

Climate & sustainability report 2020/2021

Green New Deal bargaining advice and model claim

The key piece of work has been the development and launch of a UCU Green New Deal (GND) model claim and associated bargaining guide for branches.

The comprehensive bargaining advice sets out strategies and references evidence to support branches advancing climate and sustainability agendas within their workplace, together with model claim letters. There is a specific UCU training course to accompany the GND.



We have worked with SOS-UK (Students Organising for Sustainability, a charitable arm of NUS) with the aim of developing closer links with local branches and student unions in driving through successful claims. The claim covers the following key bargaining objectives and meets the policy objectives set by Congress 2020 motions 39 and 40:

- institutions to declare a climate emergency
- agree concrete time limited action plans on environmental policies
- embed climate and climate justice into curriculums
- sign up to ethical investment and banking strategies
- review food and land use
- travel policies and carbon and energy management commitments.

These have also been developed into 'quick guides' as stand alone claims to enable branches some flexibility over which issue they wish to prioritise. See: **UCU - Green new deal**

Staff and student solidarity

We have worked very hard over the past year to ensure that we build upon the staff/student solidarity shown with the climate stoppages in September 2019. This has seen us work alongside the student-led Teach the Future campaign in joint responses to the government over critical green recovery investment and share their call for a climate emergency education act.

UCU alongside BFAWU, PCS and NEU supported the Friday's for Future September 2020 day of action and produced a **six Covid safe steps to show our solidarity to the Fridays for Future movement.**

CPD courses

We have for the first time this year rolled out a number of climate & sustainability themed CPD courses available free to all UCU members: introduction to sustainability; embedding climate education into the curriculum.

These have been exceptionally popular with members and have seen recruitment of new green reps and has allowed us to share this area of the union's work with the broader membership. Sessions have been run for every devolved nation and English region with over 650 participants over 4 months.

There will be another two CPD sessions in 2021: decarbonise & decolonise - meeting the UN's sustainable development goals; and how to run a climate themed learning week. Email us at environment@ucu.org.uk for more information.



UCU resources

To underpin UCU's commitment to this area of work, we have also seconded one day a week a member of SOS-UK to help progress our climate and sustainability policy. This has had the additional benefit of increasing our joint work with SOS-UK on the GND at branch level.

Political work

Over the past 12 months UCU has continued with its joint work with other trade unions via the TUC's TUSDAC (Trade Union Sustainable Development and Advisory Committee) with its focus on Just Transition and the Green Jobs Taskforce. UCU has been involved in meeting with government officials in making the case that the education sector needs to play a pivotal role in any industrial strategy as part of a green recovery. This has included lobbying key parliamentary groups which will be a continued focus over the coming weeks and months as set out by the general secretary.

We have submitted responses to various calls for evidence as part of the green recovery and have responded to Educational International's manifesto

We have joined the COP-26 coalition and are encouraging all branches to do the same you can sign up here: [COP26 - COP26 Coalition](#)

Climate themed learning weeks

In the lead up to COP26 in November 2021 we will be supporting branches in setting up Climate themed learning month and have a webpage dedicated to climate themed learning resources for both FE and HE. [Climate Learning Week \(ucu.org.uk\)](#)

The future we choose wall chart

We have also developed our own learning resources. Our wall chart can be downloaded or branches can request printed copies by emailing environment@ucu.org.uk

[Click here to download the wall chart.](#)



Engaging with regional and local authorities on climate change

Finally, in conjunction with Greener Jobs Alliance we have developed a guide for members on [Engaging with regional and local authorities on climate change](#)

UCU climate & sustainability conference

Following a call from existing green representatives for a forum within which they can share best practice, establish regional networks and coordinate a response to things such as COP-26 and organising conference motions, UCU's first climate & sustainability annual conference which was open to all members – branch nominated green reps and those interested in getting involved, was held in March 2021.

UCU's COP 26 campaign: decarbonise & decolonise 2030

COP26 - the 2021 United Nations climate change conference, is scheduled to take place in Glasgow, Scotland 1-12 November 2021. It has already been postponed from 2020 and we need to see our national and international leaders making meaningful commitments to address the climate and ecological emergency in a just and fair way.

UCU's COP-26 campaign

The UK will be hosting the **26th United Nations climate change Conference of the Parties (COP26)** in Glasgow on 1-12 November. The summit will bring together parties from UN member states to agree on action towards the goals of the **Paris Agreement** and

the **UN Framework Convention on Climate Convention**. In its role as COP26 president five priority areas have been agreed for the UK, they include: adaption & resilience; nature; energy transition; clean road transport; and finance. The role of education in delivering on these priority areas and to address the climate emergency in a just and fair way is absolutely critical. We as UCU are calling on members to join together and take action to ensure the agreements that come out of this year's COP fundamentally include education as a key enabler.

UCU's COP-26 campaign aims:

1. develop specific COP26 campaigns and claims around embedding climate justice and learning. See **here** for more information on our COP26 climate themed learning month and Decarbonise & Decolonise 2030 model claim.
2. international collaborations - we are working with ITUC, ETUCE and Educational International on a coordinated approach to COP26. UCU contributed to EI's manifesto for quality climate change for All which can be seen here **Education International's manifesto: education, a tool to fight the threat of the climate crisis (ei-ie.org)**
3. UCU Congress policy for 2020 re COP26 **UCU - Congress motions 2020** calls on UCU to encourage branches to progress claims with local employers. Local branches can start their green new deal claims here: **UCU - Green new deal**
4. collaborations with other unions via TUSDAC which is the TUC coordinating body for climate and sustainability where we have been discussing trade union delegations for COP26
5. encourage branches to affiliate to COP26 coalition trade union co-ordinating group: **<https://cop26coalition.org/>**

ETUCE education for social change conference 23 April 2021

UCU were asked to present the work the union has carried out towards tackling the climate emergency to the ETUCE conference on 23 April 2021 on the role of trade unions in addressing sustainable environmental development. **A copy of the presentation can be viewed here.**