



Branch news:

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

REF 2021 - an update for UCU members.

Many colleagues will be aware that preparations are under way for the next REF, due in 2021. For example, colleagues are being invited to update their REF CVs, and submit hard copies of outputs to the university reading groups.

Many colleagues may also be aware that the rules around the next REF will be different to the last, and at the moment it is far from clear precisely what form the new rules will take.

The rule changes have come about because Russell group universities lobbied HEFCE to try and ensure that ALL academics at all universities would be submitted. Presumably they saw a strategic advantage in this, since many academics at new universities are not research active, and this would dilute the overall submission.

However, HEFCE have decided not to go along with this suggestion, but to move a small distance towards it. Hence HEFCE have said that all universities will have to submit all staff that have "significant responsibility" for research. However, HEFCE have not defined what this means, and they have suggested that each university will have to interpret this requirement, in consultation with staff. HEFCE point out that many universities have suggested using a proportion of workload to define "significant", and 20% seems to be threshold that has some support.

It therefore seems likely that UWE staff will not routinely be defined as having "significant" research responsibility. The bundles everyone has for research and scholarship outside of the WAMS system amount to approximately 11% of workload. Thus it seems likely that UWE will seek to ensure that staff it wishes to submit have an additional 9% allocated for research in WAMS, so that they then meet the "significant" responsibility threshold. Obviously associate profs and profs will all meet this cut off, by virtue of their existing WAMS role

allocations (55 and 110 WLB respectively). Other staff are likely to need a similar 55 wlb uplift to hit the 20%. Many research active staff may already be receiving this due to external funding, or faculty allocations from the various time and QR schemes. Other staff may have non allocated wlbs which can be assumed to be used for research. Where staff do have more than 20% of their workload allocated to research already, then it is likely they will have to be submitted to the REF, regardless of whether UWE intended to submit them, or whether they wish to be submitted.

HEFCE anticipate that more staff will be submitted next time than last time, and they have changed the rules around numbers of publications accordingly. Staff will now be allowed to submit up to 5 papers, but they are also allowed to submit as few as 1, with an expectation that the average per head for each submitted unit is 2.5. This is in theory very encouraging, as it means the next exercise is likely to be more inclusive, and staff can feel that they have made a legitimate contribution even if they have only one or two papers to put forward.

All of this remains very uncertain at this point in time. HEFCE are due to issue further guidance in the summer, and the university will start to firm up its plans later this year. UCU intends to play a full part in consultation around these rules, on behalf of all academic staff and researchers. The union position will likely argue that staff wishes around the REF should be respected as far as is possible, within the constraints being put forward by HEFCE.

Further updates will be provided as developments progress.

Tony Ward.
UCU rep for researchers.



March 2018 Quiz Question:

Who just got a big mention in 'Dispatches'?

We will lead on the answer in the next newsletter



News from the Student Journey Directorate

There are big transformations being planned within the student journey directorate. The two main aims are improved staff experience using more satisfying tools and ways of working as well as exceptional Student Experience: Seamless, personalised, on demand. One of the longer term aspirations is de-coupling from ISIS. We thought you would want to be updated as there are implications for academics. This has and continues to involve a great deal of stakeholder involvement. Looking at the table below: A coloured block indicated a session taking place at the ECC. If you email through to studentjourney.programme@uwe.ac.uk preferences, a outlook calendar invitation will be sent directly.

		Academic Administration	Admissions and Enrolment	Attraction and Recruitment	Student Administration	Student Assessment	Support and Wellbeing	Compliance and Reporting	Alumni
22-Feb	09:30-11:00								
	11:30 - 13:00								
	14:00 - 15:30								
01-Mar	09:30-11:00								
	11:30 - 13:00								
	14:00 - 15:30								
02-Mar	09:30-11:00								
	11:30 - 13:00								
	14:00 - 15:30								
06-Mar	09:30-11:00								
	11:30 - 13:00								
	14:00 - 15:30								
08-Mar	09:30-11:00								
	11:30 - 13:00								
	14:00 - 15:30								
09-Mar	09:30-11:00								
	11:30 - 13:00								
	14:00 - 15:30								

Issues we are currently working on and would welcome your views:

- * The Mental Wealth Agenda– staff must be explicitly, consistently and meaningfully involved in being recognised.
- * Brexit– how does this continue to impact on the experience of some members?...
- * Equality and Diversity– this is currently being reviewed by an external consultant and some staff are being interviewed— we need to raise the profile of any adverse experiences amongst the membership.
- * Workload—we are re-galvanising our efforts to raise the profile of an stakeholder review of workload pressures, which we really do feel has to be the current branch priority.
- * HR Online - whilst all signs thus far are looking positive– we continue to monitor what the staff experience is of the new system.

International Women’s Day at UWE – Thurs 8th March

Make sure to sign up for our own celebrations at UWE, focusing on women in business in X Block! The day includes a panel debate, careers support, speed mentoring and inspiring workshops. You can [sign up](#) for the whole day or just parts of it.

Also please let me know if you think you might be able to help cover a stall about the UWE Women’s Forum, as it would be great to have some help!

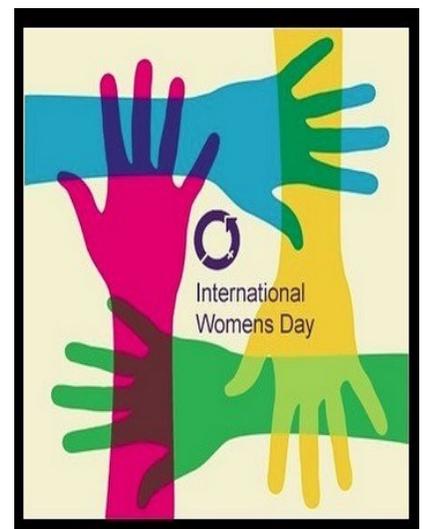
International Women’s Day with Bristol Women’s Voice – Sat 3rd March

Join in the celebrations for International Women’s Day in the city centre with Bristol Women’s Voice. The day include the Wonderful Women Awards and book launch and talks about women’s history.

[Find out more](#) about the event.

‘**Suffragette**’ screening Wednesday 07/03/2018 @ 18:15 in 2D07, Frenchay.

Runtime: 1 hour 46 minutes



“One hundred years after the women’s movement pushed open the right to vote for more and more women, there is no better film in recent years than ‘Suffragettes’ to describe the significance and drama of this culture-determining moment of British history. The film gives a real sense of the gritty situation of the working class women that were the front lines of struggle then, and is one of the few true-to-life portrayals in film today of the interpersonal dynamics of small committed social movement groups. Come join us to celebrate international women’s day and 100 years of the women’s movement.” With an introductory speaker from the UCU and local women’s movement (tbc) and a change to discuss the next 100 years.



Burnt out?

Four out of five UCU members say they suffer stress at work

UCU ANTI-STRESS AND BULLYING WEEK
17-21 NOVEMBER 2014

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Now that we have more space to meet– at the TU centre in Felixstowe Court– we are planning to arrange a Branch Social in the Spring– please do let us know if you have any ideas as to how that could be best supported. We could continue inviting an external speaker.



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