

OPEN LETTER

Directed to:

The Vice Chancellor Steve West,  
The university of the West of England,

For the:

UWE Branch of the University and College Union.

By E-mail

Dear Professor West (Vice-Chancellor, President & CEO),

You say that “Every day #TeamUWE achieves exceptional things.” You expect the exceptional from us on a daily basis. We implore you to be exceptional now. Listen to #TeamUWE and act in the best interests of the students.

**We say the lost wages of striking staff should go directly into a fund to support our students; including those hit by financial hardship and in need of mental health and wellbeing support.**

The decade long intensification of the marketisation agenda has seen universities cutting staff pay and increase their workloads. This sector wide agenda has seen job insecurity leading to ever-increasing tuition fees, ballooning rents, and growing numbers of students having to work part-time jobs simply to get by.

Amidst these stacked crises staff are forced to take unprecedented nationwide strike action at 150 universities to demand:

- nationally agreed action, using an intersectional approach, [to close the gender, ethnic and disability pay gaps](#);
- an increase to all spine points on the national pay scale of at least inflation (RPI) + 2% or 12% whichever is the higher;
- an agreed framework to [eliminate precarious employment practices by universities](#);
- nationally agreed action to address excessive workloads and unpaid work, to include addressing the impact that excessive workloads are having on workforce stress and ill-health;
- for the standard weekly, full-time contract of employment to be 35 hours, with no loss of pay.

**You have taken the wages from staff for the industrial action they have taken; we now need you to take the workload capacity off the staff commensurate with their lost pay.**

**The wages lost by staff left with no option but to strike should go directly into a fund that support students including those hit by financial hardship and mental health problems.**

The lost wages of staff should not be allowed to disappear into general university budgets or into senior management pay.

We call on you as the Vice-Chancellor, President & CEO to publicly commit to ensuring that all money saved on the wages of striking staff goes into the University of the West of England Student Hardship fund and towards improving the financial situation of and mental health support for students.

Today, Professor West, is your day to be exceptional.

Your Sincerely,

UCU@UWE

Cc:

The student Union at UWE