

Minutes of branch meeting

Thursday 25th February 1.15 pm Room 1E2.4

1 Welcome and apologies for absence

34 members in attendance, 7 apologies for absence.

2 [Notes of branch committee meeting 20 January 2016](#) (for information).

Brief updates:

- **Prevent**

Members were shown materials used in a recent training session for staff. After some discussion, in which concerns were expressed that the University's response to the legislation is disproportionate. Agreed to write to University Secretary about this and to ask what steps the University is taking to ensure that the content of this training does not (as it appears to do) contravene anti-discrimination and equalities legislation.

- **TEF**

A copy of the University's response to Government consultation on the Green Paper has been posted on the UCU blog at <http://bath.web.ucu.org.uk/2016/02/12/university-of-bath-response-to-the-green-paper/>

The University's non-committal response was noted.

- **Proposed redraft of university career progression process**

The main point to note in this proposal is that promotion to Reader or Professor would include the following requirements:

The candidate will be expected to have a sustained and auditable research record normally of international standing: this will be linked to a substantial portfolio of articles published primarily in major journals and/or conference proceedings (or other outputs appropriate to the discipline, e.g. books/book-chapters); and

The candidate will be expected to have attracted research grants/ contracts as Principal or Co-Investigator at a funding

level appropriate to the discipline, possibly in collaboration with other Universities or organisations,

The second of these introduces a link between funding and promotion which we have opposed.

We also raised our concern about the use of unit evaluation scores in the consideration of all applications for promotion, and asked what steps the University has taken to ensure that the known influence of social characteristics on the evaluation process is taken into account. We did not receive a response to this.

- **Grade 6/7 progression**

The University have acknowledged that staff in Grade 6 posts in 2007 had, under the terms of our local agreement, a normal expectation of progression to Grade 7, but that this has not happened in all cases. UCU will pursue a claim for regrading and pay arrears on behalf of this group and also on behalf of those who were appointed AFTER the agreement was signed.

- Bath Scheme (probation)

We had a report that the University is removing the requirement for those on teaching contracts of less than 0.4 to complete the Bath Course. We have asked for further information on this and lodged our concern that this would constitute unequal treatment for part-time staff, who should have the time needed to complete the course included in their workload.

3 Pay claim 2016

Report from national pay briefing.

The main features of the pay claim submitted by Unite, UCU, GMB and EIS are:

- 5% increase to all spine points on the 51 point national pay scale
- agreed minimum rates of pay for roles within all occupational groups, including to the academic career pathways as detailed in the Model C to the 2004 agreement
- nationally-agreed minimum rates of pay for external examiners
- nationally-agreed action for institutions to close the gender pay gap by 2020

- nationally-agreed action for institutions to reduce the proportion of their staff on casual and zero-hour contracts and to ensure that their pay reflects the rate-for-the-job of permanent staff.

Full details of the claim and of the timetable for negotiations and action to support our claim are at

<http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/7875/UCUHE264/pdf/UCUHE264.pdf>

If the employers do not make an offer we can accept, we will be balloted in April for industrial action during the spring/summer assessment period.

UCU has also produced an online tool comparing pay for similar types of work done at different universities:

<https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/8087/HE-rate-for-the-job>

Please print off and display the items below to publicise the claim to others, including non-members, who will also benefit.

 [Why pay matters ? poster \[205kb\]](#)

 [Why pay matters ? leaflet \[427kb\]](#)

4 **Assimilation of hourly paid and casual workers**

Following over two years of negotiations with the employer, which have yielded very little to improve the position of the growing number of hourly paid teachers and researchers at the University of Bath. The meeting endorsed a formal reference to the employer to formalise our claim for improved terms and conditions for the hourly paid staff that we represent (attached). **National meeting for staff on casual contracts, 11 March**

UCU is holding its annual meeting for staff on casual contracts on 11 March and each branch can send two delegates. If you are interested in getting involved in UCU's campaign for secure employment in education and would like to attend please see details and how to register here.

Or contact ucu-sec@bath.ac.uk for further information.

5 **#GrantsNotDebt: Reinstate Student Grants**

The motion attached was agreed unanimously.

6 **Disability: Campus Access Audit coming up later this year.**

The meeting heard a brief report from our disability rep that the University is about to undertake its audit for the work to be carried out over the next 5 years. One priority is the link from the bus terminus to the Parade, which is difficult and, for some, inaccessible. Another is the replacement of heavy doors with automatic opening. Members invited to forward to David Skidmore any further ideas on what needs doing to improve the campus for those with mobility or sensory impairments.

7 **UCU Congress 2016**

This year's UCU Congress is from 1-3 June in Liverpool.

The branch is entitled to send 2 delegates and submit one motion to Congress and two motions to HE Sector Conference that takes place at the same time.

Deadlines: motions 6 April; delegates 29 April

Members are invited to submit items for motions (TEF ? governance ? VC pay ? casualization ?) and/or nominations for delegate to ucu-sec@bath.ac.uk

8 **UCU South West Region HE Committee**

Next meeting; UWE Wednesday 9th March 2 pm. If you want to go to this please contact ucu-sec@bath.ac.uk or Michael Carley, who is currently Chair of South West Region

9 **UCU Academic Related, Professional Staff Committee**

Tim Barrett nominated to this national UCU committee. [Latest academic-related /professional staff newsletter](#)

10 **Any other business**

Convention for Higher Education

Saturday 27th February at Christopher Ingold Chemistry Building, University College London (UCL).

<https://heconvention2.wordpress.com/pa>

If you are interested in attending contact ucu-sec@bath.ac.uk

Branch committee vacant positions (see attached) – open to all members of our branch.

Scholarships for refugees Following the VC's rejection of a proposal to create 10 scholarships for Syrian refugees there will be a lobby of Council on the issue today at 3.45 pm.

25th February 2016

Dear Mr Brooks

Formal Reference in respect of the use of Hourly Paid and Casual Contracts by The University of Bath.

The University of Bath branch of the University and College Union is seeking to reach a collective agreement with the employer on the use of hourly paid and casual contracts. Following a well-attended branch meeting on 25th Feb 2016 to discuss a proposal circulated to all our members a week earlier, members have instructed Branch Officers to lodge a reference and seek to begin formal negotiations at the earliest possible opportunity.

Background

UCU Branch Officers began a series of discussions with you in 2013, following the disclosure through responses to FOI requests that the University of Bath is one of the heaviest users of zero hours and casual contracts for teaching and research staff in the country. Additionally, it came to light that the 2009 agreement on assimilation of part-time hourly paid Teaching Fellows to established fractional contracts was not being honoured. Full implementation of this agreement has not yet taken place. In those discussions, UCU has attempted to work constructively with the University to negotiate agreements that would more generally tackle the dependence on casual and temporary contracts at Bath that leave hundreds of staff in poorly paid and/or in insecure employment.

As you should be aware, our early meetings with Ian Cheetham, Director of HR, focused on the University's own policy on the use of casual workers; specifically that "*casual workers should not be engaged into regular work with a pattern and / or work that is deemed as core activity essential to the day-to-day running of a department*". It continues to be the case, however, that the University systematically makes use of atypical worker contracts to deliver such '*core activity*', despite the fact that there is a regular and predictable pattern of work.

UCU members at the University have, understandably, been pressing local officers for details of progress made in relation to the various outstanding issues we have been engaged in discussions on. Sadly, we have had to report that little actual progress has been made.

Michael MacNeil, UCU National Head of Bargaining and Negotiations, wrote to Professor Breakwell recently requesting a commitment from the University to work with the union to tackle the dependence on casual and insecure contracts at the

University. We would be grateful if you could provide us with a copy of any response you have sent to him, as requested by 12 February. I'm sure you will appreciate that, in light of the recent FOI information published in respect of the Vice Chancellor's pay, benefits and expenses, pay and security of employment remains an extremely high priority for our members.

In light of the above, UCU Branch Officers have been mandated by the members at The University of Bath to lodge the following reference:

Reference

UCU at The University of Bath is seeking to secure a collective agreement with the University on a single Policy for the Use of Hourly-Paid and Casual Contracts to include the following:

1. Assimilation of hourly-paid Teaching Fellows to established fractional posts at the point at which they meet the threshold of the existing agreement of 2009, and mechanisms for calculating the fraction/pathway to which they will be assimilated. This assimilation process to be carried out twice a year, as agreed in our more recent meetings, and to build in a review mechanism whereby fractional salaried Teaching Fellows who have been undertaking additional hourly-paid work for two years have their fractional contract increased accordingly;
2. As discussed in recent meetings, the extension of the above agreement on assimilation to all hourly-paid staff in UCU's bargaining unit;
3. Minimum guaranteed hours contracts for part-time hourly paid teaching staff where their hours fall below the 0.2 threshold;
4. The ending of the use of atypical worker zero hours contracts for teaching-related, research and academic-related staff where regular patterns of work have been established, to be replaced by contracts with employee status with appropriate pay, terms and conditions

We are therefore requesting that negotiations on the above begin without delay, with a view to reaching a collective agreement by the end of the academic year in order that all changes are in place for the beginning of 2016/17.

Michael Carley: UCU Branch President
Hedley Bashforth: UCU Branch Secretary

On behalf of University of Bath UCU members

#GrantsNotDebt: Reinstate Student Grants

Proposed: Christopher Roche (Vice President)

Seconded: Kim Luetchford (Recruitment Officer)

University of Bath UCU Local Association Committee:

Notes:

- 1) Following on from the 2015 budget announcement, on Thursday 14th January a legislation committee of 18 MPs agreed to cut maintenance grants given to the poorest students in England.
- 2) Currently over 500,000 students receive targeted support based on their household income to help with the cost of living while at university, creating a total expenditure of £1.5 billion per year.
- 3) When tuition fees were raised in 2010 it was with the caveat that maintenance grants would be kept in place to ensure students from lower income backgrounds were not deterred from attending university by incurring high levels of debt.
- 4) Students in need of this financial support, if forced to take out the amount as a loan rather than a grant, will leave with around £53,000 of personal debt. This will either deter these students from attending or will create higher costs for the government as currently around 50% of all student debt is written off.
- 5) University of Bath's Vice Chancellor, Glynis Breakwell, publicly lobbied MPs to increase tuition fees in 2010, partly justifying this position on the basis of "improved support for poorer students."

Believes:

- 1) That this decision was made in an undemocratic, underhanded way with no debate or wider vote on an issue that was not explicitly stated in the Conservative Party manifesto in the lead up to the 2015 General Election.
- 2) The measure was introduced without any consultation with students, the HE sector, or the general public. An Equality Impact Assessment run by the government on the proposal revealed students from poorer backgrounds, and in particular BME students, mature students, women, disabled students, and Muslim students would be particularly at risk from the introduction of this.
- 3) This cut follows a stream of others to further education colleges and adult skills, and other 'reforms', that disproportionately negatively impact institutions providing education to people from lower income backgrounds.
- 4) That it was obvious in 2010 that a future Conservative government would make attempts to withdraw the so called "improved support for poorer students", comprised principally of an increase to maintenance grants from £2,906 to £3,250 for students from households earning under £25,000 per year.
- 5) That the position taken by University of Bath Vice Chancellor, Glynis Breakwell, was at best poorly considered, and at worse a regrettable prioritization of self-interest and short term benefit over the wellbeing of students and higher education.

Resolves:

- 1) To condemn the removal of maintenance grants for the poorest students and the increase in and inequality of debt that this will produce.

2) To encourage all branch members to follow national responses and continue to lobby MPs to reinstate study grants for all students.

3) To invite members who sit on statutory University bodies (Council, Court, Senate, Academic Assembly) to raise the issue in those forums and to ask whether, now that the “improved support for poorer students” have been withdrawn, the Vice Chancellor has made efforts to oppose the removal of maintenance grants, and what actions she will now take to lobby for their reinstatement.

University of Bath UCU branch committee

President **Michael Carley (Mech Eng)**

Vice-president **Christopher Roche (Management)**

Secretary **Hedley Bashforth (SPS)**

Treasurer **Tim Barrett (BUCS)**

Membership **Katy Jordan (Library)**

Recruitment **Kim Luetchford (Pharmacy)**

Health & Safety convenor **Michael Carley (Mech Eng)**

Pensions **James Davenport (Computer Science)**

Casework co-ordinator **Cynthia Spencer (Psychology)**

Green **Hartmut Logemann (Maths)**

Learning rep **Theo Papadopoulos (SPS)**

Ordinary member reps:

Women & non-binary members rep	Vacant
BME members rep	Vacant
LGBTQ members rep	Vacant
Disabled members rep	David Skidmore (Education)
Postgrad rep	Harry Pitts (SPS)
Postdoc rep	Nour Alhusein (POLIS)
Academic-related & Professional Services rep	Anna Baildon (Careers)
Teaching Fellow rep	Elke Pawlowski (FLC)
Lecturer/Reader rep	Vacant
Professor rep	Vacant