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## 2006/7 pay agreement

**There are two main elements to the national pay deal for this year which was agreed following a ballot of members last term.**

- All lecturers should receive a 2% increase effective from 1 August 2006 (or on a locally agreed pay award date) with a further 1% increase from 1 February 2007.
- Colleges which are not using the new pay scales agreed in the 2004 pay deal should now be opening up talks with UCU to determine when these are to be put in place.

The national agreement allows up to six months for these talks to be completed and by the end of March 2007 all colleges should have agreed a timetable for the implementation of the new scales.

UCU will negotiate with colleges taking into account local circumstances but colleges should be in no doubt that we expect the agreement to be honoured. We will be monitoring the situation very carefully and will provide support to any college branch that is experiencing difficulties.

# New National Age Equality Agreement

A new agreement between UCU and the AoC aims to help Colleges get to grips with the Age Discrimination laws which come into force on 1 October 2006. The agreement which is recommended to all FE Colleges in England and Wales provides a framework for colleges to follow in order to comply with the new laws. It was negotiated by UCU FE Officials with the assistance of the national Equality Unit at head office.

The agreement recommends procedures to eliminate discrimination on the basis of age in recruitment, promotion and training and career development opportunities. It is recognised that age discrimination can affect young people as well as older people so the agreement addresses both ends of the age spectrum.

The legislation provides for a new right to ask to work beyond a normal retirement date and the agreement recommends procedures for this right including recommending that reasons be given if a request is refused and an opportunity for appeal.

**In a recent statement to the press Roger Kline, head of equality and employment rights at UCU said:**

*'This provides a good framework for both employers and unions to consider in local negotiations. I hope that employers will focus attention on meeting the legal requirements swiftly. However, the guidance is primarily a commitment to implementing minimum requirements and I hope that individual employers will adopt interpretations which go beyond this to enhance opportunities for employees rather than restrict them. In particular, where employees*

*wish to continue working on a full-time or part-time basis beyond their normal retirement age we expect employers to give serious consideration to this and not a blanket refusal.*

*'There is an ageing workforce in FE colleges which could soon create a serious staffing problem. Adopting flexible arrangements for the working options of older staff is just one area that can be explored to address this. Teaching is a stressful job and many staff will want to retire as early as possible, but the important principle is choice.'*

All colleges will have received the National Joint Agreement on Guidance for Age Equality in Employment in Further Education and all branches are urged to negotiate local implementation as soon as possible.

The agreement can be found at:

[http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/docs/b/e/feagree\\_age\\_1.doc](http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/docs/b/e/feagree_age_1.doc)

## Staff Governors Conference

The annual College Staff Governors Conference will be on  
**27 November 2006**  
at UCU head office, London

The theme of the event is corporations in the post White Paper era.

Speakers will include Phil Hope Minister for Adult Skills and Andrew Thomson CEO Quality Improvement Agency.

For the programme and an application form contact Martin Whelton at  
[mwhelton@ucu.org.uk](mailto:mwhelton@ucu.org.uk)

## Quality consultations

There are two consultations underway on quality in the learning and skills sector with dates for submissions in late October. These are the Quality Improvement Agency's Quality "Improvement Strategy" available at:

<http://www.qia.org.uk/pursuingexcellence/index.html>

and the LSC's Framework for Achievement available on:

[http://www.lsc.gov.uk/National/Documents/SubjectListing/ConsultationsandResponses/Currentconsultations/fe\\_assessment-framework\\_fe.htm](http://www.lsc.gov.uk/National/Documents/SubjectListing/ConsultationsandResponses/Currentconsultations/fe_assessment-framework_fe.htm)

The consultations are interlinked and are intended to complement one another. The Quality Improvement Strategy lays out the direction for quality improvement in the sector. It outlines the proposed vision and sets out the principles that should underpin quality improvement. It contains action plans that start to delineate what will be achieved for the next 3 to four years.

The Framework for Excellence, the first in a series of consultations, sets out three dimensions of quality and proposes seven key performance indicators for colleges to guide LSC decisions on resource allocation.

UCU will be submitting a response which will be posted on the UCU website. If members and branches have particular points they would like to make on the consultation document, contact:

[dtaubman@ucu.org.uk](mailto:dtaubman@ucu.org.uk).

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## FE White Paper

A summary, analysis and UCU response to the FE White Paper and guidance to branch action on possible college action following the White Paper have been prepared and will be available on the UCU web site shortly.

## College Governance

The DfES have been conducting another consultation on changes to college Instruments and Articles of Governance. The changes are largely concerned with enacting some of the proposals of the FE White Paper that proposed that college governors periodically review the mission and focus of the college, and take a pro active role in the oversight of quality improvement.

There are proposals to reduce the minimum size of corporations, relax the set categories of governors, except for staff and student representatives. There are also proposals to clarify the position around publication of corporation agenda, minutes and papers.

The UCU response can be found at:

[http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/docs/o/i/ucu\\_fechangesresponse\\_jul06\\_1.doc](http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/docs/o/i/ucu_fechangesresponse_jul06_1.doc)

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## Initial Teacher Training and CPD

Massive changes to both initial teacher training and continuing professional development are to be introduced in September 2007 but some colleges are already introducing new procedures and processes in advance of the changes.

Many of the details are still being drawn up and UCU expects regulations to be laid before Parliament in the New Year. A summary of what is known about the changes will be available to branches soon.

Branches in colleges which are introducing changes to ITT and CPD in ways that may go beyond the scope of the proposed changes should contact their regional office.

## '24-7' Work-Life Balance Survey 2006

The '24-7' Work-Life Balance Survey is an annual survey jointly run by the Work Life Balance Centre in Leicestershire, the Centre of Industrial Relations Keele University and Coventry University. The survey is an internet-based questionnaire which will run from 28th September to November 15th 2006. The findings for this year's survey will be reported in February 2007. The survey website is: <http://www.24-7survey.co.uk/>

The survey asks workers to highlight the problems they encounter with their 'work-life' balance. An analysis of last year's report can be found at:

<http://uin.org.uk/content/view/70/66/>

We are particularly keen to gain responses from workers in higher and further education, given the increasing problems of workload management for lecturers and related workers in these sectors. Indeed this year we hope to be able to write up a separate report covering those in membership of the UCU.

Can you please circulate details of the survey to your local members, encouraging as many as possible to contribute. If you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact:

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## Defend Adult Learning

Current government policy has led to a cut in funding for adult education. This has put thousands of adult education courses and hundreds of UCU members' jobs at risk. By the government's own admission, up to 500,000 adult learners risk losing their courses as a result of these new priorities for post-16 education. You can find out more about what you can do to support our campaign to defend adult education here:

<http://www.ucu.org.uk/afecuts>

## UCU Union Learning Representative

### National Conference

17 November 2006

UCU Head Office 27 Britannia Street, London

This free event is the first national UCU conference for branch learning reps, those interested in becoming reps and those interested in union learning. UCU now has over 100 branch learning reps and is training new reps on special UCU courses.

The conference will have keynote speakers from the DfES, Lifelong Learning Sector Skills Council and TUC Unionlearn. There will be workshop sessions on what support learning reps want and need and a panel session to answer all the questions that are emerging.

For further details of the conference please contact

Martin Whelton at [mwhelton@ucu.org.uk](mailto:mwhelton@ucu.org.uk)

Details of learner rep training, please contact Linda Ball, [lball@ucu.org.uk](mailto:lball@ucu.org.uk)



## **WIN WIN WIN.... at North Hertfordshire**

Successful UCU negotiations have spared members at North Hertfordshire College from the Hobson's choice of a pay cut or redundancy.

In a management restructuring, approximately 37 existing managers were invited to apply for 21 posts. Those who were unsuccessful were offered redeployment in the lower grade of lecturer, with a resulting pay cut, or an enhanced redundancy package. But, as a result of UCU negotiations with the college, it was agreed that these staff would have their current salaries protected for an agreed period, get new job titles and keep some of their higher level responsibilities.

*'This college, like many others, found itself facing a financial squeeze due to new government funding priorities for further education,' says UCU regional official Liz Martins. 'We applaud North Hertfordshire for treating its staff with respect by doing all it could to protect those affected from the impact of immediate pay cuts. It has raised morale among all staff, which will improve quality of teaching and benefit students.'*

## **Progress on pay at Yorkshire Coast College**

UCU members have won a significant pay agreement at Yorkshire Coast College in Scarborough. Under the deal, all staff will move on to the national FE harmonised pay scale by August 2007. This agreement was reached against a very difficult backdrop. A year ago, the college had announced a deficit of up to £900,000 and subsequently initiated a redundancy exercise. However, less than 12 months later UCU has negotiated a new improved contract of employment along with the pay agreement, which will deliver significant rises for many members over two years.

## **Northern Ireland: Third day of college strikes**

UCU members in Northern Ireland's 16 further education colleges took their third day of strike action in September in their campaign to win pay parity with teachers in schools.

*'Lecturers have been due a pay increase from the start of September 2006, yet the employers are refusing to make any offer. It is grossly unfair,'* says regional official Jim McKeown.

*'Colleges have massive reserves which can be used to settle this issue. Their refusal to move is only fuelling resentment and low morale across the sector. Lecturers are fed up at their treatment and are determined to keep the industrial action going until they get fair pay.'*

### **Message from the FBU**

FBU workers in Merseyside are currently involved in a campaign against cuts to the fire service where a 10% cut in firefighter posts is threatened, and a 96 hour week is to be introduced at some fire stations. This is part of a wider picture of cuts to public services and in this case endangers the safety of firefighters and the communities they seek to protect.

Firefighters have been warned that taking part in industrial action could harm career and promotion prospects – an attack on the principle of being able to join a union and take strike action if necessary.

Messages of support would be welcome to:

**The FBU Office  
The Peoples Centre  
50-54 Mount Pleasant  
Liverpool L3 5SD**



Donations to the Merseyside Hardship Fund should go to:  
HSBC bank, sortcode 40 29 28, account 91320165