

University and College Union

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To	HE branch secretaries, regional committee secretaries, HE NEC members
Topic	Convening notice: Higher education special sector conference: to debate and direct the union's response to the attack on jobs, pay and conditions resulting from the response of employers to the Covid-19 pandemic, including a draft sector-wide claim. Wednesday 30 September 2020, on-line meeting
Action	To register delegates not later than 17:00, Friday 18 September; to call branch meetings to consider motions which must be submitted by 17:00, Friday 18 September
Summary	An on-line special HE sector conference will take place on Wednesday 30 September. Details of how to register delegates and submit motions are set out in this circular.
Contact	Christine Bernabe (cbernabe@ucu.org.uk) (submission of motions) Sue Bajwa (sbajwa@ucu.org.uk) (registration of delegates)

Convening notice: Higher education special sector conference – to debate and direct the union's response to the attack on jobs, pay and conditions resulting from the response of employers to the Covid-19 pandemic, including a draft sector-wide claim.

Wednesday 30 September 2020

The higher education committee has resolved that a special HE sector conference be held in September 2020, the committee having passed the following motion:

HEC notes that the response of many employers to the Covid-19 pandemic has been an attack on jobs, pay, and conditions, including the large scale sacking of staff on casual contracts, and proposals for "voluntary redundancy", short-time working, and "voluntary" pay cuts.

HEC resolves:

- i. to call an online Special HESC in the week beginning 6 July to debate and direct the union's response to this attack on our members;
- ii. to draw up a draft sector-wide claim to be considered at the Special HESC;
- iii. that the draft claim shall include, at a minimum, demands for the protection of all jobs, including the jobs of staff on casual contracts, and the protection of staff pay and safe working conditions;
- iv. that the claim, if adopted by the SHESC, shall be served on UCEA at the

earliest opportunity, and widely publicized as a member-led fight for our sector. HEC notes that the response of many employers to the Covid-19 pandemic has been an attack on jobs, pay, and conditions, including the large scale sacking of staff on casual contracts, and proposals for "voluntary redundancy", short-time working, and "voluntary" pay cuts.

Provisionally, conference business will take place from 11:00-13:00 and 13:45-15:45, with additional short breaks within these sessions; these timings are subject to final confirmation.

This will be the first online formal conference held by UCU under our normal standing orders and business arrangements. It presents a range of technical challenges and access issues that call for careful preparation. All delegates will be expected to make themselves available to attend a preparatory technical session in advance of the conference itself. The session will explain to delegates how the conference will be conducted and will provide an opportunity for them to test their connections. This technical session is likely to take place on 29 September, but further details will follow.

1 Business of the conference

The business of this higher education special sector conference is as described in the higher education committee motion above, summarised as to debate and direct the union's response to the attack on jobs, pay and conditions resulting from the response of employers to the Covid-19 pandemic, including a draft sector-wide claim.

No other business may be transacted at this special conference (rule 16.11).

Information about the conference can be found at https://www.ucu.org.uk/hesc_sept20

2 Submission of motions and amendments

Relevant motions must be submitted by **17:00, Friday 18 September**.

A full schedule of deadlines is set out in section 3.

Branches are advised not to leave the submission of motions to the last minute. Motions can be submitted by local officers using the following methods:

- i. On-line submission form available at: https://www.ucu.org.uk/hesc_sept20 The form will ask for all the information required.
- ii. Submission by email to cbernabe@ucu.org.uk. Emails must provide the following information:
 - the title (not more than 10 words)
 - the motion text (not more than 150 words)
 - a statement to say that the motion was passed by a quorate branch meeting, and the date of that meeting

- if the branch meeting called to approve the motion was inquorate, how the motion was approved in accordance with Congress standing orders and local rules
- the name and the position of the branch officer submitting the motion

Each branch may submit up to two motions to the special sector conference. All motions must be no longer than 150 words, not including titles (no more than 10 words).

Motions must be properly approved by a quorate branch/LA meeting in accordance with Congress standing orders and local rules. The officer submitting the motion must certify that the motion was passed by a quorate branch meeting (standing order 3.1), or if a branch meeting called to pass motions was not quorate, how the motion was otherwise approved in accordance with Congress standing order 3.2. Standing orders can be found at https://www.ucu.org.uk/hesc_sept20

Receipt of all motions will be acknowledged. If you do not receive acknowledgement, please contact UCU before the deadline for receipt of motions – by email to cbernabe@ucu.org.uk. UCU cannot accept responsibility for failure of electronic communication.

Motions will be published to branches as soon as possible after the Conference Business Committee (CBC) have met on Tuesday 22 September. Branches may if they wish submit up to two amendments to the special sector conference. Amendments, which can be approved by a quorate branch meeting or quorate branch committee meeting, must add no more than 75 words to a motion. The deadline for the submission of amendments is **12 noon on Tuesday 29 September**.

3 Timetable: HE special sector conference 30 September 2020

<i>UCU</i>	
<i>Ucu1029</i>	
Friday 18 September, 17:00	Deadline for submission of motions Deadline for delegate registration
Tuesday 22 September	HE CBC meets to consider motions
Wednesday 23 September	CBC's report (motions submitted) issued
Tuesday 29 September, 12:00	Deadline for submission of amendments
Wednesday 30 September	HE CBC meets to consider amendments Amendments made available to delegates on arrival at conference Higher education special sector conference

	<i>Business starts 11:00; on-line registration from 10:30 or as subsequently instructed</i>
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Documents will be made available electronically to branches and delegates.

4 Delegate registration

Delegates properly appointed by branches should register on-line before the deadline of **17:00 on Friday 18 September**, at <https://ucu.wufoo.com/forms/special-he-sector-conference-sept-2020/>

All delegates MUST register their attendance in advance of the conference. Rights to access and vote at the meeting cannot be given to delegates who have not registered in advance, by the registration deadline.

5 Delegate entitlement

All branches are entitled to delegates to the special sector conference on the basis of one delegate per 400 members or part thereof, up to a maximum of six delegates. (Aggregation does not apply to sector conferences.) A full table of sector conference delegate entitlement by branch is available at https://www.ucu.org.uk/hesc_sept20

6 Accessing the on-line meeting

The arrangements for this on-line meeting will be confirmed in a subsequent communication and made available at https://www.ucu.org.uk/hesc_sept20. Anyone with specific access concerns should contact Sue Bajwa sbajwa@ucu.org.uk in the first instance.

Registered delegates will be contacted directly by email prior to the event.

7 Further enquiries

For further enquiries please contact Christine Bernabe (motions/documents) cbernabe@ucu.org.uk ; Sue Bajwa (delegate registration) sbajwa@ucu.org.uk

Your co-operation in meeting all deadlines is appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Jo Grady

General secretary