

Language is a human right— Save ESOL

The Save ESOL Campaign was established to tackle one of the biggest attacks on education. In October the Minister for Life-long learning announced that from September there would no longer be automatic fee remission on English classes. Our aim is to defend the rights of vulnerable workers, build alliances with other unions and build a winning campaign. The fight is not over.

******LATEST*LATEST*LATEST*LATEST******

UCU CALLS FOR MORATORIUM

At its latest full meeting, the UCU Further Education Committee voted to call for a moratorium on plans to remove automatic fee remission for English courses planned for this September. FEC proposed that the changes for the new academic year be postponed for one year to allow ESOL providers the time to adapt to the new procedures.

ESOL Conference sets direction for the future

On Friday 29 June the ESOL Conference set the future direction of the Save ESOL Campaign. The day was a great success with seventy delegates from across the country, including students, tutors and activists. There were also representatives from trade unions such as Unison, Usdaw and CWU and organisations in support of the campaign including the Refugee Council, Children's Society and the Family Welfare Association.

Out of two workshops focusing on community and social cohesion and the wider adult education campaign came ideas and suggestions about how the campaign can move forward and win for students in need of English classes. The conference agreed that there should be an immediate planning meeting to make arrangements for the upcoming demonstration to Save ESOL. A day of action in September was also agreed which will engage students and enable UCU branches to work with other trade unions at a local level to launch the Save ESOL Campaign into the new academic year.

In the new academic year the Save ESOL Campaign will continue. We are calling for:

- A funding strategy for ESOL from the government that goes beyond 2007/08
- Government to carry out a gender impact assessment on the changes to ESOL funding
- Each College to carry out a Race and Gender Impact Assessment Exercise

GLA send a clear message to colleges in London

Lee Jasper, policy director for the Greater London Assembly spoke about the need for the campaign to continue and sent a clear message to colleges about the extra money made available for ESOL provision in London. He stated that if the cash is not used as it was intended then the money should be taken back. Responding to concerns of several London delegates at the ESOL Conference that new money provided by the Greater London Authority may not meet relevant criteria, Lee Jasper set out his objectives if money was not used appropriately. As a result many of the UCU branches in London will be putting pressure on management to see that they meet the following criteria:

- Money should prioritise public sector provision over private sector
- *All* the money should be spent on reinstatement of provision
- Money should prioritise reinstatement of provision in the College before franchise

Preparing For Action

With a new cabinet and a new set of priorities in education this is the time to make a real difference. We need to make sure that the new Prime Minister and government ministers sit up and take notice. Our next big opportunity to make our voices heard is by taking direct action in the new academic year. At UCU Congress it was agreed that there will be a national demonstration in the Autumn. The date for the demonstration will be announced shortly, in the meantime, and to help get the word out about the demo, we are planning a National Day of Action which will take place across the UK on Wednesday 19th September. It's a day for everyone to get involved. We will be giving you more details and promotional materials shortly but for now get thinking about what you can do to make the Day of Action a success at your college. We want to hear your ideas about how we can attract attention locally and nationally, so let us know your ideas by emailing jnicholds@ucu.org.uk or find out more at www.ucu.org.uk

*******NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION*******

WEDNESDAY 19 SEPTEMBER

*******CALLING ALL UCU BRANCHES*******

ESOL Campaign takes to the streets of London

Hundreds of people gathered opposite the entrance to Downing Street in London on Friday 29th June after making a renewed commitment to the Save ESOL Campaign to continue campaigning until the fight is won. The crowd, including tutors, students and union activists called on the new Prime Minister to re-think the decision of the former cabinet to access to English classes. The protest was organised by the North East London Campaign to Save ESOL and adult education . While a small delegation made their way down to the official residence to hand in a postcard signed by supporters of the campaign the crowd heard from speakers such as Paul Mackney, associate general secretary and Islington MP, Jeremy Corbyn.



One Campaign, two petitions

The ESOL Campaign has certainly made its mark in Downing Street in recent weeks. During Adult Learning Week Paul Mackney and a delegation of ESOL students presented a 15,000 strong petition to the Prime Minister's door calling for the government to scrap plans to remove automatic fee remission for ESOL (far left) . On 29th June students and tutors from the North East London Save ESOL and Adult Education Campaign delivered a postcard to Number 10 showing the continued determination to campaign for Free ESOL.