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## 1. **Equality Conference 2013**



Registrations are now open for UCU members to attend the 2013 Annual Equality Conference.

It will be held at University of London Union, Malet Street, London, WC1E 7HY, from 10:00am to 4:30pm on Friday 15 November.

The conference is an excellent opportunity to meet other UCU members and discuss equality work. It consists of a mixture of motions from branches/LA's, guest speakers and workshops, and is central to taking forward the equality work of UCU.

There will be four separate meetings in the morning for women, black, disabled and LGBT members to discuss issues relevant to that group, move motions and elect members to the national standing committees. All attendees will then meet together in the afternoon.

**For full information, and to register for the conference, visit the following link:**

**<http://www.ucu.org.uk/6766>**

See the preliminary agenda for the conference overleaf.

## **Draft Agenda of the UCU Equality Conference 2013**

**10:00 – 10:30 Registration and refreshments**

**10:30 – 13:00**

**LGBT, Women's, Black Members' and Disabled Members' Conferences**

**13:00 – 14:00 Lunch**

**14:00 Plenary session with guest speakers**

**15:00 – 16:00 Workshops. Speakers confirmed so far:**

**1. Equality bargaining: keep equality on the agenda**

Paul Bridge, Deputy Head of Higher Education.

**2. Participation in the union: how can we ensure the union reflects our membership in all roles and structures**

Karen Brooks, Head of Training and Janet Newsham, ULF project lead on 'developing women in the education sector'

**3. Anti-fascism: campaigning workshop on the European elections and defeating Brons & Griffin.**

Weyman Bennett, Unite Against Facism

**4. Mental health awareness and supporting members with mental health issues and conditions.**

Emma Mamo, MIND

**5. Violence against women (including campus and international perspective)**

Kat Banyard from UKFeminista and the campaign for 'Lose the Lads mags' campaign

Nimco Ali, Daughters of Eve

**6. Identifying and understanding discrimination cases and checklist for action**

**7. Importance of monitoring and being confident to disclose in the workplace.**

**8. (family) friendly workplaces - how can we campaign for, achieve and maintain balance between our work and life demand**

Elizabeth Gardiner from Working Families

**16:15 – 16:30 Final session**

## 2 Public Sector Equality Duty



The Public Sector Equality Duty is a legacy of the Macpherson inquiry, which investigated the death of Stephen Lawrence and found that the police were institutionally racist. The Race Equality Duty was brought into force to address institutional racism, advance good relations and equality of opportunity. This Duty was later extended to Disability under the Disability Equality Duty in 2006 and to Sex under the Gender Equality Duty in 2007.

In 2010, under the Equality Act 2010, the Duty was extended to age, sexual orientation, transgender, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief and pregnancy and maternity. The duty is known as the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and it came into force in April 2011.

Recently the PSED has been under attack, with the ConDem government seeking to dismantle the legislation.

UCU was heavily involved with the recent review of the Public Sector Equality Duty, responding to the consultation and attending meetings and sounding boards.

The review group issued its report on the review on 6<sup>th</sup> September. The major findings are that it is too early to review the impact of the PSED which is exactly what UCU had argued. The report includes recommendations which include:

- Guidance must be clearer on the **minimum** requirements placed on public bodies (the report makes clear that EIA's are seen as a burden on business and public bodies).
- Public bodies should not collect diversity data unless it is necessary for them to do so
- Public bodies must ensure they adopt a proportionate approach to compliance and not seek to 'gold plate'.

UCU will continue to work with the TUC on monitoring developments as it is clear that the intention to dismantle the duty is still there.

You can read more on the background and the UCU campaign on the Public Sector Equality here: <http://www.ucu.org.uk/equalityduties>

Download the UCU Public Sector Equality Duty toolkit here:

[http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/pdf/i/3/UCU\\_Equality\\_duty\\_toolkit.pdf](http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/pdf/i/3/UCU_Equality_duty_toolkit.pdf)

## Send us your evidence

UCU needs evidence of when the PSED has been used positively in your institution. Please send in any examples of where the PSED has created positive change to: [eqadmin@ucu.org.uk](mailto:eqadmin@ucu.org.uk)



### 3. New Mental Health Guidance

October 10th is World Mental Health Day, a day for global mental health education, awareness and advocacy. The theme for 2013 is Mental Health and Older Adults. You can find information on how to mark the day, including ideas and resources, on the Mental Health Foundation website here:

<http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/get-involved/as-a-fundraiser/teaandtalk/>

UCU will be marking the day by redistributing its recently launched guidance, **Supporting Members with Mental Health Conditions and Issues**, which is available for download here:



[http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/pdf/f/f/UCU\\_MEN\\_2013\\_02\\_high.pdf](http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/pdf/f/f/UCU_MEN_2013_02_high.pdf)

Branches are urged to use the guidance and send feedback to [eqadmin@ucu.org.uk](mailto:eqadmin@ucu.org.uk)



### 4. Social Sustainable Work

At a time when employer's agenda on flexibility is being widely condemned, for example zero hours and term time only contracts, employees need support in arguing for working arrangements that reduce, rather than create, stress.

Socially sustainable work is a concept that broadens thinking about work-life balance and promotes the importance of considering the impact of working practices on wider life beyond the sphere of paid employment. This means that policies and practices about working patterns should be constructed and implemented with regard to quality of life. This is particularly important at a time when increasing numbers of people remain in employment for many years beyond traditional age of retirement.

To maintain employment many employees need to see that their needs and working preferences, such as reduced hours leading to retirement, are regarded whilst employers need to optimise resources; both of these require flexible approaches to working life. Flexibility across working the lifespan supports socially sustainable working lives. Examples of supportive working practices include

**Part time work** – part time work can offer sustainable work for parents, but also for older workers, and those who suddenly encounter caring responsibilities.

**Career breaks** - career breaks can also offer opportunities for people to meet broader life aims or requirements. As socially sustainable working is linked to the quality of life it is a key element of an institution’s corporate social responsibility and engagement with the communities where they operate.

UCU aims to produce a guide for reps and members around the concept of socially sustainable work as part of our work to promote age friendly workplaces. An initial part of this is to find what policies are already in place and what is being offered. We are also interested to hear individual stories. Policies and practices may include:

- Flexible retirement
- Part time working / Job -sharing
- Career breaks
- Compressed hours
- Temporary arrangements that support emergency leave for caring commitments

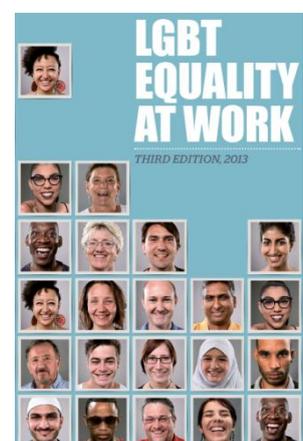
Please send us your contributions to [eqadmin@ucu.org.uk](mailto:eqadmin@ucu.org.uk)

## 5. TUC launches new guide to combat homophobia at work

The TUC has published an updated version of its guidance for LGBT workers.

LGBT Equality at Work (Third Edition) provides a context for LGBT equality issues today with sections covering:

- Using the right language
- The Law and LGB and T people
- Workplace issues and good practice
- Trans workplace issues
- Monitoring: why and how
- Challenging prejudice, promoting equality
- Resources: help and advice



You can download the guidance here:

[http://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/tucfiles/lgbt\\_equality\\_at\\_work\\_2013\\_online.pdf](http://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/tucfiles/lgbt_equality_at_work_2013_online.pdf)



## 6. Remploy factory closures

Responding to the announcement that a further three Remploy factories in Neath, Sheffield and Blackburn will close, TUC General Secretary Frances O'Grady said:

'The imminent closure of the Remploy factories in Blackburn, Neath and Sheffield means that another 160 disabled workers will lose their jobs with potentially devastating consequences for themselves and their families.

'There are already far more jobseekers than vacancies in these areas so their chances of finding new jobs are slim, particularly as many employers remain reluctant to hire severely disabled people.

'The government's withdrawal of support for Remploy factories continues to put hundreds of disabled people out of work and gives the lie to ministers' claims about supporting disabled people.'

## 7. Bedroom Tax



UCU, along with other trade unions supports the repeal of the bedroom tax. Nine in 10 disabled people are being forced to cut back on food or paying household bills after being refused emergency housing payments to help them pay the "**bedroom tax**", research has found.

The **report by the disability charity Papworth Trust** shows that almost one in three disabled applicants are being rejected for discretionary housing payments (DHPs) from the government fund intended to provide assistance to **housing benefit** claimants who are unable to pay a shortfall in their rent.

Almost two-thirds of people affected by the loss of housing benefit on rooms deemed to be "spare" are disabled. DHPs were widely promoted by the government as protecting people with disabilities from the worst effects of its under-occupation charge, which was introduced in April. Yet disabled people are no more likely to be given an emergency housing payment than non-disabled people, the research found, even if they live in adapted properties.

David Martin, strategy director at the Papworth Trust, says: "The government asked councils to prioritise people with disabilities and long-term health conditions when deciding who should get emergency payments. This simply isn't happening."

### Short-term help

Paul and Sue Rutherford had hoped to be awarded a DHP at least for short-term help in making up the £13.50 a week they are losing for having a third bedroom. Though disabled themselves – Paul has a lung condition while Sue has chronic depression – they are full-time carers to their grandson. Warren, 13, has a rare chromosome disorder. He is unable to walk or talk, cannot feed himself, and is doubly incontinent. Their house in west Wales is purpose-built for his needs, with ceiling hoists, wide doorways, a wet room and a third bedroom that allows a carer to stay at weekends when Paul and Sue need respite. Last month, however, the family were rejected for a DHP because the county council judged they had excess income of £99 a week.

"I wish [that were true]," says Paul. "Pembrokeshire county council has included at least the majority of Warren's [**disability** living allowance, DLA] care component [in that calculation]."

Martin explains: "When calculating people's income, councils are including DLA to help them sift the sheer volume of deserving applications for these emergency payments." However, he says this goes against the advice of the work and pensions minister, Steve Webb, who has told councils to "**disregard income from disability-related benefits, as they are intended to be used to help pay for the extra costs of disability**".

For facts and practical resources on the Bedroom Tax, visit:

<http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/bedroom-tax>

**Write to your local councillor on the Bedroom Tax.** Ask them to oppose anyone losing their home or being forced to move due to the Bedroom Tax or other unjust benefit cuts, and call on landlords not to evict those pushed into arrears due to these measures.

Find your local councillors at <http://www.writetothem.com/>

...or at your local council website

## 8. UK Disability History Month

UK Disability History Month runs from the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November to the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December. This year the theme is '**Celebrating our Struggle for Independent Living: No Return to Institutions or Isolation**'. This covers HIV/AIDS Day (1st December),

International Day of People with Disabilities (3rd Dec) and International Human Rights Day (10th December). It also follows on directly from Anti-Bullying Week (19th to 23rd November).

UCU is encouraging its members to attend UKDHM events and to tell us about any events they set up of their own. You can find out about UKDHM and planned events at their website here:

<http://ukdisabilityhistorymonth.com/>

The idea of Disability History Month is that supporting organisations would collaborate to facilitate and organise events, publicity materials and speakers. The purpose is to raise awareness of the unequal position of disabled people in society and to advocate disability equality. Disabled people do not just identify as disabled but also as women or men, girls or boys, straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, black or minority ethnic. Throughout the month it will be important to recognise that disabled people have multiple identities and this also includes the type of impairment including mental, physical, invisible, learning difficulty or sensory impairment.

UCU's resources for disabled members are located here: <http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2306>

UCU also continues to promote its popular Disabled People's History wall chart. You can download a copy here:

[http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/pdf/4/h/ucu\\_disposter.pdf](http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/pdf/4/h/ucu_disposter.pdf)

or request a hard copy at [eqadmin@ucu.org.uk](mailto:eqadmin@ucu.org.uk)

## **9. UK Uncapped – Guidance on Points Based Immigration**

UK Uncapped is a broad, trade union-based campaign against the temporary migration cap that the government has created, and against the effects of the cap and the points-based immigration system on the area of education, business, workers' rights, human rights and economic growth. Visit the site to learn more and lend your support.

<http://www.ukuncapped.org/>

UCU has produced update guidance (2013) to members on the issue of Points Based Immigration. You can download it here:

[http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/docs/r/c/Updated\\_PBI\\_guidance\\_9\\_May131.doc](http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/docs/r/c/Updated_PBI_guidance_9_May131.doc)

## **Get involved!**

**If you would like to join one of our networks, please send an email to [eqadmin@ucu.org.uk](mailto:eqadmin@ucu.org.uk) stating your preferred email address along with the name of the network you would like to join. You should note that these networks are not discussion forums, but that you will be sent information relating to the area of equality. The networks available for joining are:**

**Black Members Network  
Women Members Network  
LGBT Members Network  
Disabled Members Network**