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1. **BNP activity at the University of Bath**

UCU members would have learnt recently that Nick Griffin the leader of the British National Party has been invited to speak at the University of Bath on Monday 14 May. The local association are currently working with the Southsea Regional Office and local student union officers to demonstrate against this meeting if it goes ahead.

In the meantime if you want to support your colleagues at Bath please email the Vice Chancellor’s office: G.Breakwell@bath.ac.uk copied to the university secretary M.G.W.Humphriss@bath.ac.uk to ask her to review her decision. You can read UCU’s response in full at www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2534.

Your attention is drawn to the recent branch circular that sets out the union’s position on opposing the BNP. It has long been the policy of both predecessor unions to oppose the British National Party. These policies have been inherited and reaffirmed, to be discussed further at UCU’s inaugural Congress later this month. The branch circular can be downloaded at www.ucu.org.uk/circ/html/ucu17.html and www.ucu.org.uk/circ/rtf/ucu17.rtf.

2. **Equality and Diversity - Breaking Barriers project**

Calling All Mid-Career Women Working in the Bio/Health/Care Sectors

The University of Liverpool has been awarded a substantial research grant from the European Social Fund. You are invited to participate in the Breaking Barriers project which will provide a number of important outcomes including:

- An equal opportunities model of national significance
- A significant contribution to the evidence base on equality and diversity issues relating to women in the bio/health/care sectors
- Recommendations for change that will encourage and enable diversity and career progression for women in your sector

You can help plant the seeds of change:

Complete the online questionnaire - The link to the questionnaire, plus other useful information, is available from the website. www.liverpool.ac.uk/breakingbarriers

If you are based in the North West and would like to take part in an interview or focus group – contact:

julie.prescott@liverpool.ac.uk Tel 0151 794 4160
jane.ferguson@liverpool.ac.uk Tel 0151 794 5966

3. HESA Press release on student disability and ethnicity

Higher education participation widens as disabled access improves according to data from the newly released HESA Students in Higher Education Institutions 2005/06 publication which shows that the proportion of university students declaring a disability at all levels of study continues to rise. The total number of disabled students has risen by just over two thirds, or 67.7%, from 82,280 since 2000/01 while data on ethnicity reveals that the number of UK domiciled black students studying full-time for taught higher degrees (including doctorates and masters degrees) leapt by around a quarter with a 26.5% increase in black males and a 24.5% increase in black females.

For further information see www.hesa.ac.uk/press/releases.htm

4. Age Concern's latest publication on age discrimination

Age Concern has produced a guide to the new age discrimination law which came into effect on 1 October 2006.

There is information about what the law means for the individual and the second link below is to the practical guide which is aimed at any adviser who needs to identify or advise on a case where someone could have been discriminated against because of their age. It includes a step by step guide to dealing with a case and a number of case studies illustrating how the law applies to different scenarios.

www.ageconcern.org.uk/AgeConcern/age_discrimination.asp
www.ageconcern.org.uk/agediscriminationlaw/

5. Updated JNCHES equal pay guidance

The JNCHES (Joint Negotiating Committee for Higher Education Staff) Guidance on Equal Pay Reviews has been updated to assist institutions in carrying out equal pay reviews, as recommended in the JNCHES Pay Agreement 2006-09. The revised guidance takes account of changes in HE pay arrangements within institutions, as well as relevant developments in employment legislation since 2002. The guidance is available from the UCEA (Universities & College's Association) website:

www.ucea.ac.uk/index.cfm/pcms/site.Publications.publications_home/

6. 'Towards a Fairer Future'

One year on from the Women and Work Commission's report commissioned by the Prime Minister to look at how to reduce the gender pay gap and help women reach their full potential, the Minister for Women, Ruth Kelly, has published further progress on the Government's action plan in 'Towards a Fairer Future':

www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/publications/women_work_5threp.pdf.

The executive summary of the report is available via this link:

www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/publications/women_work_5threp_execsum.pdf.

7. Gender Equality Duty - specific duties for Scotland

Scottish Ministers have now made their decisions on the 'specific duties' for Scotland and these were laid in Parliament on 22 March. Information about how the Gender Equality Duty applies in Scotland can be found in Scotland section of the Equal Opportunities Commissions' website: www.eoc.org.uk/default.aspx?page=19000.

Get in touch

To contact the Equality Unit for more information about anything in this email, please use the following contacts:

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