

Raj Jethwa, UCEA and Vivienne Stern, UUK
Via e-mail

22 March 2024

Dear Raj and Vivienne

Teachers' Pension Scheme

We were extremely disappointed to learn that UUK and UCEA had approached the Minister for HE asking that post-1992 HE institutions be able pull out of the Teachers' Pension Scheme for academic staff, and that you intend to request the same of the Minister for Local Government in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Staff in post 92 universities are quite rightly entitled to be enrolled in the Teachers' Pensions Scheme, and UCU strongly opposes any attempt to change this. Our members are an integral part of the country's public education system and as such deserve proper terms and conditions including a decent, defined benefit, public sector pension – like their colleagues in schools and further education colleges.

We appreciate that the sector has little control over the cost of the scheme and that it was a UK Government decision to retain a discount rate based on GDP in the valuation, which has disproportionately impacted on the TPS schemes.

We agree, moreover, that it is unfair and unjust for the Government to restrict funding for these increases to the schools and colleges and would join with you in demanding a rethink. In effect, this decision from the government is a conscious choice to remove significant resources from the sector, exacerbating financial difficulties in a number of institutions and threatening the livelihoods of our members.

Whilst we are eager to work with you to campaign for additional funding, we oppose in the strongest possible terms any moves to opt out of the TPS and will fight, industrially if necessary, to stop employers doing so.

It is clear that any opt outs will significantly weaken the TPS for all. We also believe that offering staff poorer pension options would be disastrous for the sector, leading to retention and recruitment issues and widening the divide between the pre and post-92 institutions.

Any attempts to quit TPS will lead to worsened industrial relations at a time when we should be working together to protect the sector from attacks.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss these serious issues with you both at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Jo Grady, General Secretary