UWE UCU Branch Minutes of the AGM
22 May 2025 1200-1300
Via Teams

Executive/ROCC members in attendance:
Phil Sayce, (PS) Branch Chair
Christopher Mason, (CM) Vice Chair,
Sarah Harding (SH) Branch Secretary
Carolyn Sissoko (CS) Branch Organiser and ROCC Chair
Clive Warn (CW) HAS College Rep Glenside, LGBTQ+ and Casework Lead
Anne Foley (AF) Equality Committee Chair and Caseworker
Matt Proom (MP) Academic Related Staff Rep
Charlotte Selleck (CS) Women's Rep
Amelia Baldwin (AB) Race and Ethnicity Rep
Kim Duffy (KD) SHSW College Rep Glenside (job share) and Academic Related Staff Rep
Kait Clark (KC) Recruitment Officer
Greta Squire (GS) CHSS College Rep Frenchay

SAR: Miles Thompson,
6 Members Present. The meeting was not quorate with 19 members in attendance.

Notes Christine Taylor

1. Welcome. PS welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes of previous AGM 22 May 2024

2.1 The minutes were shared by SH on screen, and copies were available before the meeting. There were no corrections.
2.2 The minutes of the 22 May 2024 were agreed as an accurate account. (PS proposed and CM seconded and the meeting agreed.)
2.3 There were no matters arising.

3. Branch Annual Report overview from Phil Sayce Chair

3.1 Officers reports were circulated during the meeting, and a copy is stored on the UCU@UWE website.
3.2 PS spoke of the university culture which was causing great concern. PS felt we had made some progress in opening channels of communication and there has been some success in challenging the culture.
3.3 PS felt the responsibility for culture change should come from senior management.
3.4 PS said it was a fair analysis that happiness, contentment, joy and in some cases feelings of safety in the university are problematic for different people. This can be seen in some of the complex casework we have had.
3.5 Workload continues to be attacked. There is a lack of appreciation behind the workload model. PS felt it was being used as a stick to beat people. Staff are doing double the work to meet the expectations of the model. Part time staff are being exploited and we are seeing black and disabled members having a different experience in the university.
3.6 PS continued that the university are still looking at G to H grades and want module leadership to be a deciding factor in H Grade progression. There are differentials across the university as to who gets the H Grade for module leadership and who is being held on G grades.

3.7 The university are slow to recognise that we have an agreement, and they are duty bound to accept that. PS said this is a challenge to us as a Branch to encourage activism, this is a live issue.
3.8 PS concluded that the challenges are still there. This year the Branch is in a good position and the new executive is well supported. PS hopes that the union can build on the collaborations where they work and use the power of the membership to support the executive in challenging the university to respond decently to staff and the concerns they raise.
3.9 PS wished the new leadership in the union the best of luck.
3.10 PS thanked everyone he had worked with over the last few years. PS will continue as the Branch Treasurer and will be following an interest in Employment Law away for the university.

Vice Chair's Annual Report overview – Chris Mason

3.11 CM added that he reiterated PS's comments about the H Grade. We have the Pay Equality Project. It is very clear in that project that if you are a lecturer and you act as a Module Leader you should be paid at H Grade.
3.12 CM said regarding the WAMs he had been in meetings with the HoC for CHSS and CATE and they want to make sure no staff are over bundled. It should be the same in CBL. It is in our own polices that over bundling is only by agreement.
3.13 CM said he had enjoyed his time as Vice Chair, however it has been challenging and frustrating at times. CM wished AF the very best when she takes over.

Secretary's Annual Report overview – Sarah Harding

3.14 SH was pleased to be continuing in her role this year and reported having lots more work to do. SH was looking forward to working with the new team.
3.15 PS noted the work SH had done on the Branch Newsletter and how it is increasing engagement.

Recruitment Organising and Campaigns Committee Chair Annual Report overview – Carolyn Sissoko

3.16 CS reported that this year felt, from the UCU perspective, like the clam before the storm. There was the announcement of redundancies that were then focused on the Professional Services staff. We need to applaud Unison for making sure they did not become compulsory redundancies.
3.17 We are aware that we may be next, and we are preparing and organising for the upcoming year.

EDI Chair Annual Report overview – Anne Foley

3.18 AF reported that this has been a challenging year, not only with the Far Right coming to Bristol but what is happening on campus. AF wanted to thank the EDI team for their support.
3.19 AF said this isn't a one-person job, it is everybody's job, it is the heart of the union. AF will be supporting AB as she steps into this role.
3.20 AF agreed with PS that the culture at the top of the university filters down and this place is not always a safe place for people who are from many different intersectional backgrounds. As a union we want to make this a safe space for everyone
3.21 AF wanted to take this opportunity to thank PS and CM and the EDI team for all their help and support.

Casework Lead Annual Report overview – Clive Warn

3.22 CW reported that casework is always busy. Members always need support, either a call, a quick Teams meeting or representing members at grievances, and meetings with managers.

3.23 The team of Caseworkers work across the university with our members in a variety of roles and ways. We have successes all the time but most of what we do is confidential.

3.24 CW said in the last couple of years working with HR has been one of the biggest challenges. There has been an inconsistency in the approach from HR and HR are central to any casework that we do. It is important that we have a good relationship with HR and that we demonstrate a good practice.

3.25 CW has worked closely with HR this year to help them have a better understanding of the casework that we do. It was evident that HR see cases but weren't picking up on themes across the university.

3.26 We now have strategies in place to work towards a better relationship.

3.27 The big themes are workload and the cultures around that. It is important that we hear that management recognise overbundling, but in reality, we see inconsistencies. It is important that we keep the message strong to our membership that they are in control of their workload. No, is a very effective word and we can support members in controlling their workload.

3.28 CW thanked PS and CM for their support and look forward to working with the new executive in the coming year.

3.29 PS added that CW's leadership in relation to Casework has been inspirational, and CW's ability to work with the HR team in an assertive way to put our members interests at the forefront will be key going forward.

3.30 PS noted the broad scope of casework and the difficulties in developing the necessary knowledge to support it.

It was noted there were some reports from College Reps which were available to read in the circulated document.
May-25-Branch-Annual-Report-UWE-University-and-College-Union.pdf

4. Elections

4.1 PS informed the meeting that the nominations list was circulated on the 21 May and asked the meeting to adopt the nominations. AF seconded this.

4.2 The Lead Officers and Representatives on the table below were agreed. It was noted there were no contested places.

4.3 PS mentioned the Web Officer vacancy.

4.4 The PS welcomed the new members to the Executive and was pleased to note that nearly all roles were now filled. This is an amazing position to be in.

4.5 PS congratulated all the nominated Officers and Representatives and handed the meeting over to MP our new Chair.

4.6 MP thanked PS and CM for their work, leading the Branch through some tricky times, including a period of industrial action, and the marking and assessment boycott.

4.7 MP spoke of his pride in serving as Branch Chair and shared personal memories of his grandfather, who was a union man at the Shell Oil refinery in Ellesmere Port. MP added that we have an important role in standing up for our members and every union Branch in the land should be led by its members.

4.8 AF echoed MP's appreciation of PS and CM's work for the Branch which has left us in a very strong place. There's always work to be done in how we support, recruit and retain members. We are a democratic group, led by our members.

UCU Executive Posts -
Nominations at 4 pm 12 May 2025 Ratified at Branch AGM on 22 May 2025

Lead Officers	Nominee
Chair	Matt Proom
Vice Chair	Anne Foley
Branch Secretary	Sarah Harding
Branch Organiser & ROCC Chair	Carloyn Sissoko
Recruitment Officer	Kait Clark
Treasurer	Phil Sayce
Casework Lead Officer	Clive Warn
Health and Safety Lead Officer	Chris Mason
Equality Committee Chair	Amelia Baldwin
CHSS College Rep - Frenchay	Greta Squire
SHSW College Rep – Glenside (job share)	Judith Worthington
SHSW College Rep – Glenside (job share)	Kim Duffy
CBL College Rep Job Share	Rick Ball
CBL College Rep Job Share	Mary Young
CATE College Rep - Frenchay	Chris Mason
CATE College Rep – Bower and City Campus	Chris Mason
Equality and Diversity Committee	
Anti-Casualisation Officer	Margaret Roberts
Academic Related Staff Rep	Kim Duffy
Race and Ethnicity Rep	Amelia Baldwin
Researcher's Rep Job Share	Rick Ball
Researcher's Rep Job Share	Mary Young
Disability Rep	Charlotte Selleck
Women's Rep	Charlotte Selleck
LGBTQIA+	Clive Warn
Additional Elected Branch roles:	
Green/Sustainability Rep	Miles Thompson
Web Officer	Vacant
Social Media Officer	Charlotte Selleck
Branch Communications Officer	Margaret Roberts
Membership Officer	Sarah Harding
Pensions Policy Officer	Chris Mason
Learning Rep	Chris Mason

The AGM closed at 1300.

There was a short discussion about what was important to the members present; topics included pay, teaching staff what unions are about, recruiting more members and breaking down the union stereotypes.