

Pay trade dispute letter September 2021

Dear VC/Principal

Date

National Claim 2021/22; UCU Rejects Final Offer

I write to seek your assistance in attempting to resolve the existing trade dispute with your institution. The dispute relates to the 2021/22 joint HE trade union national claim, specifically:

- An increase to all spine points on the national pay scale of £2,500
- Nationally agreed action, using an intersectional approach, to close the gender, ethnic and disability pay gaps
- An agreed framework to eliminate precarious employment practices by universities
- Nationally agreed action to address excessive workloads and unpaid work, to include workload models and Covid related changes to working practices;

UCU members employed by **[name of institution]** are in dispute with their employer because the final offer made by your representatives at the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) on 6 May 2021 will mean another year of real terms pay cuts for higher education staff.

The offer in regard to the gender pay gap in higher education means the gender gap remains at around 15%, far greater than in the wider economy and the rest of the public sector, and the offer fails to address the urgent action needed to tackle the intersectional issues that create the gender, ethnic and disability pay gaps.

Furthermore, the offer does not address widespread precarious and casual employment within the sector in the form of a UK level agreement.

The offer does not recognise the levels of increased workloads undertaken by staff in recent years and in response to the pandemic, and the need for a national agreement on workloads.

The UCU Higher Education Sector Conference met in June and rejected the UCEA final offer. A meeting of the Higher Education Committee (HEC) in July agreed to invoke the New JNCHES Dispute Resolution. I wrote to UCEA triggering the process and UCU participated in two dispute resolution meetings on 14 and 23 July and sought a negotiated improvement to the UCEA final offer. UCU entered these talks in good faith seeking to resolve the dispute. However the talks proved unable to resolve the dispute and a statutory ballot for industrial action of UCU members at your institution is inevitable.

UCU members are regrettably in dispute with your institution over the 2021/22 National claim set out in the bullet points in this letter. We would urge you to instruct your representatives at the UCEA to agree to the following things in relation to national terms and conditions:

- An increase to all spine points on the national pay scale of £2,500
- Nationally agreed action, using an intersectional approach, to close the gender, ethnic and disability pay gaps
- An agreed framework to eliminate precarious employment practices by universities
- Nationally agreed action to address excessive workloads and unpaid work, to include workload models and Covid related changes to working practices;

For the avoidance of doubt, the trade dispute between UCU members and your institution will remain in existence unless and until agreement is reached on all of the matters of dispute highlighted in the bullet points above.

Yours sincerely,

PB etc