

UCU campaigns update: 19 February 2016

Dear colleague

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1. Strike for fair pay in further education (England) - 24 February

UCU members in English further education (FE) institutions will be on strike next week, Wednesday 24 February, and will be joined on picket lines by UNISON members in a dispute over pay.

London rally: 1pm-4pm, Emmanuel Centre, Lower Hall, 9-23 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 3DW

[North west rally: Manchester](#), 12:30pm-3pm: [Mechanics Institute, Princess Street, Manchester, M1 6DD](#)

For the last six years take home pay for FE staff has been declining in value - check your pay and compare it to those at other colleges [with our new webtool here](#).

2. Higher education (HE) pay campaign

The union is also consulting members in universities on the campaign to secure a decent pay deal and you will have received an email (subject line "UCU higher education pay campaign consultation") inviting you to take part in a very short survey. Please email ebailey@ucu.org.uk if you work in HE and have not yet received this.

Compare your salary to your VC's and to staff in other institutions using [the new Rate for the Job webtool](#).

[Details of latest developments including our claim and campaign materials here.](#)

3. In the news

- Elite universities proportion of disadvantaged students drops
- Pension costs increases no excuse to hold down pay
- Report into LGBT bullying

[Read all about it here.](#)

4. Build the union: national recruitment week

There's never been a more important time for education staff to join the union and next week UCU is focussed on building union membership in college, university and prison education workplaces. Help spread the word by forwarding this email [and join link to a colleague](#).

5. It's time to talk about workloads

Tackling excessive workloads is a priority for the union and over 7,400 members have now responded to UCU's in depth workload survey. [To take part click here](#).

6. Egypt: justice for Giulio Regeni

UCU has [written to the Egyptian embassy in London](#) about the recent murder in Cairo of Giulio Regeni, a doctoral

researcher from the University of Cambridge. [Please sign the petition](#) calling on the Egyptian authorities to cooperate in an inquiry into recent disappearances and torture and deaths in detention.

7. Free courses for UCU members in classroom management and voice care

Places are available on the following UCU continuing professional development courses, which are free to all members. Book your place today to avoid disappointment.

[Classroom management](#) – Nottingham, 25 February

[Classroom management](#) – Stoke, 26 February

[Speaking up: voice care for educators](#) – Birmingham, 3 March

[Leadership in education](#) – Dundee, 10 March

[Mentoring](#) – Dundee, 10 March

[Classroom management](#) – Luton, 19 April

8. 'Check off' to direct debit payment

The new Trade Union Bill means members will no longer be able to pay their UCU subscriptions through payroll (also known as 'check off'). It's important that those of you that still pay union subs by 'check off' now transfer over to direct debit [which you can do online here](#). If you have any queries please get in touch with the UCU membership team at membership@ucu.org.uk.

9. Campaigning on workplace racism: south west network

Following the union's day of action against workplace racism this month, activists in the south west have formed a black members network to continue UCU's campaign to challenge racism and discrimination in colleges and universities. Contact Josie Gill: josie.gill@bristol.ac.uk.

10. Events and publications

Campaign for secure employment: staff on casual contracts meeting: 11 March 2016

As UCU steps up the campaign to end casualisation in our sector there will be a meeting of activists on Friday 11 March 2016. [Find more details and how to register here](#).

iPRESENTE! contemporary art from Cuba - 6-29 October 2016, London

UCU is supporting this [Music Fund for Cuba](#) art and education initiative with an exhibition of Cuban artists in London in the autumn and [you can help the appeal here](#).

International Women's Day 8 March

Each year International Women's Day is celebrated across the globe on 8 March as an opportunity to draw attention to the struggle for women's rights. [You can find UCU postcards and a special film 'A woman's place is in the union' here](#).

Environmental news

With news of the Paris climate agreement and its implications for workers and education, details of the National Union of Students (NUS) 'Invest-Divest' campaign and much more besides, [issue 44 of UCU Environmental News is out now](#).

UCU officer and national executive committee elections 2016 - ballots now open

UCU's national elections are now open and members will by now have received ballot material. All members are encouraged to vote. Further information about the elections, including election addresses for all candidates, [can be found here](#).

Getting involved in UCU – a course for black members new to activism

This one day course is specifically designed for UCU black members who are interested in becoming more involved with UCU. The course will also include a professional development session about leadership. [For more details and to check entry criteria please use this link](#).

Second convention for higher education 27 February 2016

UCU is supporting a one-day conference on the HE green paper on Saturday 27 February at University College

London. [For more information and to register for the convention, see here.](#)

Defending further and adult education conference, 5 March 2016

This initiative taken by London Region UCU will discuss how we can build a movement to defend the sector and put forward alternatives to the government's cuts agenda. Gordon Marsden, shadow minister for lifelong learning will be addressing the event. SOAS, central London, Saturday 5 March, 10:30am. [Register here.](#)

All the best

Justine Stephens
UCU head of campaigns