



Dear Sir Michael,

Congratulations on your recent appointment as the first chancellor of Nottingham Trent University (NTU). I was pleased to read that you see the role as one where you hope to inspire staff and students of the university. As general secretary of the University and College Union (UCU), the largest post-16 education trade union, I am writing to you to with regards to the current situation at NTU for our members.

UCU is in dispute with NTU over recognition of the union. Over three quarters of UCU members at NTU voted for industrial action in a ballot last month and on Tuesday 21 October UCU members took a day's strike action. Essentially the university has said it will continue to deal with UCU, but only if the union complies with radically inferior new proposals. Our members, quite understandably, will not accept having new proposals that inhibit their ability to work as an equal partner with university management imposed on them.

The dedicated staff at NTU are recognised and thanked by the university in various statements on its website, yet at present they feel insulted and let down by the university's actions. I hope that you can use your new influence at the institution to encourage the university to sit back down with the union and resolve this issue. We strongly feel that the current impasse is not in the interests of anyone connected to NTU and we have no desire to harm its proud reputation as a leading new university.

We want the university to commit to working 'with staff to create an environment that enables everyone to add value in all that they do... an environment that is inclusive, supportive and focussed on success, building on the high levels of pride and loyalty that already exist within the university,' as its mission so proudly suggests. We hope that, as its first chancellor, you will be keen to help foster such a working environment.

The university's proposals are quite unique in higher education and opposition to them is far-reaching throughout the academic community. Over 12,000 people have already signed a petition condemning NTU and we would like the opportunity to present the petition to you on 11 November so you are aware of the strength of feeling in the wider academic community about the institution you will be representing. Furthermore a UCU delegation would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this issue, and also how we may be able to work together in the future.

Yours sincerely

Sally Hunt
UCU general secretary