

# VOTE YES TO REJECT THE PAY SQUEEZE

## **Why you should vote YES to REJECT the employers' final offer:**

- Since 2009, the value of your pay has been decreasing.
- In the context of a rising cost of living and hikes to utility bills and the cost of fuel, the employers have used successive pay rounds to push down on annual pay awards.
- As a result, higher education staff have taken a pay cut of more than 10% over the last three years.
- Higher pensions contributions are further eroding our take-home pay.
- The employers are squeezing our pay and it's time to say enough.

## **What the unions asked for:**

- With our colleagues in UNISON, Unite, EIS and GMB, we asked the employers for a pay offer that would offset the rise in inflation, begin to catch up on lost pay and address serious inequalities in our sector.
- We asked for a 3.7% to cover the rise in inflation and 3.3% to begin to make up for lost pay.
- We asked for the employers to commit to pay a Living Wage, to make proposals to address the gender pay gap, which is still around 15%, to assimilate and fractionalise hourly paid lecturers on the national pay

- scales and to take action to make professorial pay more transparent.
- We also asked for a national approach to disability leave.

## **Our claim is modest, reasonable and affordable:**

- These are modest and reasonable actions that would stop the pay squeeze and tackle the some of the worst inequalities.
- The employers can afford them: universities are in reasonable financial health and they have driven down the proportion they spend on staff to a historic low of 53%.
- Over recent years, Vice Chancellors have seen pay increases much larger than our rates.
- We say, our universities must change their priorities and invest in their staff.

## **The employers' response:**

- Instead of choosing to invest in staff the employers offered a 1% pay rise. With current inflation that would mean by August this year members would have taken a pay cut of 12% since 2009.
- They offered nothing on a Living Wage, nothing on hourly-paid staff or professors and nothing that would mean action to tackle inequalities like the gender pay gap.

- This is yet another attempt to push down on staff costs and squeeze your pay and it will further entrench inequality .

## **The unions' response:**

- Unite and EIS have rejected the offer, while GMB and UNISON are consulting their members now.
- UCU's higher education sector conference asked for a consultative ballot to assess members' preparedness to take action in defence of their pay.
- We are recommending that you vote YES to rejecting the offer. If members agree, we will ballot you for industrial action.

## **Action can work:**

- The union is in no doubt that it will need sustained industrial action to make further progress.
- In 2005-6, our members took action and won a three year pay deal that began to reverse the historic decline in salaries.
- It's time to decide whether we take up that challenge again.

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