

The start of the academic year has seen chaos for staff in many areas of the university. Academic staff are reporting absent timetables, mystification of the workload policy across the university and a stark absence of collaborative working with managers around workload. Timetabling staff are under huge pressure and are in a constant state of firefighting with the effect being an increased pressure of work on academics who must mitigate the impact of mistakes, on students and the experiences they have. Remember the trope that student experience is key? The university need to understand how the experience of the staff is the experience of the students. The university simply do not make this link.

UWE are coming for your workload! UCU have seen various 'interpretations' of the workload policy where staff are being told 'no' carry over the first 15 WLBs. However, UWE confirm staff are not able to unilaterally take an extra 5 days of leave (which is 15 WLBs). Those five days matter! Why should we lose them? The university have said they are 'capping' any carry over to 55 WLBs (about 3.5 weeks' worth of work) because it would be unreasonable to carry any more than that forward. There is no plan to manage the managers who fail to manage the workload of their team effectively, nor a plan to mitigate the resulting impact on staff physical and psychological health. Staff who are over-bundled are blamed for the over-bundling! And if they don't come with a plan that fits into the university's unilaterally constructed rule of the bundle cap - it's their problem!

Let's face it - the university do not care about over bundling and their inaction and unfair rule making, clearly demonstrates that. By being over bundled you risk the accusation of not being able to manage your time - is perverse.

Furthermore, members need to demand your union has a seat at the workload management group. Currently we are being 'done to' and the very staff this group seeks to manage does not communicate with your union. This is your work, and you need a voice. Sign the petition for your union to be on that management group [CLICK HERE](#).

Remember:

- **You must not be over bundled.**
- **All work needs to be bundled.**
- **You must have workload conversations with your people manager.**
- **Over bundling yourself deprives our incoming, and hourly paid, academics of work.**
- **If you really must be over-bundled (career enhancing opportunity, or for work which has already done) - you must get a written agreement from management saying you will take ALL of the over-bundling to the next academic year or be paid as HPL at the appropriate rate for the work.**
- **No agreement, no over-bundling. **We need to take a stand.****

Solidarity - we need action now to protect your future working conditions - act now.

Phil Sayce, Chair.

PS, if wages were deducted for working under MAB, or if you took on unpaid work, like extra marking, do not sign off your TAS because it's inaccurate - it claims you were paid for work, however you haven't been paid and is a misrepresentation.

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- LGBT+ equality conference info
- Stressed? Help and advice links.

Recruitment Organisation Campaigning Chair (ROCC) Carolyn Sissoko

It's a busy time for ROCC and there are a few items of interest I would like your help with and bring to your attention

1. Please sign our petition to Steve West

UCU was on strike a year ago over working conditions at UWE, and to date none of the issues that drove us to the picket line have been addressed. Most importantly, UWE's academic staff are concerned that UWE is currently struggling to meet student needs in large part because UWE's expenditure on staff costs as a percent of annual revenue has declined by 5% since the pre-Covid years. This situation has put excessive pressure on academics, who have students with needs that the University does not have the capacity to meet. In addition, as academics we find ourselves every year doing more and more of the work that administrative staff did in the past. At the same time the evidence indicates that expenditure on university management has been increasing; however, despite repeated promises UWE management has not shared with its unions the data on employee expenditures by pay grade. In this environment the challenges faced by the University sector are being used to justify a further, so far unspecified, transformation, even though UWE, as the VC acknowledges, has 'a strong balance sheet'. Our managers need to know that we stand together against compulsory redundancies. Please sign our petition, available [here](#)

2. Please fill out the UCU survey on workload

The more data UCU has on the current dysfunction in the workload system, the stronger is our position in discussions with management. Please fill out this survey and send the link on to your non-UCU colleagues: [Workload survey](#)

FAQs on dealing with workload:

• Why does UCU advise against taken on excess workload or taking on work with inadequate workload bundles?

When you take on work for which you do not receive adequate WLBs or when you agree to be over bundled, you are not just harming yourself but keeping someone else from getting a job. In practice, you are not doing this 'for the benefit of the students' because you are enabling unsustainable management practices that are generating growing harm to the University over time.

• What happens if I'm a module leader and I have sessions scheduled to run, but I don't have staff on the module team with the workload bundles to run the session?

If the managers have not provided resources for a session, then the session should not run. If you are at workload capacity, you should NOT pick up additional workload.

• What should I do when my manager asks me to do work, but accepting the work would cause me to be over bundled?

If you are being asked to do work without WLBs or without adequate WLBs, you should refuse to do the work. Tell your manager to feed upwards that the work has not been adequately resourced. It may help to talk to your colleagues and push back as a team. Contact UCU@uwe.ac.uk, as we may need to take these issues to a Collective Grievance or go into dispute. At the same time, things that are fundamentally unfair need to be addressed by management immediately.

• What should I do if the work of someone who was made redundant is being allocated to me?

The work of someone who was made redundant can only be reallocated if someone is under bundled. It cannot be reallocated without accompanying workload bundles or by causing someone to be over bundled. If the work is not resourced, management have decided it should not be done. *We as a group have to hold this line to protect AL and admin jobs.*

• Is it okay for my manager to say teaching-related tasks are covered by the general 'academic administration' bundles?

Academic administration bundles have nothing to do with teaching but refer to the time spent doing things like filling in Holiday forms and other employee-related administrative tasks.

• I am an Module Lead and I have been asked to ask around to find out who has workload availability to staff my module. Is this my job?

MLs and PLs should not be determining how to staff modules, because they cannot allocate resources. That is the role of a manager.

• I am in a situation where I am going to choose to be over bundled, do you have any advice for me?

UCU advised you to be sure to get in writing a commitment from your line manager and/or upper-level managers what you will be given in exchange for taking on the excess workload. Be aware that you cannot rely on any informal commitments, such as claims that you will have the right to carry over workload bundles.

Dr Rick Ball and Dr Mary Alice Young (Law) are the new College Representatives for Business and Law following a long absence of representation at the College level.

Rick and Mary welcome all Union members to contact them should they wish to discuss any work-related issues in strict confidence. Rick and Mary can signpost fellow UCU College members to access further help and get the ball rolling concerning the processing of any matters which require further attention.

You can contact Rick and Mary at richard.ball@uwe.ac.uk; mary.young@uwe.ac.uk

[Annual National Congress views from a first-time delegate; Margaret Roberts](#)

This was my first time attending a national congress; it was an unusual experience! Held in Bournemouth between 29th and 31st May 2024.

What I experienced and learned from my first congress :

- You need to know parliamentary procedure for allowing points of order, rebuttal and speakers times, and to pay close attention to paragraphs of motions – people refer to specific sections.... keeping you on your toes.
- It was interesting to discover issues facing other UCU colleagues.
 - e.g. One university trying to transfer professional services staff to a limited company to contracts that are NOT commensurate with current Terms (can anyone say [TUPE](#) and [TUPE](#)! – watch this space).
- Finding out about the issues facing FE who are included in UCU
- The Palestinian Ambassador, Husam Zomlot, made an impassioned plea to the congress for support
- UWE branch did not put forward a motion this year (perhaps a discussion for next year?)

Motions passed (the ones I noted)

- [Business of Recruitment and Organising see Section 6 of NEC report](#)
 - Anti Casualisation
 - Support democratic debate between branches
 - UCU condemns use of subsidiary companies in order to circumvent TPS contributions for new staff
 - Support NPC pensioner commission
- UCU to develop parliamentary campaigns for HE
- [Save post 16 education for the many not for the few](#)
 - Definition of Free speech vs academic freedom
- Inequality crises from retired members group

There were more motions (full details [HERE](#)) but quite honestly it was very confusing.

Each person who supports the motion gives a little preamble and sometimes these were very long meandering stories, then I forgot what the motion was.....

The separate [Further](#) and [Higher](#) Education Sector conference was cancelled on the day (30th May 2024) due to Unison strike action, so, [UCU](#) decided to cancel both sector conference day in support of our Unison colleagues.

Hope this helps if it's your first congress in 2025.

UWE UCU Exec Vacancies

There are currently some vacancies (and workload) on the UWE exec. Please contact ucusecretary@uwe.ac.uk if you would like more information regarding any of the positions below:

- **Treasurer**
- **Recruitment Officer**
- **Health and Safety Lead**

UCU reading group

If you'd like more information,
please contact Greta Squire
Greta.Squire@uwe.ac.uk



News from UWE's LGBT+ Staff Network.

There is a members equality conference coming up, if you would like more information, please click [HERE](#)

LGBTQ branch rep. Clive.Warn@uwe.ac.uk

Not a UCU member yet? Here's how to join: [JOIN HERE](#)



Stressed?

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 set of management 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.

General members meeting dates 2024 via TEAMS.

Friday 6th December 2024 at 12.00

ucusecretary@uwe.ac.uk

Names and Contacts of UWE UCU reps:

- **CHSS College Rep:** Glenside (role share) Clive Warn clive.warn@uwe.ac.uk and Judith Worthington judith2.worthington@uwe.ac.uk
- **CBL College Rep:** Margaret Roberts margaret3.roberts@uwe.ac.uk and Rick Ball Richard.ball@uwe.ac.uk
- **CATE College Rep Frenchay:** Chris Mason christopher4.mason@uwe.ac.uk
- **CATE rep Bower and City Campus:** Margaret Roberts margaret3.roberts@uwe.ac.uk
- **Anti-Casualisation Officer and Web Officer:** Richard Broomhall richard.broomhall@uwe.ac.uk
- **Academic Related Staff Rep:** Matt Proom matt.proom@uwe.ac.uk
- **Race & Ethnicity Rep:** Amelia Baldwin amelia.baldwin@uwe.ac.uk
- **Researcher's Rep:** Margaret Roberts margaret3.roberts@uwe.ac.uk
- **Disabled Members and Environmental Rep:** Judith Worthington judith2.worthington@uwe.ac.uk
- **Women's Rep and Social Media Lead:** Charlotte Selleck charlotte.selleck@uwe.ac.uk
- **LGBTQIA+:** Clive Warn clive.warn@uwe.ac.uk
- **Branch Communications Officer:** Greta Squire great.squire@uwe.ac.uk
- **Health and Safety Rep:** vacant