

# u+we in solidarity

Newsletter of UWE Branch of the UCU

17<sup>th</sup> September 2012

## Branch Exec Changes

Our long standing negotiating secretary, Mal Hughes, has received a well-deserved internal promotion and must now cut back on his union activities. Andy Tubb now replaces Mal as negotiating secretary. Mal will continue with his existing cases, but new cases requiring a senior officer will be handled by Andy, Terryl Bacon or Rob Pardoe. Mal will remain as a co-opted member of the branch executive so we will continue to have the benefit of his long experience.

However, Andy's former role of Organising Officer is now unfilled and we seek nominations from the wider membership for this role. This is key role in the branch an opportunity to get more deeply involved in union activities.

## The Revised Workload Model

UWE have been modelling a revised workload calculation to take account of points we agreed last year. This modelling and revisions to the workload model are ongoing, and we feel that progress has been made on improving the model. We have agreed to the introduction of the proposed model. We don't feel this new model is perfect, no model could ever be perfect, but we do think it shows some significant improvement. We didn't want to delay introducing a new model, because the alternative would have been keeping the old model for another year, with the same disastrous results as last year. Details will be released shortly, and should be implemented over the next couple of months. You will find significant improvements in some circumstances, hopefully most circumstances. However because the University wanted to keep the cost financially neutral, there will be some teaching circumstances where the resource has been reduced. Nevertheless the University has increased the resource overall by about 0.7%.

Clearly there is a fundamental issue about financing teaching at the University, and we shall be seeking to persuade the University to increase the spend per student so that the model can be improved further. Until this can be achieved changes to the model are likely to result in improving one thing only at the expense of another.

Despite this we think there have been some seriously useful benefits. In the next newsletter we will spell out what we think these benefits are in detail.

Meanwhile we will continue to negotiate improvements and changes to the model. Your feedback is invaluable so please give us your views on new model.

## Getting Back Your Bundles

Did you work more than 550 bundles last year? If so, then you should be offered the choice of an equivalent reduction in this year's workload, or extra payment in compensation.

The university have told us that they're prepared to make an extra payment for any number of bundles worked over 550 (initially, the agreement was that you had to go over by more than 50). The decision whether you take additional payment or have a reduction in bundles this year is yours.

## Bristol City Council plans for closure of Care Homes and Day Centres

Bristol City Centre is currently in the process of agreeing to close eight care homes for the elderly in order to save £3.5 million over four years leading to two hundred elderly residents having to find a new home. Seven day centres used by the elderly and vulnerable groups such as people with learning disabilities are also in line for closure leading overall to 130 job cuts for experienced and committed carers and placing huge additional pressures on informal carers. The Council has identified a rising demand for places in care homes which is likely to be met by privatised providers.

These closures are proving to be highly unpopular and are becoming a central issue in the Mayoral election. The closures are also being vigorously contested by care workers and unions in alliance with service users. Bristol & District Anti-Cuts Alliance (BADACA), to which UWE UCU is affiliated, argues that the closures are not inevitable and the decision can be reversed. BADACA is asking for you to get involved in the campaign by:

- Joining the lobby of Bristol City Council on Tuesday 18th September at 5pm
- Signing a petition at: <http://tiny.cc/be2gkw>
- Contacting your councillor and MP
- Contacting BADACA at this email address: [carecampaign@bristolanticutsalliance.org.uk](mailto:carecampaign@bristolanticutsalliance.org.uk)