

Special FE Sector Conference, Saturday 1 April

Report on voting

About these votes

121 registered delegates were sent a unique voting link.

Voting was conducted in two sequential rounds.

In round 1, amendment 1A.1, motion 1, amendments 2A.1 2A.2, 4A.1, 6A.1, 7A.1, 7A.2, and motions 8 and 9 were voted on.

113 members voted in round 1. Of those, not every delegate voted in every vote.

Round 1 opened on Saturday 1 April and closed on Tuesday 4 April.

In round 2, motions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 were voted on.

117 members voted in round 2. Of those, not every delegate voted in every vote.

Round opened on Wednesday April 5 and closed on 19 April.

Summary of voting

Motion	Title	Voting
Motion 1A.1	Amendment to motion 1	LOST
Motion 1	Composite: For an FE aggregated ballot Further education committee, City of Bristol College	LOST
Amendment 2A.1	Amendment to Motion 2	CARRIED
Amendment 2A.2	Amendment to Motion 2	CARRIED
Motion 2, as amended	Local bargaining as part of an FE England co-ordinated campaign The Manchester College	CARRIED
Motion 3	No automatic move to aggregated ballot without strong membership support Oldham College	CARRIED
Amendment 4A.1	Amendment to motion 4	CARRIED

Motion 4 (as amended)	Building to win FE England bargaining Colchester Institute	CARRIED
Motion 5	Building to win FE pay bargaining Eastern and home counties regional committee	CARRIED
Amendment 6A.1	Amendment to motion 6	CARRIED
Motion 6 (as amended)	Building to win Burnley College	CARRIED
Amendment 7A.1	Amendment to motion 7	CARRIED
Amendment 7A.2	Amendment to motion 7	CARRIED
Motion 7 (as amended)	FE England campaigns / local flexibility Thames College	CARRIED
Motion 8	For continued local pay negotiation and disputes Kendal College	LOST
Motion 9	Campaign for parity with sixth form colleges The Manchester College	CARRIED

Amendment 1A.1

LOST

Votes in favour	50
Votes against	60
Registered abstentions	1

Add new note 5: The 87% vote for strike action on a 51% turnout in the consultation ballot.

Add new believes E: The result of the consultation ballot was the first time in UCU's history that an FE ballot got over 50%.

Add new resolves ii.: To organise an England-wide ballot starting at the beginning of May 2023 lasting for 6 weeks

Motion 1 Composite: For an FE aggregated ballot Further education committee, City of Bristol College

LOST

Votes in favour	54
Votes against	54
Registered abstentions	2

SFESC notes:

1. The RPI rate of inflation currently stands at 12%.
2. Decline of physical and mental health of staff in FE, including due to excessive workload.
3. Further Education Colleges have recently been reclassified as part of the public sector.
4. The biggest wave of industrial action seen for a generation.

SFESC believes that:

- a. We need a fully-funded pay award for FE that at least matches inflation.
- b. The level of stress due to excessive workload has reached such a high level, it's putting workers' physical and mental health at risk.
- c. The reclassification of FE as part of the public sector offers the opportunity to level up funding of colleges with schools and to provide a binding bargaining framework.
- d. We need England-wide action involving all FE branches to be able to secure more funding for FE and to be able to level up the sector.

SFESC resolves:

- i. Support the call for an aggregated ballot of all branches in England.

Amendment 2A.1

CARRIED

Votes in favour	56
Votes against	53
Registered abstentions	4

Delete Notes 5 and add: 'A successful aggregated ballot would build upon the coordinated action taken over the last five years.'

Delete 'towards a future' and ' turnout of 50%'. Add the word 'an' before FE and 'significant' before 'turnout'. The new sentence to read, 'To build an FE England aggregated ballot, and move to ballot only when a consultation reaches a significant turnout'

Amendment 2A.2

CARRIED

Votes in favour	59
Votes against	48
Registered abstentions	6

Add to FESC resolves

- e. to organise lunchtime briefings to support all branches to start to organise their members for next steps in the campaign to secure the national aggregate ballot
- f. for branches to pair up within their regions up to support their campaigning activities

Motion 2 (as amended) Local bargaining as part of an FE England co-ordinated campaign The Manchester College

CARRIED

Votes in favour	67
Votes against	43
Registered abstentions	4

FESC notes:

1. FE pay has fallen by 30%+ since 2009 and the £9k pay gap with school and 6th form teachers widens.
2. We don't currently have meaningful England-wide bargaining in FE.
3. The significant #RespectFE deals won in England and the NW.
4. The importance of building on our achievements.
5. A successful aggregated ballot would build upon the coordinated action taken over the last five years
6. The hostile environment for trade unions created by the Tory government, particularly since the anti-Trade Union Act.

FESC resolves:

- a. To continue to focus on recruitment and organisation within FE, in particular moribund branches and branches with sub-100 members.
- b. To increase the number of branches active in #RespectFE campaign.
- c. To use industrial leverage to secure meaningful FE England bargaining on pay and workload.
- d. To build an FE England aggregated ballot, and move to ballot only when a

consultation reaches a significant turnout

- e. to organise lunchtime briefings to support all branches to start to organise their members for next steps in the campaign to secure the national aggregate ballot
- f. for branches to pair up within their regions up to support their campaigning activities

Motion 3 No automatic move to aggregated ballot without strong membership support Oldham College

CARRIED

Votes in favour **61**
Votes against **48**
Registered abstentions **7**

FESC congratulates all branches fighting back in FE and winning for members.

33 branches smashed the Tory anti trade unions laws last year as part of the Respect FE campaign along with branches in the North West in the regionally coordinated campaign.

FESC notes:

1. the progress made in in recent years - branches are stronger, better organised, growing in membership and winning disputes.

FESC believes:

- a. An FE England aggregate ballot has a strong appeal and should be considered as part of our strategy.
- b. Previous England-wide aggregate ballots in FE did not secure wins for members.
- c. Moving to an FE England aggregate ballot too soon could take the union and branches backwards.

FESC resolves:

- i. There should be no automatic move to an FE England aggregate ballot following the members' consultation.
- ii. That UCU should not proceed with any FE England aggregate ballot where the turnout in the member consultative e-ballot is below 60%

Amendment 4A.1

CARRIED

Votes in favour **84**
Votes against **19**
Registered abstentions **10**

Add

iii. any negotiations with the AoC must include all the elected officers to negotiate nationally.

iv. any offer must be discussed at FEC before the officers recommend to members.

Motion 4 (as amended) Building to win FE England bargaining Colchester Institute

CARRIED

Votes in favour 72
Votes against 33
Registered abstentions 10

Conference notes:

1. The success of the Respect FE strategy in gaining specific wins for branches
2. The re-classification of FE to be part of the Public Sector
3. The lack of a framework for binding England-wide pay bargaining in FE

Conference believes:

- a. Industrial action delivers gains for members
- b. Industrial action is most effective when it is co-ordinated collectively across branches
- c. FE England aggregated strike action will only be effective when the FE sector has a system of binding England-wide pay bargaining

Conference resolves:

- i. There should be a priority of time and resource to campaign for a system of binding FE England pay bargaining
- ii. There should be a consultation with branches and members before decisions are made to move away from the current Respect FE strategy to an aggregated ballot.
- iii. any negotiations with the AoC must include all the elected officers to negotiate nationally.
- iv. any offer must be discussed at FEC before the officers recommend to members.

Motion 5 Building to win FE pay bargaining Eastern and home counties regional committee

CARRIED

Votes in favour 66
Votes against 46
Registered abstentions 4

Conference notes:

1. The success of Branches that have won gains for their members using the Respect FE strategy
2. Real and binding England-wide pay bargaining in FE does not exist
3. The re-classification of FE to be now part of the public sector

Conference believes:

- a. Strike action (or the threat of) delivers gains for members
- b. Strike action is most effective when it is co-ordinated collectively across branches
- c. FE England aggregated strike action will not be effective until FE has a system of binding England-wide pay bargaining

Conference resolves:

- i. In light of the re-classification of FE to be now part of the public sector campaign for real and binding England-wide pay bargaining in FE
- ii. There should be no aggregated ballot until the above campaign has been given sufficient time and resources to achieve its aim, at minimum at least 1 year and this decision has been put to a sector conference.

Amendment 6A.1

CARRIED

Votes in favour	53
Votes against	47
Registered abstentions	10

Add new notes 4: 'The sovereign democratic body in UCU is congress and sector conferences.'

Delete the words 'in the future' in conference resolves E.

Delete resolves F. and add new resolves F, 'To ensure that all branches abide by democratically arrived at decisions made by FE sector conferences.'

Motion 6 (as amended) Building to win Burnley College

CARRIED

Votes in favour	80
Votes against	27
Registered abstentions	9

Conference notes:

1. The strategic aim of UCU to return to meaningful FE England pay bargaining.

2. The success in securing significant deals as part of the Respect FE campaign.
3. The primacy of the branch as the principal organising unit within UCU.
4. The sovereign democratic body in UCU is congress and sector conferences.

Conference resolves:

- a. To launch a recruitment and capacity building drive within FE.
- b. To increase the number of branches actively participating in the Respect FE campaign.
- c. To maximise, consolidate and publicise the number of branches securing victories.
- d. To centre FE within UCU messaging, political and public engagement.
- e. To have a sober examination of the objective conditions surrounding the possibility of an FE England aggregated ballot.
- f. To ensure that all branches abide by democratically arrived at decisions made by FE sector conferences
- g. To mirror and improve upon best organising and industrial relations practice within the union movement.

Amendment 7A.1

CARRIED

Votes in favour	53
Votes against	48
Registered abstentions	11

Under "FESC Resolves"

'Delete' "i. That all FE branches are authorised to opt in, and opt out of, any FE England statutory ballot in any FE England pay campaign/dispute."

'Replace' with "i. That for all FE branches there shall be a mechanism determined by FE officers for exclusion from any FE England statutory ballot in any FE England pay campaign/dispute - where there may be a detrimental impact on local negotiations, disputes or campaigns."

Amendment 7A.2

CARRIED

Votes in favour	56
Votes against	45
Registered abstentions	9

Under "FESC Resolves"

Delete "iii. Shall retain the right to negotiate and settle agreements on pay and conditions with their employers with no FE England imposed thresholds or ratification criteria."

Replace with "iii. That all FE branches shall retain the right to negotiate and settle agreements on pay and conditions with their employers under the national Respect FE framework. If binding FE England pay bargaining is in place, the appropriate ratification process shall be followed."

Motion 7 (as amended) FE England campaigns/local flexibility Thames College

CARRIED

Votes in favour **68**
Votes against **42**
Registered abstentions **6**

FESC notes:

1. That most branches engaged in local pay negotiations this year improved pay and working conditions for members – with many achieving significant victories.

FESC believes:

- a. That FE branches are best placed to decide on local tactics and strategy.
- b. That local democratic control by members ensures that FE England pay campaigns are strongly supported by members, leading to real victories. That ongoing local negotiations, disputes, and campaigns should not be jeopardized by any FE England ballot.

FESC resolves that all FE branches:

- i. that for all FE branches there shall be a mechanism determined by FE officers for exclusion from any FE England statutory ballot in any FE England pay campaign/dispute - where there may be a detrimental impact on local negotiations, disputes or campaigns
- ii. are authorised to decide the timing of strike action with their employers in any FE England pay campaign/dispute
- iii. that all FE branches shall retain the right to negotiate and settle agreements on pay and conditions with their employers under the national Respect FE framework. If binding FE England pay bargaining is in place, the appropriate ratification process shall be followed.

Motion 8 For continued local pay negotiation and disputes Kendal College

LOST

Votes in favour **50**
Votes against **53**
Registered abstentions **8**

Conference notes and welcomes the progress made by branches locally in pursuing pay claims with their employers.

Conference believes that there is no mechanism to secure an FE England binding agreement.

Conference, therefore, commits to continuing the current approach of supporting branches to use local disputes as a source of leverage with college employers. The tactics in these local disputes to be determined by affected members.

Motion 9 Campaign for parity with sixth form colleges The Manchester College

CARRIED

Votes in favour	103
Votes against	6
Registered abstentions	2

FESC notes:

1. 6th form colleges and colleges in Wales have national agreements way more favourable than FE.
2. Students at 6th form college are taught by a teachers on more money with fewer teaching hours.
3. It still should be an aspiration of all FE colleges to have agreed England-wide terms and conditions through England-wide bargaining.
4. The teaching staff in FE must be treated fairly.
5. This resolution is to extend the Respect FE agenda.

FESC resolves:

- a. That UCU start an FE England campaign, including advertising, that brings FE to the fore because of its essential role in training young people for work in this era of skills shortages.
- b. To launch a campaign to lobby parliament and the DFE England
- c. Colleagues to write to MPs including the Education Secretary to ask for FE to be better funded, staff to be treated fairly and given conditions of employment the same as those in 6th form colleges.