unite's call for greater protection for **catering staff forced to work outside** selling coffee and cakes etc on the Parade (ongoing).

Criticism of University response to the **Prevent Duty** imposed on universities under the 2015 Counterterrorism and Security Act. Some minor changes to wording were secured, but UCU maintains that this University's response is disproportionate and called for Senate to be consulted before University Council rushed through its changes to the code of practice on freedom of expression in November. UCU held an open meeting in November to explain our concerns and the meeting was addressed by UCU National President Liz Lawrence.

Challenge to **redundancy** of three creative producers working in ICIA

Opposition to 7% increase in **nursery fees**.

Protection of **employment rights of resident tutors** who are also Tier 4 visa holders

Support for Alison Hayman, Bristol University **lecturer dismissed for not bringing in sufficient research funds** (Alison's case is still ongoing).

Support for campaign to welcome refugees, including the presentation of a letter signed by over 1100 staff and students calling for the University to offer 10 **scholarships to refugees**.

Members ran a UCU stall at the **Tolpuddle Martyrs Festival**, July.

This was very successful in engaging with UCU members who were attending the festival, and with other trade-unionists. Money raised by selling merchandise on the stall was donated to the PCS National Gallery strikers and to the UCU branch at Bolton College who were also in dispute. While this is a South West region event, the core members involved have been from Bath so if anyone is interested in coming next year let us know. Even if you do not want to stand on the stall, it is a good weekend or day out in good company.

Support for **Free Education campaign** run by Bath Students Against Fees and Cuts

Support for **anti-austerity demonstrations**, London, June and Bath, July.

Together with UNISON, Unite and the Students Union we held a meeting in November at which University Pro-Chancellor Jan Royall denounced the **Trade Union Bill** as an attack on trade union freedoms and called on staff and students to lobby members of the House of Lords before the Bill comes before them in the next few weeks (the Bill already has MPs' approval).

Support for UCU members facing closures and redundancies at the **Open University**, including the Bristol regional office.

Motion to HE Sector Conference calling for the use of online consultative ballots (used to end the pay and pensions disputes) to be decided by UCU HE Committee alone (i.e. not the General Secretary or other union officials)

Motion to UCU Congress calling for national agreement on facilities time for TU activities to be extended to hourly paid staff.

Hedley Bashforth
03 December 2015