

## **General Secretary: Job Description**

### **University & College Union (UCU): General Secretary – job description**

#### **Job Context**

UCU is the largest trade union and professional association for lecturers, learning support staff, academic-related, professional staff, trainers, researchers and managers working in further and higher education in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Our 120,000 members are employed mainly in universities, colleges of further education, colleges of higher education, and in adult, prison and land-based education. We also have members in the private sector, for example in private training agencies and language schools, as well as members working on a freelance basis. Students training to teach in post-school education also belong to UCU.

#### **Background**

The General Secretary is the chief salaried officer of UCU. The General Secretary is responsible to National Congress and the National Executive Committee for the overall performance and activities of UCU. The General Secretary is a member of the National Executive Committee and its subcommittees on a non-voting ex officio basis.

#### **Purpose of Post**

To lead UCU and ensure its strategic and operational aims and objectives are met; to maximise UCU's potential within and outside the post-compulsory education sector nationally and internationally.

#### **Key duties and responsibilities**

To undertake the duties and responsibilities specified by the Rules of UCU.

To lead UCU and ensure strategic and operational aims and objectives are met, in accordance with policies agreed by National Congress and the NEC.

To establish and continuously develop UCU as a viable and effective organisation.

To report to and to advise the National Congress and the NEC on the activities and performance of the organisation.

#### **Representation of members**

To have overall responsibility for the development of strategic proposals in relation to the employment terms and working practices of members of UCU.

To have overall responsibility for the direction of national negotiations with employers and other agencies in the post compulsory education sector in accordance with UCU's nationally agreed bargaining agenda.

To oversee and support the work of the Bargaining and Negotiation Department and in particular to ensure:

- the effective representation of members in accordance with sector conference and National Congress policies

- the aims and objectives of sector conferences are met
- sectoral bargaining plans are coordinated with organising and recruitment objectives
- the development and implementation of regional plans in accordance with sector conference and National Congress policies.

### **Campaigning and organising**

To have overall responsibility for maximising UCU's membership potential.

To have overall responsibility for the strategic development and implementation of UCU's national organising plan.

To report to and to advise the National Congress and the NEC on the activities and performance of the organisation.

### **Equality and diversity**

To actively promote equality and diversity in all aspects of UCU's work.

To oversee and support the work of the Equality & Participation Department and ensure the integration of UCU's equality policies and objectives with UCU's bargaining activities.

### **Education policy**

To have overall responsibility for the strategic development and implementation of UCU's UK wide national public and post-16 education strategies and policies.

To oversee and support the work of the Policy & Campaigns Department and ensure UCU's UK wide public policy and political objectives are met.

### **External relations**

To proactively represent UCU to external audiences nationally and internationally and to facilitate a positive image for UCU.

To represent UCU in its dealings with employers, governmental and non-governmental bodies, key opinion formers and decision makers, other unions and professional bodies.

To take lead responsibility for the lobbying of government and shadow ministers, leading civil servants, key policy staff in the main political parties, TUC and general secretaries of unions, leading officials of post-compulsory sector organisations, NUS, UUK, UCEA, AoC, vice-chancellors and principals, funding councils, research councils, professional bodies, ACAS, CBI and other relevant bodies.

To take lead responsibility for inter-union relations, relations with the TUC, international trade union organisations and other international bodies.

To take the leading role in promoting UCU's aims and objectives in the media.

To represent UCU on public bodies relevant to UCU's work and aims and objectives.

## **Internal administration**

To have overall responsibility for the general administration of UCU in accordance with policies agreed by National Congress and the NEC.

To report to National Congress and the NEC on the work undertaken by staff and elected representatives.

To develop management and organisational structures and processes that enable UCU to deliver its strategic aims and objectives.

To ensure UCU meets its statutory and legal obligations and operates within trade union law, employment law, health and safety law, financial regulations, data protection and UCU Rules and to take such measures as are necessary to protect members' interests and UCU resources in the event that UCU breaches such obligations.

To oversee the operation of UCU's legal scheme in accordance with policies agreed by National Congress and the NEC.

To have overall responsibility for UCU's relationships with professional advisers and external providers.

## **Responsibility for staff**

To have overall responsibility for ensuring UCU develops and implements best employment practices.

To have overall responsibility for ensuring UCU values and embraces diversity amongst its workforce.

To have overall responsibility for the efficient and effective allocation of UCU staff to enable UCU's strategic and operational aims and objectives to be met.

To have overall responsibility for the effective management and development of UCU staff in accordance with UCU's personnel policies and procedures.

To have overall responsibility for recruitment and retention planning and processes within UCU.

To have overall responsibility for negotiations with the staff union.

To line manage the UCU Senior Management Team, who are the National Heads of Department of UCU.

To undertake grievance and discipline processes and to be the final authority for dismissal of staff in the organisation.

## **Responsibility for financial resources**

To have overall responsibility for the financial performance of UCU.

To have overall responsibility for ensuring UCU operates within budget; that financial plans are developed which maximise the utilisation of resources and control costs.

To have overall responsibility for ensuring effective financial procedures are in place in order that UCU's financial targets are met.

To ensure National Congress, the NEC and SFC are informed of the financial position of UCU.

To determine the budgets of all departments of UCU in consultation with SFC and relevant National Heads of Department.

To monitor and authorise expenditure within the limits of authority.

### **Responsibility for physical resources**

To have overall responsibility for the efficient and effective deployment of UCU's internal resources and infrastructure

To have overall responsibility for ensuring plans are developed which maximise the utilisation of internal resources and infrastructure.

### **Responsibility for information resources**

To keep the performance of UCU under constant review through the development of systems for analysing performance against nationally agreed objectives.

### **Other responsibilities**

To undertake such other duties as the NEC may reasonably require.

## **General Secretary: Terms of Employment**

Nothing in these terms shall be deemed to be detrimental to any contractual provisions already in place for a member of staff of the Union who may be elected to the post of General Secretary.

### **Salary scale: General Secretary**

£106,412 - £103,311 - £100,302 - £97,380 - £94,545 pa, plus London weighting as negotiated by the staff union, currently £4,278.

The post is full-time and its holder may not undertake any other work without the sanction of the National Executive Committee.

Expenses arising from employment are reimbursed. If the appointee has to move house to take up the post of General Secretary, reasonable removal expenses shall be met.

### **Hours of work**

Normal hours are 35 per week. The General Secretary is expected to work such hours as may be necessary and reasonable to carry out the duties of the post but not inconsistent with reasonable leisure time, and is required to attend all national UCU meetings which may fall outside normal working hours. The General Secretary is also required to be in attendance at the UCU annual Congress.

### **Holidays**

Seven weeks' annual leave with full pay.

In addition there is an entitlement to all Public Holidays other than those falling during the period of Congress for which days off in lieu are granted. In addition the holder is entitled to days off on the following closure days associated with Public Holidays:

- 5 days at Christmas/New Year
- 2 days at Easter holiday
- 1 after August Bank Holiday

### **Pension**

All permanent staff are eligible for membership of the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS). UCU will automatically enrol the postholder in USS unless s/he opts out, in writing, before the start of employment at UCU and thereafter confirms the opt-out on every third anniversary of appointment.

### **Union membership**

UCU encourages all its employees, including the General Secretary, to belong to a relevant recognised trade union and recognises Unite for that purpose.

## **Termination of Employment**

By law the post of General Secretary is subject to election every five years. During the five-year period of office, termination of appointment shall be by:

- i. The giving of six calendar months' notice in writing by either the General Secretary or the President acting on behalf of the National Executive Committee.
- ii. Summarily and without notice upon the postholder having been found, after due process, to have been guilty of gross misconduct.

Any variation of the above terms shall be by agreement of the officers of the union and subject to the endorsement of the National Executive Committee.

## **Other conditions of employment**

Other staff policies applicable to UCU staff and negotiated and agreed with the staff union, including UCU Discipline Policy and UCU Grievance Policy, will apply to the General Secretary.

March 2019