

UCU UWE

May/June 2017

LISTENING TO, WORKING WITH, PROMOTING THE NEEDS OF MEMBERS
AND STRIVING FOR A SECURE FUTURE.

Branch news

Are you performing? But we want to develop as well.....

As we reflect on the PDR process as it is and how it is proposed to become...following some consultation on the 'Performance and development review' proposed changes to the PDR process: we have carefully considered just how deeply this affects all of us. As always we continue to want to hear your views on this: so will be circulating documents to inform this soon. Here are some of the Branch exec views on PDR past and present.....

UWE states that it wants to achieve a 'culture of high performance and constructive challenge'? The proposed changes to the "Performance and Development Review" aim to take us there but don't really make it clear how to achieve that as of yet, so we are asking for further clarification.

We are told that our organisational values underpin the PDR process. In case you forgot - we have five: *Ambitious* (a strong desire for fame, wealth, power, money), *Innovative* (The VC wants us all to be entre-

preneurs, which is probably easier when you are well resourced), *Connected* (Do we mean those dry-bones..."Head bone disconnected from the neck bone), *Inclusive*, and *Enabling* (we like those...if we get beyond the rhetoric).

Importantly, UWE has developed a set of "leadership behaviours" (which presumably includes "innovative" and other 1980's-inspired ideas such as 'singing from the same song sheet', 'reading from the same page' and 'upping our game'. Amidst all of this so far the document is not clear enough to us regarding how that all reflects the values of the University and is a fit for everyone at UWE.

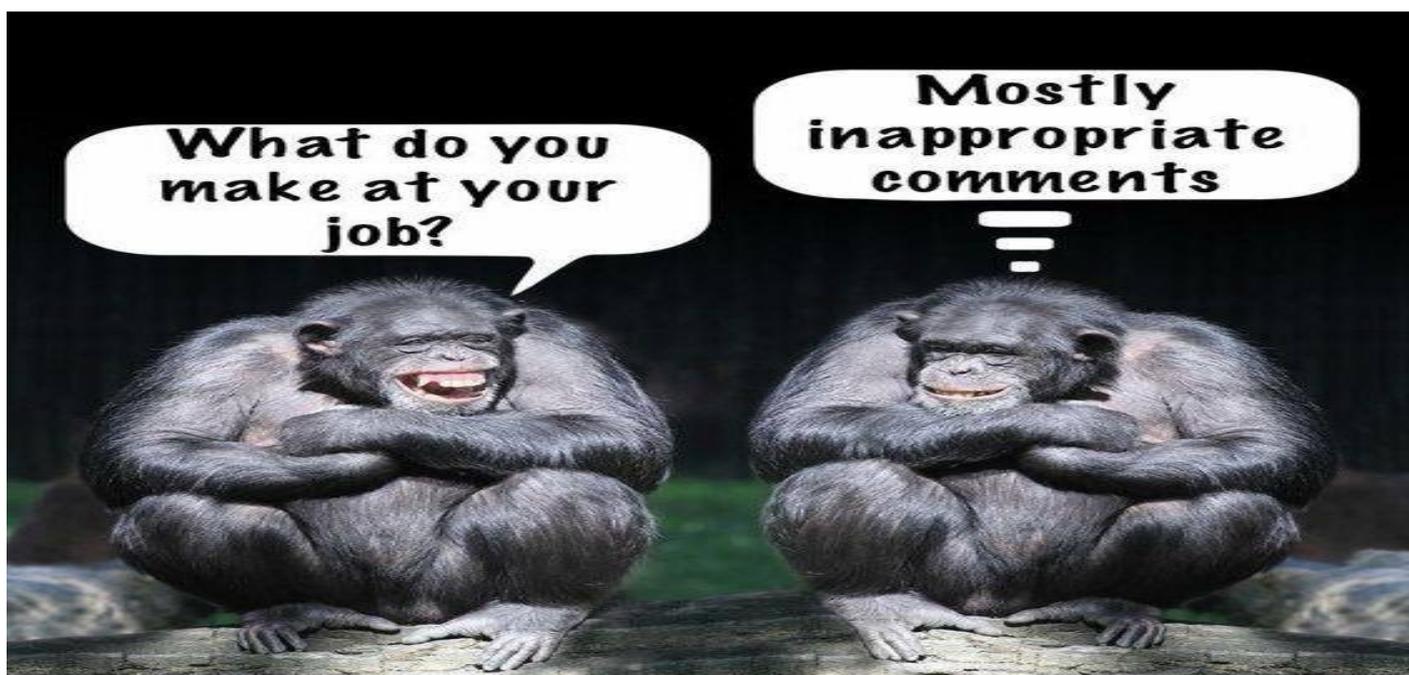
But, rest assured.....all completed PDR forms can be safely "secured in a locked drawer or filing cabinet".....if they need to exist on paper....we'll have to circle back on this one.....thought we were go-



Thus far we are not discerning enough clarity or guidance around what differentiates leadership from management here - which is a missed opportunity because although different they are actually “connected” and we do need both, if done well.

Although much of your role as for example a Programme or Module leader relies on your capacity to merely persuade, non-hierarchically, apparently your “performance” will nevertheless be judged using all manner of Business Intelligence which is more concretely influenced by factors beyond the cosy walled-garden of your Programme/Module; are you feeling enabled yet? Speaking of which...comfortable with anonymised feedback? The new proposals are! So people can say what they like— confidentially of course. Although being punished by anonymous feedback?- resonant of the NSS??

We want to believe that if you work hard and do your job, well you are rewarded with.....a salary being developed is the norm in the PDR process. A fair transaction. The new PDR is proposed to be an opportunity to “link” with “recognition schemes” for staff who perform and behave to support the UWE strategy. A potential mechanism for favouritism and other deals — does that sound “inclusive”? Patronage is actually rather divisive. Let us know your thoughts..



Did you have your say in the staff survey?

We await the news of when the results will be released. Will our voices be heard this time?

We want to hear your views on....

Brexit

Workload

Stress

Bullying

Event Capture

Creeping Casualisation

A special award for our Vice Chair, Professor Harriet Bradley

UCU Distinguished Service Award

Nominated by South West Regional Committee

As a long-standing branch rep at both the University of Bristol and UWE, a regional officer and NEC member, Harriet (pictured below with SW Regional Official Nick Varney) has made a significant contribution to UCU in many roles. A member of both AUT and NATFHE from the mid-1980s, Harriet served as executive committee member at Bristol from 1996, with a break while she was Dean of Social Sciences and Law. She had two spells as Bristol LA President. Nationally, she served two terms on the NEC and was Chair of NEC Education Committee. Currently she is Chair of UWE UCU's executive committee. She also served one year as Vice Chair of the South West Regional Executive Committee.

Harriet's contributions to UCU have been many and varied. Achievements include carrying out a survey of professorial staff at Bristol, producing a report showing the difficulties that women face in gaining senior posts, along with recommendations for improving their promotion chances. A tireless caseworker, at Bristol Harriet worked with Human Resource on implementing the institution's first anti-bullying policy. She also led on securing an agreement on fractional posts for teaching staff on short-term, hourly-paid contracts. More recently, Harriet played an active role organising the 2016 Cradle to Grave conference.

Harriet has managed to combine her UCU work with a successful, social justice-orientated academic career. As Dean, she was not only an academic 'leader', she was also a UCU champion. Harriet ran her Faculty on a team basis. She resisted compulsory redundancies by offering strategic development opportunities, and helping young academics with career progression, especially young women.

The example that Harriet has set colleagues and fellow union members has indeed been exemplary. A constant presence and speaker at local UCU rallies and events, a leading scholar and educator who has inspired a generation of students, a passionate campaigner and feminist activist, Harriet is a role model for many. To quote one of her students, 'Harriet has nurtured many young working-class female students and given them opportunities in an attempt to even out the inequalities in academia. Her actions are examples of true widening participation and I will forever be grateful for the step up she gave me'.



News from the UCU Website.....

Anti-Casualisation Activism: Priority-setting and training day

24 June UCU, Carlow Street London, 1030-1600

- Are you on an insecure contract?
- Are you active in campaigning on casualisation in your branch
- Are you interested in getting more active and effecting change for precariously employed staff?

'Anti-Casualisation Activism' is a one-day participatory training event aimed at people who want to help UCU make a difference for casualised staff in their workplace. This is an opportunity to share experience, set your priorities, learn about the national campaign and get new skills to take back to your workplace. The day will combine plenary discussions and briefings with participatory workshops on campaigning, negotiating, supporting individual members and fighting for equality. Lunch will be provided and travel expenses will be covered. Register online and we will contact you to confirm your place. <https://ucu.wufoo.eu/forms/anti-casualisation-training>.<https://ucu.wufoo.eu/forms/anti-casualisation-trainingconference/>

UCU Congress 2017: the challenges facing education and our union

UCU's annual Congress took place over the May bank holiday weekend and you can find details of all decisions taken and motions voted on via the UCU website...UCU.org.uk. Addressing conference, UCU general secretary Sally Hunt delivered a damning critique of the government's record on education and set out the challenges facing the union, including the fight for better pay and conditions, Brexit, funding for further education and building our membership in university and college workplaces.

Learning for life: develop your career with UCU's CPD programme

The following courses are available for registration free to UCU members:

Change management, Brighton 19 June

Assertiveness skills, Brighton, 19 June

Classroom management, Exeter, 19 June



Events can include being shouted at, abused or unjustly criticised – in private or public; being blackmailed, intimidated or threatened in some way; subjected to foul and abusive language; being unfairly criticised and undermined or otherwise treated with gross disrespect or contempt; being forced to accept large increases in an already excessive workload, undertake additional tasks, etc.

Harm caused can initially make someone break-down in tears, instil fear, cause depression, agoraphobia or panic attacks, undermine confidence, or humiliate and belittle someone to the point where they cannot face colleagues or students. The DWP will want medical evidence of a clinically diagnosable condition such as depression in order to make an accident declaration, a necessary precondition for a benefit claim.

When such events happen, members should be advised to enter the event into the accident book at the workplace, or ask the rep to do it on their behalf. Some employers may try to prevent such entries being made. The law requires the accident book to be available in the workplace for injured persons, or someone acting on their behalf, to record an injury. If it is still not possible to record the accident in the book, victims or their representative should write a letter informing the employer of the incident, and make the point that they were prevented from recording it in the book. Reps should also insist that the employer submit a RIDDOR report after 7 days absence when the injured person remains off work, although if they do, the HSE may not accept this. Unlike DWP, HSE say that stress is always 'process', not 'event'. DWP is the HSE's home department.

If as a result of the incident the victim develops a long-term mental health condition that causes a degree of disability greater than 14%, they may be able to claim Industrial Injury Disablement Benefit or other injury-related benefit.

DWP decision-makers have comprehensive guidance on treating stress as an accident, publicly available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/297640/dmgch66.pdf

Victims must show a direct relationship between the incident and resulting injury, and obtain a clinical diagnosis to support the claim, if they are to persuade the decision-maker to make a work-related accident declaration. An 'accident declaration' by the DWP decision-maker is now only needed when a claim for benefit is made.

Where we can help to ensure there is a record that at least some of these cases were 'accidents', we will have started a process of establishing more formally the extent to which stress and related illness and absence is caused by unacceptable practices by managers and employers.

