



AN INFORMATION BULLETIN FOR MEMBERS AT UCU UWE Bristol

Spring 2024

Hello All,

Welcome to the March 24 edition of the Members' newsletter! Firstly, thanks to Sarah Harding, branch secretary, for editing and putting this together - remember any news you have can be forwarded to [ucusecretary@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:ucusecretary@uwe.ac.uk).

You will have heard from Steve West that the university is in dire financial straits. The financial picture being so challenging despite the exponential growth of managers and 'leaders' employed to ensure the security and financial success of the university. UCU@UWE have asked for more analysis of the data because the data provided doesn't ring true! It reads like it's been reworked specifically with the UWE environment in mind. Fear not! UCU@UWE are asking questions and seeking clarity! Who are these £100k+ people? It is not clear. What we do know is there are dwindling numbers of academic, and related, staff undertaking the work of the university despite the huge workloads and diminishing real time pay. Our union says academics, and students, perform best without heavy layers of managers. Students need well treated, well paid staff who have the resources to do their jobs. Make no doubt, UWE are coming for academic and professional services. Undoubtedly, UWE's narrative paves the way for job losses. Our challenge to them is, 'do not lose our brilliant academic and professional staff', look at the hefty layers of overpaid and underperforming managers on 'S grades'. We must not let this disparity destroy our university. UCU are still waiting for the data promised, so UCU can analyse it thoroughly. We know it's going to be a difficult read...watch this space for more once analysis has taken place.

**YOUR NEW 'DAY ONE' RIGHTS:** [GOV.UK](http://GOV.UK)

From the 6 April 2024 the law around **flexible working changes**. Staff will be entitled to make two requests per year for flexible working (previously one), which the employer must decide on within two months (previously three). Staff no longer need to submit a business case to apply for flexible working. Furthermore, the employer must consult the employee before making a decision, and the employer cannot cite 'adverse impact' on business in their decision. Refusals must be more specific and relate to the request. If you are thinking about making a request, please contact us for support ([ucu@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:ucu@uwe.ac.uk)).

Also note new paternity regulations apply from the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024 which allows for two weeks leave to be taken either in one block or two discontinuous times. This also covers adoption leave for men. New protection from redundancy rules also applies from 6<sup>th</sup> April 2024 for those who are pregnant, returning from maternity, adoption, or shared parental leave. Furthermore, carers are entitled to take one week's carer's leave in any 12-month period. This does not replace time off for carer's who need to take emergency leave and this week is intended for scenarios where careers would give notice of the need for leave, for example, planned surgery.

It's a mixed bag from me this time, and a plea from me; **do your work**, and **not the work of others**; we are going to be pressured to work over and above, and this takes its toll on worker's health and wellbeing, and the employment of your colleagues. Overwork diminishes student experience and quality of work. We need to build the unions at UWE, and I urge you to **pull together**, **recruit** and **empower** yourselves, and your colleagues, who need the collegiality and solidarity of us all. Hard times are coming, and we need to be ready for them.

In solidarity, Phil – branch Chairman.

**Branch AGM 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 12.00 via TEAMS**

## UCU congress 2024

Wed 29<sup>th</sup> – Fri 31<sup>st</sup> May.

Bournemouth International Centre

Register [HERE](#)

### Claim tax relief on UCU fees

UCU members are entitled to offset Tax a proportion of subscriptions paid against tax paid click [THIS](#) link for more info.

### News from UCU national

UCU trustee, general secretary, and NEC elections 2023-24 have just taken place and the results are in.... Jo Grady has been re-elected as General Secretary of UCU with a further 5 year term.

UCU have been busy with campaigns, Rallies, and marches and in January 2024 over 5000 people attended the **PROTECT THE RIGHT TO STRIKE** march in Cheltenham.



### General members meeting dates 2024 vis TEAMS.

- Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 at 13.00
  - Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2024 at 10.00
  - Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2024 at 12.00
- [ucusecretary@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:ucusecretary@uwe.ac.uk)

### National membership data update

#### April/May 2024

UCU National hold their annual membership database update in April and May. Please can you check and update your details using your [My UCU](#) login. If you are having trouble logging into your account advice is [HERE](#)

### Rep 1 course. Article by Sarah Harding

I attended the Rep 1 course online at the end of 2023 and found it very insightful being new to the UCU exec. Day 1 started with the usual introductions from course members and there was wide representation from an assortment of HEI's across the UK. It was interesting to hear from other UCU members about situations at their workplaces and as you can imagine, there are similar problems throughout higher education and UWE can relate to all of them. The course continued with a brief overview about the trade union movement, how UCU is organised and democracy within the union. Subsequent days covered a multitude of topics including branch organisation, recruitment, member rights, membership, and collective responses, there was the opportunity to work in small groups to discuss, plan and organise campaigning, branch mapping, reps roles, policies, and creating an effective branch. It was a remarkably interesting course and one I would recommend. One thing I did glean from the course is that UWE is well presented regarding union representation. Interestingly, some HEI's struggle with union representation and engagement from members, so well-done UCU UWE branch!

Want to do some UCU training? Click [HERE](#) for more info....

## **If you are a module leader and are on band ‘G’ then read this!**

Recently UCU successfully challenged the University for a new starter, appointed at point 32(G). This individual was new to academia, without a teaching qualification and on probation, was expected to assume module leadership for several modules for which no specific support or mentoring was provided. A grievance procedure was filed, and UCU was successful in the individual being uplifted from commencement of their employment to H grade. In 2007 UWE signed up to a National Agreement Pay Equality Project (PEP). PEP states:

*“A Lecturer will not be expected to undertake the role of module leader. Any temporary appointment to this role at grade H would usually be for a fixed period of not normally more than twelve months. At the end of this period s/he will revert to the grade G if appropriate. Where there is an ongoing requirement for the role of module leader to be undertaken this will be paid at grade H.”*

**Despite this agreement areas in the university have been paying band ‘G’ to new and existing staff who have been given module leadership.**

In 2019, the University consulted the branch on changes they wished to make to this agreement. They argued that this agreement was dated and therefore no longer current. No agreement was reached! The University’s position is that it can ask a Lecturer at grade ‘G’ to undertake module leadership, but it **will only do so if certain ‘safeguards’** are in place. The purpose of these safeguards is to ensure a new module leader is supported in undertaking this role. *The safeguards are that:*

- 1. The lecturer must have successfully passed their probation period.*
- 2. They must be on or above scale point 33, the mid-point in the grade.*
- 3. The lecturer will only be asked to lead modules of a reasonable size and complexity.*
- 4. The lecturer will be provided with appropriate support and mentoring in order to assist them in undertaking the module leadership role.*

The above is **not policy** and not agreed by UCU. Indeed, it is not published on the intranet.

**So, if you are band ‘G’ and are module leading, please contact UCU for advice and support. [Judith2.worthington@UWE.ac.uk](mailto:Judith2.worthington@UWE.ac.uk)**



Not a UCU member yet? Here's how to join:  
<http://join.ucu.org.uk>



## UCU Exec Contacts

- **Chair** - Phil Sayce
- **Vice-Chair** - Chris Mason
- **Branch Secretary** - Sarah Harding
- **Treasurer** - Grant Howie
- **Branch Organiser & ROCC Chair** - Carolyn Sissoko
- **Recruitment Officer** - Andy Mathers
- **Case Worker Leads** - Clive Warn & Phil Sayce
- **Equality Committee Chair**- Anne Foley
- **Health and Safety Officer** - Vacant

A full list of all UCU branch officers and their contact emails is available [HERE](#)

## Wellbeing

Report stress to your line manager as soon as possible so action can be taken to help eliminate or reduce stress to a safe level. Your manager will work with you to identify the specific causes of your stress and help you address them. If your stress is related to a personal issue, your manager could allow you some flexibility and time. They will advise you of any appropriate leave (such as [carer's leave](#) or [compassionate leave](#)) or consider allowing unpaid leave. Your manager may review your work to see if some could be prioritised or deadlines extended to reduce additional work pressures. If your stress is work related, your manager will work with you to identify the specific causes of stress. The HSE's [standards](#) for stress (external link) cover the six primary causes of stress at work. Your manager should carry out a wellbeing at work action plan to identify the issues and the actions to effectively manage stress. Follow-up meetings will be scheduled to review progress against the actions and check whether further support is required. If reporting stress to your line manager would not be appropriate you should contact [People Services Advice Team](#) for advice and guidance or Click [HERE](#) for more staff support and [HERE](#) for EAP.



## The LGBT+ Staff Network

The LGBT+ Staff Network is for colleagues who identify as being part of the LGBT+ community. The network provides peer support, networking opportunities, a focus group for discussion of LGBT+ and related issues, and provides a voice to the University on equality issues.



Are you over bundled?  
Remember to email your people manager to request workload carry over to the next academic year!



## Names and Contacts of UWE UCU reps:

- **CHSS College Rep:** Glenside (role share) Clive Warn [clive.warn@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:clive.warn@uwe.ac.uk) and Judith Worthington [judith2.worthington@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:judith2.worthington@uwe.ac.uk)
- **CBL College Rep:** Margaret Roberts [margaret3.roberts@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:margaret3.roberts@uwe.ac.uk)
- **CATE College Rep:** Chris Mason [christopher4.mason@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:christopher4.mason@uwe.ac.uk)
- **Anti-Casualisation Officer:** Richard Broomhall [richard.broomhall@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:richard.broomhall@uwe.ac.uk)
- **Academic Related Staff Rep:** Matt Proom [matt.proom@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:matt.proom@uwe.ac.uk)
- **Black Members Rep:** Vacant. Please contact [ucu@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:ucu@uwe.ac.uk) if you are interested in serving.
- **Researcher's Rep:** Vacant. Please contact [ucu@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:ucu@uwe.ac.uk) if you are interested in serving.
- **Disabled Members Rep:** Judith Worthington [judith2.worthington@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:judith2.worthington@uwe.ac.uk)
- **Women's Rep:** Charlotte Selleck [charlotte.selleck@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:charlotte.selleck@uwe.ac.uk)
- **LGBTQIA+:** Clive Warn [clive.warn@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:clive.warn@uwe.ac.uk)