

What UCU wins for YOU

Since 2009 wages and pensions have come under attack. This is a national, not a local problem. Trade unions have had a hard time resisting this attack, but in the last year UCU has had some success:

- ★ An end to 6 years of pay cuts. Without our joint action with other unions, employers would have imposed a 1% pay increase. We won 2%.
- ★ A reduction in the impact of damaging changes to USS pension proposed by employers. We won an increase in the salary threshold for the biggest cuts. Employers wanted a £40K threshold not linked to inflation. UCU won an increase in the threshold to £55K, index-linked.

These are significant gains that are worth thousands and are consolidated into your pay. The value of the gains is far greater than the cost of trade union membership. You will receive these benefits even if you are not a member of a trade union. So if you are not a member why should you bother joining? Here are two good reasons:

- ★ The gains are valuable, but we have still lost 13% in the value of our pay since 2009. When employers try to cut the value of pay again this year we will need to show that we are not prepared to accept that. The more of us who are prepared to say that the more we can protect your pay.
- ★ If the employers succeed in imposing the changes to USS that are currently subject to consultation, they will try to impose further cuts in three years' time unless we prevent them.

We also secure important gains through local negotiations - some of these are featured in this newsletter. We can secure bigger gains for **everybody** working in in HE if YOU join us.

Branch members' meeting

Wednesday 22nd April 1.15 pm 1W2.104

Main items: 2015 pay claim, recording of lectures.

Please send items for agenda to ucu-sec@bath.ac.uk

Not a member yet?

Here's how to join:

<http://join.ucu.org.uk>

Become a local UCU contact:

<http://btu.web.ucu.org.uk/volunteer/>

News roundup ... for more on each story see bath.web.ucu.org.uk

Local

Another new member for Bath's £100k + club

The appointment of a Vice President (Implementation) has raised a few eyebrows across the campus. After all, we have survived 50 years without a Vice President of any kind, so why do we need one now? The new appointment brings the number of people in Bath's £100K club to 60. This is an increase of 100% since 2009 while total staff numbers have increased by about 4%. [Read more](#)

Creatives sacked as university launches new direction for the arts

One of the jobs given to the new VP (I) is to manage The Edge, the £11million building intended 'to refocus and reboot the direction of travel for the arts' at the university. Four weeks before the building's official opening has sacked its three creative producers and shifted half of the remaining ICIA staff over to Accommodation and Hospitality. [Read more](#)

Academic year changes - UCU calls for workloads check

The University is considering a move back from semesters to terms. UCU is open to ideas for change, but insists that this is not done by increasing workloads. We have asked for further information on the implications of the proposed changes for workloads. [Read more](#)

Probation - UCU wins changes to cut workload pressures

UCU is represented on the Bath Scheme Committee, overseeing the training of probationary lecturing staff. New staff on probation have many competing pressures to deal with: teaching, administration, research (not necessarily in this order), as well as getting familiar with a new job and sometimes working part-time. Formal, additional training, requiring attendance at courses and the writing of reports, can often add to these pressures. The last meeting accepted UCU's recommendations, with the timing of Recognition Panels changed to October and March to prevent clashes with assessment periods, and agreement to spread good practice in the development of workload models reflecting these pressures.

Management wants to extend control over recording of lectures

University managers have said they want to record everything unless we tell them not to. UCU has expressed its support for the existing arrangements. [Read more](#)

National

UCU renews call for an end to tuition fees

Commenting on Ed Miliband's announcement to cut tuition fees to a maximum of £6,000 a year and raise the maintenance grant available to students, UCU said it welcomed any reduction in the cost of accessing higher education. However, it said that what students and staff really need is a long-term funding solution for universities which allows all who would benefit to go. This could be provided by a 'business education tax' (BET) - a modest, hypothecated increase in corporation tax - to abolish tuition fees.

USS

Members have until May 22nd to respond to employers' consultation about proposed changes to USS. UCU has issued guidance on how to respond, especially in relation to the flawed method used to value USS assets which led to the false idea that there is a 'black hole' that need to be filled by increased contributions and lower benefits. The Information Commissioner has now suggested that Bath disclose its views on the valuation and on the proposals, and it is clear that this University, unlike many others has accepted the 'black hole' theory without questioning it. [Read more](#)

Living Wage pressure starts to pay off

The trade unions have been informed that our demand for hourly paid workers to be treated the same as permanent staff has been agreed. From April hourly paid workers will be paid a minimum of £7.85 an hour. Hundreds of campus workers, many of them students, will benefit from this.

This is a big victory for joint trade union-student action and shows that nothing is more effective when it comes to changing the minds of senior university managers.



We still have concerns about how the University is going about the Living Wage issue. Instead of just paying it as a minimum to all staff, it is paying the same low basic rates plus a 'pay supplement' or tip. The problem with that is that it can be withdrawn at any time. We want to see it made permanent so workers do not have to fight to keep it every year.

We will continue to push the University to make a clear and firm commitment to being a Living Wage employer, like Queen Mary University London and Santander Bank. It has not so far done this. But just as important we will continue to push the university to reduce its high dependence on zero hours contracts. The University of Bath was revealed last year as one of the heaviest users of these toxic contracts.

Marie Morley

The progress of the Living Wage campaign is a tribute to the efforts of UCU's Branch President Marie Morley who died in November.

Marie was a source of great strength and unity for the branch, for our members and for the other trade unions at the university. Our sympathies are with Marie's family.

Here Marie is pictured with the University Chancellor and PVC Jane Miller.



New UCU rep for young and early careers members

Young members, early career academics and researchers at the University of Bath now have a dedicated UCU branch rep. Harry Pitts, a PhD student and graduate teaching assistant in the Department of Social and Policy Sciences, took on the the new role in December.

This is a response to increasing casualization and exploitation among this section of the HE workforce. Many young and early career academics and researchers face precarious and insecure conditions. TAs and demonstrators are allocated insufficient paid prep time. Early career researchers are paid at one grade while performing work more suited to another. As a group, young members and early careers workers have a fragmented and contingent status. This makes it difficult to organise young members for bargaining purposes, but the election of Harry as a rep for this group is already making a difference.

£50,000 backpay secured for hourly paid staff

Last September, one of our postgrad members noticed that the university has been underpaying holiday pay for hourly-paid workers since 2009. The university was paying hourly-paid employees at a rate of 1.4% below what is legally permitted. UCU took the matter up with HR and they accepted that staff have been underpaid. Anyone who has worked in ANY hourly-paid role since 2009, including GTAs, demonstrators and invigilators are among those owed money. It also applies to anyone working in the bars, cafes, shops and other campus outlets.

So far the university has had to pay out over £50,000 in backpay, but will not provide full details of the process by which they will decide who to pay and how much. Even worse, people who have received backpay have had no explanation at all from HR. Although some people seem to have received the outstanding holiday pay in full, others have not. In response to this lack of clarity, Bath UCU mobilised hourly-paid workers to submit subject access requests under the Data Protection Act. These demanded full disclosure of the amount underpaid in the period 2009-2014. The UCU action has extracted real gains, but until everyone gets back what they are owed, the campaign continues.

What more should Bath UCU be doing to fight for young members and early careers? Send any thoughts, issues or concerns to Harry Pitts, Young Members and Early Careers Rep, at f.h.pitts@bath.ac.uk.

Drop-in session for hourly paid staff, postgrads and early careers staff

If you want advice, help or support with any aspect of your work at the University of Bath, call in at our drop-in session.

No need to make an appointment.

Wednesday 22nd April

2.30-4.00 pm

1E2.1 (ex-ICIA box office)