



UCU Congress, 24 – 26 May 2025

NEC report to Congress

The national executive committee's report to Congress was issued to branches in March as circular UCU/2160.

It is set out here in sections corresponding to NEC's sub-committees together with appendices for Congress's information:

- 1 Strategy and finance committee (page 2)**
- 2 Higher education committee (page 7)**
- 3 Further education committee (page 15)**
- 4 Education committee (page 25)**
- 5 Equality committee (page 28)**
- 6 Recruitment, organising and campaigning committee (page 32)**

Appendices

Membership of the NEC and its subcommittees 2024-25 (page 36)

Subscription rates for members of UCU 1 September 2024 – 31 August 2025 (page 39)

Current UCU affiliations (page 40)

UCU membership statistics at 30 April 2024 and 30 April 202 (page 41)

Acronyms and abbreviations (page 42)

Section 1: Report of the strategy and finance committee (SFC)

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Chaired by the President Maxine Looby, the strategy and finance committee (SFC) keeps a strategic overview of the work of the union. It receives reports from the general secretary on the overall industrial picture, demands on the union's resources, work with other unions and the TUC, in the political arena, including in the devolved nations, and on the general secretary's activities undertaken on behalf of the union. It deals with cross-sectoral issues, including the union's international work. The committee also receives regular management accounts and membership figures.

2 Working with other unions and political overview

- 2.1 We welcomed the new Labour government and the possibility of rebuilding the country and delivering the New Deal that workers need after fourteen destructive years of the Tories eroding our public services and social fabric. Since the election there has been a step change in our engagement with the Department for Education (DfE). We have been involved in and have signed off new social partnership arrangements 'Improving Education Together' with the DfE and other education unions.
- 2.2 We held an excellent FE and prison education lobby of Parliament involving members from our sectors meeting with their MPs and putting their issues front and centre. The first Budget delivered a victory for our New Deal for FE campaign announcing £300M additional funding for the sector. We are waiting to hear how the money will be allocated, though the Department has confirmed that £50m can be drawn down for pay. We will keep campaigning to close the gap with school teacher pay.
- 2.3 We have met regularly with the Minister for Skills about the crisis in higher education, however the government hasn't proposed any solution beyond raising tuition fees, which does nothing to address the root of the crisis. The marketised model which saddles students with a lifetime of debt and incentivises universities to generate revenue rather than deliver good, secure jobs and world-leading teaching and research needs to change. We need urgent investment from the government, and the development of a fit for purpose funding model as a longer-term solution. We have been pressing the case for a full and comprehensive review as the current model is not working for anyone. This will be a crucial period for our campaigning to win our vision for higher education.
- 2.4 We welcomed the Employment Rights Bill. An end to exploitative zero-hour contracts and unscrupulous fire and rehire practices is long overdue, and protections from unfair dismissal, and rights to flexible working, bereavement, paternity and parental leave from day one are all necessary to boost productivity and growth. But we need to see more pernicious forms of exploitation - seen in universities with postgraduate researchers being denied important terms and

conditions - addressed too. We will keep working with the TUC and other unions to ensure this popular legislation is delivered as promised.

- 2.5 The scale of the challenges ahead must not be underestimated. We face danger from the resurgence of the far right across the UK. Free, publicly-funded education at all stages of life is not only a right but the antidote to the politics of hate and division that we must challenge at every turn.

3 Finance and property

- 3.1 The committee receives regular management accounts and reports on financial matters. This enables the committee to monitor spending against the agreed budget. The committee discussed the draft budget and subscription rates ahead of these being considered by the NEC. Proposals for the upcoming financial year will appear in the Congress documents with greater explanation, for consideration by delegates.

4 Democratic structures

- 4.1 The standing orders and rules group (SORG) reports to the committee. This year consideration was given to a rule change making provision for the suspension of members in extreme circumstances (at the time of writing, still to be considered by the NEC), the balance of representation by sector on NEC sub-committees, the implications of a rule change on PGR members with respect to advisory committees, along with ongoing supervision of branch requests to vary the model local rules.
- 4.2 SORG, SFC and the NEC received a report on the matter of a rule change presented at Congress 2024 in the form of an emergency motion. It was subsequently established that it was not in keeping with the union's rules to amend the rulebook via an emergency motion submitted from the Congress floor in the name of ten delegations.
- 4.3 The union now conducts many of its UK committees on a hybrid basis. Preparations are underway for the first hybrid meeting of Congress to take place in 2025, following amendments to the Congress standing orders passed by Congress 2024, and a decision of the NEC. The union now conducts many of its UK committees on a hybrid basis. All arrangements will be fully tested and supported, and the experience will be reviewed before decisions are made about the format of Congress in future years.
- 4.4 This is the first year of the new Conduct of Members Committee. This committee elected by Congress delegates now has oversight and responsibility for the operation of the disciplinary procedure for member conduct. The committee is currently chaired by Helen Kelsall (Trafford College Group).

5 The TUC and joint union work

- 5.1 The annual Congress took place in September. UCU submitted motions on post 16 education, prison education and amendments on climate change and teachers

pension scheme along with an emergency motion on de-escalating war in the Middle East.

- 5.2 Delegates contributed to a range of debates. In addition the union co-hosted a fringe on sexual harassment and UCU President Maxine Looby chaired a fringe on economic strategy, while the general secretary addressed a rally organised by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign.

6 European and International work

- 6.1 UCU's European and International work covers both solidarity and education policy issues. This work is overseen by the International Working Group, which held two hybrid meetings during 2024-25.
- 6.2 In line with the international motions from the 2024 Congress, as well as existing UCU policy, we have promoted solidarity actions in support of workers, educators and students in countries such as Argentina, China, Colombia, Lebanon, Palestine, Turkey and Ukraine. There has been a particularly strong focus on Palestine, including support for the Campus Voices for Palestine tour and multiple workplace days of action.
- 6.3 UCU remains actively involved in our global union federation, Education International (EI) and its European region, the ETUCE. In late July, UCU participated in the 10th EI World Congress in Buenos Aires, where over 1200 participants from across the globe gathered to discuss issues relating to 'Growing our unions, elevating our professions, defending democracy'. UCU's co-sponsored resolution on academic freedom was endorsed by the Congress and UCU representatives spoke in various debates and sessions, including on FE teacher shortages, job cuts in HE and scholasticide in Gaza.
- 6.4 In November, UCU participated in the ETUCE quadrennial conference in Budva, Montenegro, in which the overarching theme was 'Fighting for the Future of Public Education in a Social Europe'. A number of major resolutions on issues such as challenging the far right, defending higher education, addressing the teacher shortage and artificial intelligence in education were agreed, and a new ETUCE Bureau and Committee was elected.
- 6.5 Throughout the year we have sought to share information and experience with our sister unions, for example, via meetings, webinars and visits. This has included a diverse range of organisations, including from Argentina, Canada, Zimbabwe, Palestine, the Philippines and the United States.

7 Update on action on Congress motions 2024

- 7.1 Motion 16 set out strategy for the general election of 2024 and underpins the ongoing campaigns and engagement with the new Westminster Government and MPs and Lords of all parties.
- 7.2 Motion 17 on the public service crisis called for a joint front with other unions in the TUC to rebuild public services. This was one of the areas covered by a TUC motion and ongoing work.

- 7.3 Motion 18 on historic inequality between survivors of TPS members was resolved through joint work with other unions. This remains an ongoing piece of work.
- 7.4 Motion 19 on joint membership schemes with the large unions in our sectors has not been possible to progress this year due to ongoing workload.
- 7.5 Motion 20 on professional services and bodies continues as part of the agenda for the academic related, professional services committee. Relevant invitations to present stalls were issued to professional services bodies ahead of Congress 2025.
- 7.6 Motion 21 on developing a mechanism for democratic oversight of UCU media projects has not been progressed due to the other higher priorities in discussion with UCU staff unions.
- 7.7 Motion 22 on minimum services legislation has been achieved through the commitment of the new UK Government to repeal the legislation and instructions to employers not to use it.
- 7.8 Motion 23 on single employment status remains an area of joint work with other unions in influencing the overhaul of employment rights.
- 7.9 Motion 24 on electronic voting for union ballots is on track for delivery pending passage of repeal of anti-union laws and commitments made by the new Government.
- 7.10 Motion 25 on electronic ballot for union elections is an area that we continue to press for reform.
- 7.11 Motion 26 on arms expenditure led to a motion at TUC Congress on the issues as requested.
- 7.12 Motion 27 on engagement of members and branches in practical solidarity work has had a full programme of events and actions across the year.
- 7.13 Motion 28 on international solidarity was the enabling motion to continue the priority work of the union through its international working group with activity across a range of areas.
- 7.14 Motion 29 on Ukraine solidarity has led to affiliation to the Ukraine Solidarity Campaign and other solidarity efforts to engage members in support of the Ukrainian peoples right to self-determination.
- 7.15 Motion 30 on solidarity with Argentinian workers in the face of the new, far-right President, has led to meetings at Education International World Congress in Buenos Aires with our sister union and participation in further solidarity events.
- 7.16 Motion 31 on support for Uyghur Muslims: UCU has written to UUK calling for HEIs to speak out on this issue.
- 7.17 Motion 32 on Solidarity with Palestine has led to action in conjunction with Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Stop the War Coalition et al, we continue to campaign for these goals- <https://www.ucu.org.uk/CeasefireNow>. We spoke in

favour of the resolution on Gaza at the Education International (EI) World Congress. UCU has donated to the EI solidarity initiative - the Teachers Empowerment Initiative - in support of teachers in Palestine in dealing with mental health trauma.

- 7.18 Motion 33 in defence of Palestinian rights, free speech and academic freedom has involved UCU defending staff and students speaking up for Palestinian rights, including at St Andrews University and the University of Sheffield. UCU members have been successful in their campaign to get USS to divest some of its Israeli linked investments and we publicised the PSC Divest for Palestine conference. In June we supported the Fobzu conference 'Overcoming Barriers, Building Links Conference 2024: Emergency Support for Palestinian Higher Education' and are working with UCU members, including in the University & College Workers for Palestine network (see Motion 35), to promote the Emergency Committee for Universities in Gaza appeal. We provided financial and other forms of support for the Campus Voices for Palestine Tour and have followed this up further webinar events and planned activities at Cradle to Grave.
- 7.19 Motions 34 and 35 on solidarity with Palestine, see actions on motions 32 and 33, above.
- 7.20 Motion 36 on solidarity with Palestine protests on US campuses. UCU has supported the student protests and encampments at UK, US and other international universities. We continue to call out over-zealous monitoring, surveillance and policing of student protests. We have spoken out against the attacks on the right to protest, including attacks on PSC.
- 7.21 Motion 37 on the Palestinian Family Scheme. UCU publicised the online petition to Create a Palestinian Family Visa Scheme for Palestinian people affected by war which was debated on 13 May 2024. In February 2025, we called on the new government to introduce a non-restrictive visa scheme for Palestinian refugees.
- 7.22 Motions B18 and B31 referred to an independent investigation into racism: this is reported on in the equality committee chapter of this report.
- 7.24 Motion B33 involved the extension of solidarity with Dr Faiza Shaheen, the former Labour Party candidate for the Chingford and Woodford Green constituency however the general election result rendered further activity moot.
- 7.25 Motion B34 related to a series of solidarity and campaign efforts related to the snap General Election of 2024. The union continues to work with all parliamentarians supportive of our sectors including those referenced in the motions and congratulate the BMA on the resolution of their disputes.

Section 2: Report of the higher education committee

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The higher education committee has four scheduled meetings each year. In the current year, a number of additional special meetings have been held. The HEC is chaired by Maria Chondrogianni (University of Westminster) as president-elect and the elected vice chairs are Sean Wallis (UCL) and Lucy Burke (Manchester Metropolitan University).

2 Pay and New JNCHEs

- 2.1 A pay offer of 2.5% from UCEA was rejected by HEC in June 2024. Following an unchanged 'full and final' offer in August, at its meeting on 27 September 2024, the committee rejected this offer again, but was willing to accept the pay-related elements on the four areas covered by the terms of reference.
- 2.2 A negotiators Q&A was held in November 2024, open to all members to ask the negotiators questions about the offer and the negotiations. Since the close of Congress 2024 UCU's negotiators have been Maria Chondrogianni (president-elect), Sean Wallis and Lucy Burke (HEC vice chairs), the national negotiators elected by HESC – Stephen Desmond (Southampton Solent University), Christopher O'Donnell (University of the West of Scotland), Vicky Blake (University of Leeds) and Ben Pope (University of Manchester), and Shahenda Suliman (UCU Head of HE).
- 2.3 A consultative ballot of the union's HE members was conducted in respect of UCEA's final offer in December 2024. The turnout was 26.99%. The pay element was rejected (68.03% of votes cast). The terms of reference on the pay related elements (contract types, pay spine review, workload and equality pay gaps) was accepted (85.62% of votes cast).
- 2.4 The consultation also asked members if they were willing to participate industrial action in pursuit of an improved offer. 53.15% of votes were cast in support of action.
- 2.5 A branch delegate meeting (BDM) followed the consultation results, and a meeting of the HEC held on 12 December voted to move to an industrial action ballot.
- 2.6 Following that meeting, further discussion was undertaken by the chair and vice chairs of HEC, and then by HEC, in respect of the time frame for a ballot. At the time of writing, HEC has agreed that planning should take place for an industrial action ballot that allows action to be taken in the first semester of 2025-26.
- 2.7 Following much work, revised terms of reference relating to casualisation, workload, pay spine reform, and equality pay gaps, had been agreed with the joint unions and UCEA. UCU was committed to progressing this work, however difficulties were experienced setting up timelines for the different negotiation groups. During October and November, UCEA proposed to start taking forward

some of this work. However, following HEC's decision in December 2024 to move to an industrial action ballot, UCEA withdrew the terms of reference for joint work and other pay related aspects of the offer.

- 2.8 Joint union discussions relating to the national pay claim for 2025-26 have recently concluded and the joint pay claim was submitted on Friday 7 March 2025.

3 Redundancies and the defence of HE

- 3.1 The committee has discussed with concern the increasing number of redundancies threatened across the sector. The evidence of the current broken funding model is now starkly apparent in the current crisis in HE. Branches across the UK have launched staunch defences of their members' jobs with over the threshold ballot turnouts in numerous institutions. HEC has sought to ensure branches are supported and asked for an overarching campaign in defence of higher education. The *Stop the Cuts: Fund Higher Education Now* campaign was launched in February 2025.

4 USS

- 4.1 **Stability Working Group (StWG):** Throughout 2024/25, the Superannuation Working Group (SWG) has continued to represent scheme members on the StWG, working alongside UCEA employer representatives and USS staff.
- 4.2 SWG has produced a number of proposal papers including a Gilts Correlation paper and a paper proposing changes to Valuation Methodology, the latter seeking to introduce more stability to the scheme.
- 4.3 In line with UCU policy, SWG have continued to investigate Conditional Indexation (CI). SWG agreed a terms of reference for a CI Working Group on whether CI was a viable option for USS. SWG is committed to engaging scheme members on this issue.
- 4.4 **Ethical Investment:** UCU has engaged with USS on its ethical investment policy with particular emphasis on investments in high carbon producers and industrial/military complex. In August 2024, the Financial Times carried an article stating USS had disposed of £80million of Israeli government bonds which UCU welcomed. SWG continues to promote responsible investment and is working with Climate & Ecological Emergency Committee to research the impact of war on climate and how pension schemes fund this devastation despite public commitments to Net-Zero and Paris Accords.
- 4.5 **Scheme Factors:** In January 2024, SWG became aware that USS would change the Early Retirement Factors and that this would have a serious detrimental impact on those scheme members seeking to retire before normal pension age. SWG argued for and achieved a delay in the implementation of these changes until 1 October 2024. This allowed many scheme members the time to consider early retirement options.

- 4.6 **Transparency Agreement:** SWG continues to push for greater transparency and the provision of information for scheme members. We have continued to review the Transparency Agreement and have recently agreed further changes that will ensure that more information on USS is available to scheme members.
- 4.7 **Collaborative Review Forum (CRF):** The SWG has agreed to establish the CRF, made up of representatives from UCU, UCEA and USS, to consider and investigate changes to scheme rules and make recommendations to JNC on these. At its first meeting in January 2025, it was agreed that CRF would focus on Co-Habitation rules as well as unintended consequences from Restoration and Recovery for total and serious Ill-health retirees between April 2022 & March 2024.

5 Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS)

- 5.1 UCU is represented on the Teachers' Pension Scheme England/Wales Pensions Board and Scheme Advisory Boards for England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland.
- 5.2 The main areas of discussion this year have been the issues arising from the Transitional Protection Remedy (known as McCloud) changes in member contributions following the 2020 Valuation, and employers offering incentives for members to opt out of Teachers Pensions.
- 5.3 There have been inevitable delays in many areas due to the Transitional Protection remedy. Most notable have been significant delays in members receiving a Cash Equivalent Transfer Value for divorce proceedings which for many has held up divorce settlements and has been particularly distressing. It is hoped that the backlog will be cleared by the first quarter of 2025.
- 5.4 During each valuation the member contribution rates are also considered. The bands are required to yield an average of 9.6%. Every year the bands are increased with CPI. Because wages have not kept up with inflation fewer members have gone through to the next band and the yield has fallen to 9.45%. In the consultation with the scheme advisory boards the Unions in England and Wales argued to keep the lowest band unchanged. This has resulted in a 0.3% increase on all bands other than the lowest.
- 5.5 UCU is continuing its campaign on the issues arising from the increased employer contributions in post 92s. We have sent a letter jointly with the Employers to the Treasury asking for a review of the SCAPE discount rate. Branches are campaigning against employers threatening to use subsidiary companies for new and current staff. Some employers are offering incentives for members to opt out of the scheme. We continue to raise these issues with the department along with other unions and have asked ministers to intervene. The union has campaigned and will continue to campaign for the Government to provide the additional funding for the HE Sector.
- 5.6 The three union sides of the Scheme Advisory Boards for England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland have agreed to work together to ask the

Government to review the link between the Normal Pension Age in the scheme and the State Pension Age. The 2011 Hutton report which recommended the link also recommended a review to see if it is still appropriate.

6 Health and safety

- 6.1 A UK-wide workload conference was held on 20 April with over 80 safety and workload reps attending. The event received lots of positive feedback and many reps have asked for more similar events in future. Reps found the high-quality workshops, case studies from HE and FE branches and the networking opportunities particularly useful.
- 6.2 Workload rep training continues to run in two separate half day sessions – workload reps 1 and workload reps 2. Both training sessions run every three months (online, open to all nations and regions).
- 6.3 Two CPD workshops feed directly into the workload campaign and aim to build up interest and knowledge in the role of a UCU workload rep. More information can be found on the workload campaign page here:
<https://www.ucu.org.uk/workloadcampaign>
- 6.4 HSE have been updating their work-related stress resources and free training webinars for employers and stakeholders on using HSE stress management standards and preventing work-related stress. They have also revamped their HSE stress indicator and the safety climate tools. The HSE website includes links to webinars and resources on building a business case which reps could find useful. See: <https://books.hse.gov.uk/Stress-Indicator-Tool/>
- 6.5 This work is being carried out in line with HSE's renewed focus on work-related ill health as set out in their 10 year strategy Protecting people and places: HSE strategy 2022 to 2032. See: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/assets/docs/the-hse-strategy.pdf>

7 Anti-casualisation work

- 7.1 The Employment Rights Bill (England, Scotland and Wales only) sets out to end "exploitative" zero hours contracts. We have worked closely with the TUC and responded to consultations to urge the government to foresee potential loopholes in the legislation and ensure that employers are not able to evade their obligations.
- 7.2 Under the new legislation employers will have to offer workers on a zero hours contract a guaranteed hours contract reflecting the hours they have worked in a specified reference period. How that will be calculated and work in practice will be set out in Regulations.
- 7.3 The proposals are far from perfect, but they are a step in the right direction of consigning zero hours contracts to the history books.
- 7.4 A suite of documents available in our bargaining and guidance library has been updated including our anti-casualisation campaigning packs, anti-casualisation negotiating packs, and advice on bargaining to end zero hours contracts.

- 7.5 We have also updated our Challenging Redundancies guidance and applied it across all sectors and introduced new guidance on the new rights for new parents in redundancy situations.

8 Research staff

- 8.1 We have published our Research Staff manifesto along with guidance on using the manifesto to campaign and negotiate for more secure contracts for research staff in higher education.
- 8.2 We have input into a number of workshops on the new People, Culture and Environment (PCE) element of the Research Excellence Framework 2029 to try to stress the importance of security of employment for a healthy research environment.
- 8.3 We have had major wins for Postgraduate Researchers who teach at Sheffield, Sussex and Cambridge universities. The deals won include getting rid of zero hours contracts, improvement to terms and conditions and pay rises.
- 8.4 At the end of January UKRI announced the biggest real-term increase in the stipend for UKRI-funded postgraduate researchers (PGRs) in over two decades.
- 8.5 This is a major win for our 'PGRs as staff' campaign and we have called on other funders to confirm they will now match it and peg their stipends to the Real Living Wage. In addition to the stipend increases there were improvements to terms and conditions, including increased medical leave and support for disabled students. These measures combined are another step towards PGRs achieving de facto staff status.

9 AI

- 9.1 The Future of Work in Post-16 Education working group first met in March 2024 to identify the threats and opportunities to UCU members of Artificial Intelligence and datafication, and to advise on the development of policy, national negotiation approaches and support for branches. It brings together members from across the union to undertake this work.
- 9.2 This group has undertaken a survey of members and branches, which has directed the work of the group, discussed bargaining approaches with the Heads of HE and FE and has drawn up fundamental principles on AI which will be discussed at Congress. Bargaining guidance for branches is being drafted and we hope to develop training for members and activists.
- 9.3 We have also established a group with education unions to look at AI and ensure we have a coherent cross-sectoral approach.

10 Academic related, professional staff (ARPS)

- 10.1 The ARPS committee has been working on a new blog which should be launched before the annual meeting to allow academic-related, professional services staff members to communicate more effectively on the issues that matter to them.

- 10.2 The committee has also run a number of open meetings in the last year, which bring together ARPS members from across the country to discuss key concerns.
- 10.3 A survey launched in January 2025 by the committee looks at the working environment of ARPS members, and will inform discussions at the annual meeting and the work of the committee in the coming year.

11 Medical Research Council Units

- 11.1 The decision by the MRC to cease funding MRC units in universities and replace them with Centres of Research Excellence is beginning to have a significant impact on UCU members. UCU supported an open letter which was sent in January to Professor Vallance as the minister responsible for Science, Research and Innovation. The letter sought to encourage the government to pause the implementation of the new model and review the approach to funding to prevent further damage being done to world leading research teams.

12 Progress on motions from special HESC April 2024

- 12.1 Motion HE1 sought an anti-redundancy campaign that investigated HEI finances, equality data in respect of those targeted for redundancies, updated redundancy guidance to branches, allowed for knowledge-sharing between branches, and called for legal test cases within redundancies such as trade union victimisation. Financial information is now collated in the union's Organising and Bargaining Information System (OBIS) which regional and devolved nation offices will have access to, and specialist analysis of HEI finances is provided to support branches in critically assessing employers' claims of financial difficulty and rationales for job cuts. Equality data can be requested directly by branches at local level. Redundancy guidance has been updated. Work is ongoing to identify opportunities to bring branches together on these issues.
- 12.2 Motion HE2 called for information and support for branches on developing local hardship funds, a twinning/branch support scheme to enable support for branches under threat, a political campaign in support of education, and the negotiation of a sector-wide moratorium on job cuts and course closures. Information about local hardships funds can be provided by UCU's finance office. Previously under Reclaim HE, and now under the campaign Stop the Cuts: Fund Higher Education Now, UCU is campaigning against the redundancies and for stable long-term funding in HE.
- 12.3 Motion HE3 called on HEC to ensure members across all different job types and contract types were involved democratically, reflected in branch guidance on defending jobs, and in strategies and campaigns, including campaign materials, with involvement of relevant advisory committees where appropriate. UCU continues to work to defend the jobs of all members, irrespective of job role or contract type.
- 12.4 Motion HE4 called for the defence of creative arts courses in all institutions and for urgent government lobbying against such cuts. Opposition to the cuts and defence of the arts has formed part of UCU's political lobbying and the

importance of a broad HE curriculum was a feature of Reclaim HE. Current campaigns oppose all cuts and redundancies.

- 12.5 Motion HE5 highlighted the importance of university language departments, called for their closure to cease, and called for standard terms and conditions and career pathways for language teachers. Course closures and redundancies continue to be opposed.
- 12.6 The support for a reconvened Convention for Higher Education (initiated by London region) and sending a speaker to that event, called for in motion HE6, took place. UCU also publicised the demonstration in support of Goldsmiths and gave ongoing support to the campaign.
- 12.7 Motion HE7 called for a manifesto for higher education with an emphasis on resolving the HE crisis and made demands for an incoming Labour government to end the hostile environment for overseas students and cover additional employer TPS contributions. A general manifesto was produced by UCU ahead of the general election in July 2024. The themes included in the motion continue to form part of UCU's ongoing political lobbying.
- 12.8 Motion HE8 called for a public campaign emphasising HE as a common good, proposing alternative funding models, and seeking partnership agreements with other HE unions. These themes are included in current campaigns.
- 12.9 Motion HE9 called for strike committees to co-ordinate action and called for a political campaign in defence of jobs and courses in a general election year. HEC has discussed the issue of strike committees previously. There has been no UK-wide action in the current year; some local strike committees operate. Campaigning on jobs and courses has continued as described in respect of motions HE2 and HE7 above.
- 12.10 Motion HE10 called for employers to be asked about the accountability of their finances leading to proposed redundancies and called for various actions ahead of the general election. Motion HE11 set out some areas to be included in UCU's general election work, including proper funding for HE, the damaging impact of competition between institutions, long term planning, sector-wide terms and conditions and an end to REF and TEF. UCU produced a manifesto and campaigned ahead of the general election and continues in its political work. UCU continues to ask about institutions' finances and information is recorded in OBIS.
- 12.11 Motion HE12 called on HEC to look at the lessons of UCU Scotland's campaigning on the Fair Work Convention.
- 12.12 Motion HE13 sought to ensure that all strategies for campaigning take into account the devolved nature of HE, including the resourcing of campaigns. The impact of devolution is noted at various points in campaigns, particularly in respect of political campaigning.

- 12.13 Motion HE14 asked that branches be encouraged to share information about appraisal schemes regionally to assist regional offices in supporting branches challenging the linking of appraisal and pay. Regional offices provide support where this is raised by branches.
- 12.14 Motion HE15 asked for guidance for post-92 institutions on challenging the contractual maximum teaching year being exceeded and developing ways to share information about instances of this. Guidance on the post-92 framework agreement was reissued and further work to support post-92 HEIs continues.
- 12.15 Motion HE16 made some specific requests around further work on institutional finances, including a specific finance working group, sharing of detailed financial analysis of institutions, use of external consultations, more training and support for branches on this issue. The OBIS system which branches will soon be able to access via regional offices provides a considerable amount of comparative financial data. Further guidance for branches on making requests for financial information has been made available.
- 12.16 Motion HE17 sought actions in opposition to restrictions on migrant workers in the UK, including ensuring the salaries for university workers are above minimum visa thresholds, calling on the government to maintain and improve the Graduate Visa, and reinstate the right to bring partners and dependents. The call in respect of salaries had been made via New JNCHES. UCU continues to press politically for the rights of migrants.

Section 3: Report of the further education committee (FEC)

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This part of the annual report deals with UCU's work in the further education sector, including Adult and Community Education (ACE) and prison education, over the last year. Only an overview of the work undertaken can be reported.
- 1.2 A significant part of the work in the last year has been focused on developing and delivering the New Deal for FE and Prison Ed campaigns: [UCU - A New Deal for FE](#) and [UCU - UCU prison educators: unlocking futures](#). This has meant progress on some work associated with the Further Education Committee's key objectives will have been impacted. The priority work areas for FEC are pay, equality, ACE, anti-casualisation, prisons, protecting members' TPS benefits and work to reduce members' workloads.

2 New Deal for FE

In February 2024, the Further Education Committee (FEC) made decisions about the national pay campaign and claim for the coming year. FEC decided to launch a new national campaign called 'Levelling up the Sector' and organise a national aggregate ballot of all branches over the summer with strike action in September.

- 2.1 In March more than 20 FE branches sent requests to call a Special FE Sector Conference (SFESC), which took place online on Saturday 13 April 2024. The business of the conference was to debate the year's pay and conditions strategy and decide whether an aggregate ballot would be called.
- 2.2 Over 100 delegates representing more than 70 FE branches participated in the SFESC. The decisions can be found here: https://www.ucu.org.uk/fesc_13april2024
- 2.3 Alongside the motions from branches two other documents were circulated to delegates to inform the debate: https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/14389/SFESC-background-docs/pdf/SFESC_background.pdf
- 2.4 Regarding the campaign strategy, SFESC rejected the FEC position and called on the union to immediately implement the 'New Deal for FE' strategy and develop the national pay claim and campaign 2024/25.
<https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/14381/FE-joint-unions-pay-claim-2024-25/pdf/FEjointpaycliam2024FINAL.pdf>
- 2.5 Regarding a national aggregate ballot, SFESC resolved there would not be an aggregated ballot this year; specifically, no ballot in June [2024] or action starting in September [2024]. Local pay claims would be developed to build branches in preparation for a future aggregated ballot. The timing of that future aggregate ballot will be subject to branch consultation and the decision of a Special FESC.

- 2.6 In support of the New Deal for FE campaign, the SFESC approved new campaign materials to show the wide range of pay disparity in FE. Other materials such as a template claim, the importance of binding national bargaining and a petition covering pay, workloads and binding national agreements would be produced as part of the campaign. Building branch organisation and density is a central part of the campaign.
- 2.7 There was strong support for branch autonomy and decision making at the SFESC which meant branches retaining the ability to be excluded from national campaigns based on their particular local circumstances and that until binding national agreements were in place at sector level, branches will not be forced into disputes, or an aggregate ballot, or be subject to any national ratification of their local agreements if those agreements have been endorsed by their branch members.
- 2.8 The New Deal for FE campaign was rolled out in May: [UCU - A New Deal for FE](#) with a launch event in June: [A New Deal for FE](#)
- 2.9 A key part of the campaign is focused on supporting every FE branch in England in building organisation and engaging in local bargaining to bring pressure to bear on employers nationally. This is the first step towards winning binding national bargaining. Members are at the heart of this campaign, and the aim is to get every FE member involved. This campaign is calling for a new deal for FE workers involving:
- a 10%/£3000 pay rise
 - parity with schoolteacher pay within 3 years
 - a minimum starting salary of £30,000
 - reform of the pay spine
 - close equality pay gaps
 - national agreements on workload
 - a return to national bargaining
 - putting FE at the heart of a new government's plans
- 2.10 New campaign materials were circulated to branches – leaflet and poster available at <https://www.ucu.org.uk/NewDealForFE>
- 2.11 A briefing paper on why we need national bargaining was circulated to branches and branch briefings took place during autumn.
- <https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/13711/The-case-for-binding-national-negotiations-in-further-education-in-England>
- 2.12 A petition on national bargaining was developed and branches proactively encouraged to sign and use the petition: <https://newdealforfe.org.uk/>

- 2.13 As part of the political lobbying work targeting the new UK government for more funding for FE resources were made available to members to write to their MPs:
https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/14567/End-FE-neglect---draft-Labour-MP-email/txt/End_FE_neglect_revised.txt
- 2.14 A New Deal for FE 'live' event took place on 19 September:
<https://youtu.be/fcfoK9Pxn6A>
- 2.15 A range of videos highlighting the voices of FE members was produced and can be viewed on our YouTube channel including this short campaign video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y8wL7JyF480>
- 2.16 A lobby and MP briefing took place on Wednesday 23 October. Over 60 members from across FE England and prison education attended as did several MPs.
<https://youtu.be/Z22ZJXZ5dRw> and <https://youtu.be/ISxJZOJdU14>
- 2.17 In October the UK government announced an additional £300m funding allocation to FE. [Budget 2024: Extra £300m for FE](#)
- 2.18 In support of making the case for fundamental change in FE, UCU made a submission to the schoolteacher (Pay) review Body (STRB) in January.
<https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/14718/UCU-submission-to-the-STRB/pdf/STRBUCUsubmissionFINAL.pdf>
- 2.19 The campaign will continue to build in the new year in support of the national pay claim 2025/26, the distribution of the £300m additional funding, UCU's response to the outcome of the STRB and the UK government's Spending Review announcement expected in the spring.

3 FE Pay 2024/25

- 3.1 In March 2024, the joint further education trade unions in England (GMB, NEU, UCU, Unison and Unite) submitted our pay claim 2024/25 to the Association of Colleges (AoC). The first pay talks at the National Joint Forum (NJF) took place in May.

<https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/14381/FE-joint-unions-pay-claim-2024-25/pdf/FEjointpaycliam2024FINAL.pdf>
- 3.2 At the first meeting discussions focussed on the headline pay claim of 10% or £3,000 whichever is greater, closing the pay gap with schools, a £30k starting salary for teachers in FE, and progress towards achieving binding national agreements. The AoC made no offer at the meeting. Further to this the AoC said they could not make an offer until after the schoolteacher's pay offer was known.

[UCU - Update on England FE pay negotiations 2024-25](#)
- 3.3 The NJF process stopped at that point and resumed in October. The AoC final recommendation on pay was 2.5% or £750, whichever is the greater. [UCU - Latest on pay recommendation](#)

- 3.4 Branches have used the recommendation as a reference point for their negotiations.
- 3.5 **Just Transition Framework:** The FE trade unions and the AoC have reached agreement on a just transition road map for colleges. The agreement lays out a local strategy for colleges to work towards a more sustainable future. The college workforce needs to have the resources and knowledge to train those moving into new and developing growth sectors.

4 Prison Education

- 4.1 UCU launched the unions new prison education campaign 'Unlocking Futures' at Congress 2024. [UCU - UCU's campaign for prison education](#) and [UCU - Prison education staff](#)

The campaign is calling for:

- a comprehensive review of the current operation of Prison Education Framework (PEF) and the prison education curriculum before the Prison Education Service (PES) contract is rolled out
- UCU to be consulted by the MoJ on this and other prison education matters
- the prison education service that is overseen by the DfE as a national prison education service and on a not-for-profit basis
- a comprehensive review of the recommendations from the Coates review in order to inform these current proposals
- the implementation of the Joint Unions in Prison Alliance recommendations and safer prisons
- a national contract for prison education staff and professional respect and parity of esteem with FE
- HM Treasury to confirm the application of New Fair Deal as a matter of urgency.

- 4.2 In December 2024 we held a prison education strategy day where prison education reps discussed several issues linked to the campaign. Also, discussions covered branch development plans that focus on finding new reps and more members and more regular communication.

- 4.3 The Black Prison Educators network continues to grow and develop. A Charter has been developed and key matters discussed are UCU's CPD offering, Black women and sexual harassment advisory group, decolonising the curriculum and developing Black leaders. [UCU - Black prison educators' charter launched](#)

- 4.4 A video featuring Pauline Rattery, one of the founder members of the BPE group can be seen here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2WsiZCUhqM&t=106s&ab_channel=UCU-UniversityandCollegeUnion.

4.5 **Prison education - political work**

4.6 We continue with our focused lobbying work on behalf of members terms and conditions as well as the many flaws with the current Prisoner Education Framework (PEF) contract. The prison ed contract is fundamentally flawed, and we have no confidence the new Prisoner Education Service (PES) contract, which has now been delayed beyond April 2025, will be an improvement.

4.7 UCU recently made a submission to the justice committee inquiry into rehabilitation with powerful evidence from members forming a key part of our submission.

4.8 UCU is working with the other justice unions as part of JUPG (Justice Unions Parliamentary Group) on developing a new campaign about the awful state of the prison estate. Reps have been asked to send in examples of how bad their working conditions are. These will be compiled into a report for parliamentarians and have spin off parliamentary questions.

4.9 **JUPA**

UCU continues to work with the other unions in the Joint Unions in Prisons Alliance on improving the health and safety of our members working lives. [JUPA_-_Safe_Inside_Prison_Charter.pdf](#) The Safe Inside campaign statement and charter have recently been updated and are currently in the process of being signed off within each unions' structures.

4.10 **New prison education contract**

The contract is due to roll out later this year. The successful bidders have been advised but the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has made no public statement at this time. It's likely there will be some TUPE transfers of members between employers as a result we are organising TUPE training for reps, most likely this will be in March or April 2025.

4.11 **Prison Education Annual Meeting**

This will be a hybrid meeting open to all members and held at UCU HQ on Friday 21 February. There will be a wide range of speakers, updates from branches and opportunity for members to network.

5 **Anti-casualisation 2024/25**

5.1 The Employment Rights Bill (England, Scotland and Wales only) sets out to end "exploitative" zero hours contracts. We have worked closely with the TUC and responded to consultations to urge the government to foresee potential loopholes in the legislation and ensure that employers are not able to evade their obligations.

5.2 Under the new legislation employers will have to offer workers on zero hours contract a guaranteed-hour contract reflecting the hours they have worked in a specified 'reference period. How that will be calculated and work in practice will

be set out in Regulations. The proposals are far from perfect, but they are a step in the right direction of consigning zero hours contracts to the history books.

- 5.3 A suite of documents available in our bargaining and guidance library has been updated including our anti-casualisation campaigning packs, anti-casualisation negotiating packs, and advice on bargaining to end zero hours contracts.
- 5.4 We have also updated our Challenging Redundancies guidance and applied it across all sectors and introduced new guidance on the new rights for new parents in redundancy situations.
- 5.5 It remains a priority of the anti-casualisation committee (ACC) to increase the participation of FE members (including those in ACE and Prisons) but sadly little progress has been made this year.

6 Adult and Community Education (ACE)

- 6.1 Prior to the election we developed a template letter for members to send to their MPs highlighting the cuts to the Adult and Community Education budget since 2010, the devastating impact that is having on community education and asking MPs to hold the government to account. We also developed a series of videos featuring members working in ACE to promote the service and UCU membership.
- 6.2 Despite a change of government, ACE provision remains severely underfunded and our members severely underpaid and with poor terms and conditions.
- 6.3 We have continued to lobby government on the need for an improved and stable funding model for ACE and a means to tackle the inequality between the terms and conditions of teachers working in ACE and teachers working in other parts of the education system. Unfortunately, we have continued to witness cuts to ACE services for example at Coventry.

Given the lack of national bargaining for our ACE members we have been trying to engage the regional mayors in discussions about ACE provision in their combined authority. This is an attempt to have at least a regional form of bargaining to tackle issues of pay, job insecurity and lack of professional respect.

- 6.4 In addition, at the annual meeting in March, we are planning to launch a national claim for ACE around which we can campaign and negotiate to improve the working conditions of our ACE members.

7 AI

- 7.1 The Future of Work in Post-16 Education working group first met in March 2024 to identify the threats and opportunities to UCU members of Artificial Intelligence and datafication, and to advise on the development of policy, national negotiation approaches and support for branches. It brings together members from across the union to undertake this work.

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- 7.3 This group has undertaken a survey of members and branches, which has directed the work of the group; discussed bargaining approaches with the Heads of HE and FE and has drawn up fundamental principles on AI which will be discussed at Congress. Bargaining guidance for branches is being drafted and we hope to develop training for members and activists.
- 7.4 We have also established a group with Education unions to look at AI and ensure we have a coherent cross-sectoral approach.

8 Health and Safety Update

- 8.1 A workload conference was held on 20 April with over 80 safety and workload reps attending from across the UK. The event received lots of positive feedback and many reps have asked for more events similar to this one to run again in the near future. Reps attending the workload conference found the high-quality workshops, case studies from HE and FE branches and the networking opportunities particularly useful.
- 8.2 Workload rep training continues to run in two separate half day sessions – workload reps 1 and workload reps 2. Each training session runs every other month (online, open to all nations and regions).
- 8.3 More information can be found on the workload campaign page here:
<https://www.ucu.org.uk/workloadcampaign>
- 8.4 Two CPD workshops feed directly into the workload campaign and aim to build up interest and knowledge in the role of a UCU workload rep. 'Tackling excessive workloads' – This workshop has been running since October 2022 and remains one of the most popular CPD courses.
- 8.5 UCU CPD survey of members reveals that engagement in CPD is increasing members involvement in branch activities and encouraging members to become reps and branch officers. See report here:
https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/14412/UCU-CPD-survey-2023/pdf/UCU_CPD_survey_Feb24.pdf
- 8.6 HSE resources which may be useful for FE and other sectors can be found here:
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/education/asbestos.htm>
- 8.7 In addition, HSE have been updating their work-related stress resources and free training webinars for employers and stakeholders on using HSE stress management standards and preventing work-related stress. They have also revamped their HSE stress indicator tool and the safety climate tool and launched these survey tools to employers. HSE website includes links to

webinars and resources on building a business case which reps could find useful. See: <https://books.hse.gov.uk/Stress-Indicator-Tool/>

- 8.8 This work is being carried out in line with HSE's renewed focus on work-related ill health as set out in their 10 year strategy Protecting people and places: HSE strategy 2022 to 2032. See: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/assets/docs/the-hse-strategy.pdf> and <https://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/assets/docs/hse-business-plan.pdf>

9 Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS)

- 9.1 UCU is represented on the Teachers' Pension Scheme England/Wales Pensions Board and Scheme Advisory Boards for England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland.
- 9.2 The main areas of discussion this year have been the issues arising from the Transitional Protection Remedy (known as McCloud) changes in member contributions following the 2020 Valuation and employers offering incentives for members to opt out of Teachers Pensions along with the continuing concern of HE institutions using subsidiary companies to avoid their obligations to enroll teaching staff into Teachers Pensions Scheme.
- 9.3 There have been inevitable delays in many areas due to the Transitional Protection remedy. Most notably has been significant delays in members receiving a Cash Equivalent Transfer Value for divorce proceedings which for many has held up divorce settlements and has been particularly distressing. All non-funded public sector pensions have had the same issues caused by a) the delay in finalising the valuation and review of scheme factors and b) all public sector schemes have been awaiting guidance from the treasury on how to undertake two calculations to take account of service during the remedy period being in either the legacy or reformed scheme. This has thrown up several legal and technical issues but for the majority of cases this should be possible. It is hoped that the backlog will be cleared by the first quarter of 2025.
- 9.4 During each valuation the member contribution rates are also considered. Like other public sector schemes TP has banded contribution rates dependant on income, with the lowest percentage for the lowest paid. These bands are required to yield an average of 9.6%. Every year the bands are increased with CPI and because wages have not kept up with inflation less members have gone through to the next band and the yield has fallen to 9.45%. The Department consulted the scheme advisory boards on a variety of ways to rebalance the member contributions and the Unions in England and Wales argued to keep the lowest band unchanged. This has culminated in a 0.3% increase on all bands other than the lowest.
- 9.5 The Treasury consulted with the employers and the Trade Unions through the TUC on extending New Fair Deal to FE establishments. New Fair Deal protects access to public sector pension schemes for staff transferring from a public sector employer to a private employer in a TUPE transfer. When the public sector pension schemes were reformed in 2012, they were initially going to

retain New Fair Deal for FE and HE but, after a lot of lobbying by the employers, in the end didn't on the basis that FE and HE institutions were 'private' organisations. Now that FE has been declared to be in the public sector the treasury have revisited this and determined to extend New Fair Deal to FE.

- 9.6 The department launched a consultation on some minor changes to the Teachers Pension regulations, which included the changes to the member contribution rates and extension of New Fair Deal. We responded very positively to the New Fair Deal arrangements, but whilst acknowledging the increase in member contribution rates, raised issues about members' salaries falling behind and our concerns for increased opt-outs.
- 9.7 UCU is continuing to campaign on the increase in the employer contribution for TPS. Although FE institutions are receiving additional funding to cover the costs, HE institutions are not leading to more considering ways of avoiding their obligations. Decreases in active membership of the scheme would be concerning for future valuations. We have sent a letter jointly with the Employers to the Treasury asking for a review of the SCAPE discount rate. Branches are campaigning against employers threatening to use subsidiary companies for new and current staff. There is also a worrying trend of employers offering incentives for members to opt out of the scheme. We continue to raise these issues with the department along with other unions and have asked ministers to intervene. The Union has campaigned and will continue to campaign for the Government to provide the addition funding for the HE Sector.
- 9.8 The three Union sides of the Scheme Advisory Boards for England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland have agreed to work together to ask the Government to review the link between the Normal Pension Age in the scheme and the State Pension Age. The 2011 Hutton report which recommended the link also recommended a review to see if it is still appropriate.

10 Report of the Special FE Sector Conference April 2024

- 10.1 Motion 1 called on UCU to immediately implement the New Deal for FE campaign, not to organise an aggregate national ballot, no future national aggregated ballot until there strong membership support, an FE sector conference decision, and a new national bargaining agreement in place. The New Deal for FE strategy was implemented immediately – see section 2 above.
- 10.2 Motion 2 on respecting the decisions of FESC, resolved continue with the Respect FE campaign, with no aggregated ballot this year and use local pay claims to build branches in preparation for a future aggregated ballot. Respect FE laid the foundations on which a New Deal for FE was built. Local pay claim templates were developed and circulated to regional offices.

[UCU - Respect FE](#) and [UCU - A New Deal for FE](#)

- 10.3 Motion 6 resolved that in UCU campaigns, there should be evidence of pay disparities, with data, to show the current range in pay, and terms and

conditions across the sector in England. For UCU to produce briefing papers to send to all members explaining the importance of binding agreements. Pay data informed the joint union claim and New Deal for FE campaign materials. A briefing on the importance of binding national bargaining was developed alongside the Petition for national bargaining as well as other campaign materials. <https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/13711/The-case-for-binding-national-negotiations-in-further-education-in-England> and <https://newdealforfe.org.uk/>

- 10.4 Motion 7 called for UCU to produce a petition 'Levelling up, leave no one behind. A petition was developed and circulated to branches. It has over 5000 signatures; <https://newdealforfe.org.uk/> Other materials were developed to support of the campaign; see links for motion 6 above.
- 10.5 Motion 8 resolved that a branch can be excluded from any national action, dependent on local context and that branches retain local power to build branch capacity, density, and organising power whilst a long-term strategy is constructed and employed so that we can achieve our aims. There was no national ballot for the academic year 2024/25. However, branches have autonomy to lodge their own disputes.
- 10.6 Motion 9 resolved that until binding pay bargaining is achieved, any FE branch will be able to opt out of any national dispute or aggregated ballot by passing a motion to that effect at a quorate branch meeting. There was no national ballot for the academic year 2024/25. However, branches have autonomy to lodge their own disputes.
- 10.7 Motion 10 resolved that national ratification of local agreements in FE shall not take place unless and until national binding pay bargaining is in place. All local agreements are ratified at branch level in line with the resolved action in the motion.
- 10.8 Motion 11 resolved that at any time, branch committees may present any offer from their employer to branch members. Decisions over whether to accept such an offer may be made at a quorate branch meeting or by a simple majority vote in an e-ballot branch meeting or by a simple majority vote in an e-ballot of branch members. All local agreements are being ratified at branch level in line with the resolved action in the motion.

Section 4: Report of the education committee (EdC)

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The education committee meets twice a year; in September and January. This year its chair is Vicky Blake (University of Leeds), and the vice chair is Peter Evans (South Thames College).
- 1.2 The committee has continued its focus this year on work that contributes to the overall aim of building a positive vision for post-school education.
- 1.3 The General Election in July, and the change in government has brought a significant change in approach. The union's contact with the Department of Education has increased significantly including high-level ministerial meetings, increased consultations, partnership forums and formal inquiries. Our task is to convert these interactions into meaningful policy change that will improve the working lives of UCU members.

2 Consultation responses

- 2.1 UCU have responded to a number of consultations, including:
 - Ofsted Big Listen consultation
 - Curriculum and Assessment Review
 - Improving the way Ofsted inspects education
 - REF 2029 People, Culture and Environment Indicators Survey
 - House of Lords Industry and Regulators Committee Inquiry into '*Skills for the future: apprenticeships and training*'
 - Parliament's Justice Committee Inquiry into 'Rehabilitation and Resettlement: ending the cycle of reoffending'
 - 'The application of zero hours contracts measures to agency workers' (relating to the Employment Rights bill)
 - Education Committee 'Further Education and Skills' Inquiry
- 2.2 The General Secretary also gave oral evidence at the Covid-19 Inquiry in March 2025. The focus was the impact of the pandemic on key workers.

3 Improving Education Together

- 3.1 The Department for Education are forging a social partnership agreement bringing together Schools and Colleges, unions, employer representatives, and government in England. A recognised aim of the partnership is government recognition that '*we know we can only succeed if we design and deliver change together across the sector and its workforce*'.
- 3.2 There will be a Partnership Board that provides strategic oversight in addition to a number of Partnership Subgroups which will work through the detail of policy development and delivery on the core partnership commitments and develop

recommendations for the main partnership Board to review. The initial three subgroups will work on the following topics:

- accountability systems
- special education needs and disabilities (SEND) and inclusion; and
- workforce

4 Education funding reform

- 4.1 In November, the Secretary of State, Bridget Phillipson, announced an inflationary rise in undergraduate fees and student maintenance for 2025-26, as well as a reduction to classroom-based foundation year fees. UCU criticised the fee hike as 'economically and morally wrong'. According to newspaper articles, the government is planning on allowing tuition fees to rise annually by inflation. If implemented, it would result in domestic tuition fees reaching £10,000 pa by the end of this Parliament. In response to these news stories, we called on the government [to invest in HE, not to raise tuition fees even higher](#).
- 4.2 Bridget Phillipson said that any additional investment will need to be accompanied by 'widescale reform in the higher education sector'. Full plans for reform are expected by the summer but we already have a list of their headline priorities: *access, economic growth, civic and regional engagement, quality, and efficiency*. These priorities were sketched out in broad terms, leaving plenty of room for development between now and the summer. As part of our engagement with the Department for Education (DfE) on these issues, we will continue to push for an alternative agenda based on [our 2024 election manifesto](#).
- 4.3 In the autumn Budget, the government announced that it will be providing an additional £300m funding for FE and Sixth Form Colleges for financial year 2025-2026. We believe momentum is gaining among MPs and ministers who are openly acknowledging the unacceptable pay gap between school and college teachers. This follows years of sustained lobbying by UCU.
- 4.4 In December, UCU provided a submission to the School Teachers Review Body (STRB) which was the first time FE was included in the process. This indicates another positive signal that FE pay is firmly on the agenda.
- 4.5 At the time of writing, the policy team are preparing a response to a newly launched Education Select Committee inquiry "Making Further Education fit for the future" which provides another opportunity to make the case for pay parity for members in FE.

5 Curriculum and assessment review

- 5.1 The panel leading the independent review of curriculum and assessment in England is expected to publish its findings later this year. The panel explicitly set out that it is seeking 'evolution, not revolution' and so it remains to be seen how far-reaching any proposed reforms will be, however, subject choices,

qualification types and assessment options were all in remit and so we will follow all comms and final report closely.

- 5.2 We made a submission to the review calling for a fresh consideration of the knowledge, skills and values which should characterise an educated young adult in 21st and indeed 22nd century Britain. The response also called for an end to forced re-sits of GCSE English and maths in colleges.

6 Academic freedom and freedom of speech

- 6.1 The incoming government paused the implementation of the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech Act). UCU met with DfE officials in October to outline our main concerns and to put forward an alternative position, including the recommendations in the [UNESCO/ILO CEART report](#).
- 6.2 On 15 January the Labour government published its response to the review of the current legislation. Key provisions from the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 will be brought into force, whilst 'burdensome provisions' will be dropped. The Office for Students (OfS) will still have the power to investigate complaints over breaches of free speech from staff, external speakers and members of universities, as well as issuing fines and penalties, but crucially the statutory tort option will be scrapped. In our response, we said that [Labour should dispense with the Tory culture war bill altogether](#).
- 6.3 UCU also continues to challenge attacks on academic freedom at institutional level. For example, in November, UCU wrote to the University of Sheffield to challenge their restrictions on pro-Palestinian educational events, including activities organised by the local UCU branch.

7 Cradle to Grave

- 7.1 Cradle to Grave will take place at the end of March 2025 on the theme "*Education for Liberation: building progressive post-16 education policy*". The event will be chaired by Vicky Blake with breakout sessions on the following topics:
- Supporting the resilience and rebuilding of education systems under military assault and occupation
 - Curriculum and Assessment, to include prison and ACE education
 - Decarbonisation and green skills: a just transition for post-16 education

- 7.2 The keynote speaker will be Richard Burgon MP.

8 Action on Congress motions 2024

- 8.1 Motion 10: *Building a brighter future for post-16 education*. The work of the union in response to this overarching motion on UCU's education policy agenda is outlined above.
- 8.2 Motion 11: *Save post-16 education (for the many not the few)*. The national campaign defending the sector was launched in February 2025.

- 8.3 Motion 13: *Mischaracterisation of 'academic freedom' and freedom of speech*. Work is underway to deliver an event on academic freedom in 2025.
- 8.4 Motion 14: *Conflict, history education, academic freedom and free speech*. UCU has continued to express solidarity with the people of Palestine and Ukraine. The Union has hosted a number of events throughout the year including a speaking tour and webinars.
- 8.5 Motion 15: *Health and social care conference*. Discussions have taken place with the Retired Members Committee to scope out the proposed conference on health and social care.

Section 5: Report of the equality committee (EQC)

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Equality Committee meets twice a year; in November and February. This year the committee is chaired by Rhiannon Lockley (Birmingham City University) and Pat Roche (Blackpool and the Fylde College) is the vice chair.
- 1.2 Equality is central to the union's work and the equality committee has continued its work to ensure that it is a prominent theme across all UCU activity.

2 UCU Race Review

- 2.1 In September 2024, both UCU and Unite UCU (UCU staff union) committed to progress the work of the Race Review and ensure that any recommendations arising from the Review are acted on quickly.
- 2.2 This independent review has been initiated in response to concerns about racism within UCU, affecting both Black members and Black staff. Originally prompted by concerns raised by UCU's Black Members' Standing Committee (BMSC) regarding institutional racism, the review was later expanded to include staff following formal disputes and complaints raised by the staff union, Unite UCU.
- 2.3 The review aims to ensure equity, justice, and adherence to UCU's commitment to equality, actively opposing harassment, prejudice, victimisation, and discrimination. It is jointly overseen by UCU Senior Management Team (SMT), BMSC, and Unite UCU, ensuring independence and timely delivery of recommendations.
- 2.4 The terms of reference were agreed and sent to the independent panel in January 2025. UCU will continue to update staff and membership on progress.
- 2.5 As part of the review, a survey into the experiences of racism is being developed with input from the Black Members Standing Committee. This follows a motion at NEC in November.

3 Anti-far right campaigning

- 3.1 The UCU's anti-far-right campaign focuses on addressing the alarming rise in extremist violence that targets marginalised communities and thrives on systemic racism, Islamophobia, and antisemitism. Recognising the role of education in fostering inclusivity, the campaign advocates for significant public investment in education to promote critical thinking and counter divisive narratives.
- 3.2 Alongside this, UCU actively combats racism and fascism through union-led initiatives, offering unwavering support to affected communities. This dual approach highlights the union's commitment to creating solidarity and empowering both staff and students to resist hate.
- 3.3 Article in response to summer riots: <https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/13701/UCU-response-to-far-right-riots>
- 3.4 Booklet for Labour Party conference 2024:
https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/14604/Harnessing-the-power-of-post-compulsory-education/pdf/Harnessing_the_power_of_post-compulsory_education_sep24.pdf

4 Equality groups conference 2024

- 4.1 UCU's annual equality conference combines a joint equality conference for black, disabled, LGBT+, migrant and women members as well as dedicated sessions for the five constituencies, joint sessions, various workshops and guest speakers.
- 4.2 The annual conference took place from Thursday 28 November to Saturday 30 November 2024 at Conference Aston, Birmingham. The delegate feedback was overwhelmingly positive.
- 4.3 Continuing with the annual conference theme, a survey was issued to all UCU members to gather data on the experiences of members seeking reasonable adjustments and that of branch reps in supporting disabled members. Findings from the survey will be shared at the annual Disabled Members Conference in the Autumn.
- 4.4 UCU is a stakeholder in the government's Social Partnership group examining improvements for SEND provisions. UCU has contributed to these meetings to raise issues of workloads and lack of funding for its members in higher and further education.
- 4.5 We have engaged with the government on its consultations on the Equality (Race and Disability) Bill which will extend pay gap reporting to include ethnicity and disability for employers with more than 250 staff and extend equal pay rights to workers experiencing discrimination based on race or disability.
- 4.6 UCU continues to work with Disabled People's Organisation and the TUC to encourage the government to enact all areas of the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People. (UNCRDP)

5 Letters to government

- 5.1 The General Secretary wrote to the Health Secretary in December condemning the ban on puberty blockers. [UCU - Letter to UK health secretary Wes Streeting on the banning of puberty blockers.](#)
- 5.2 The General Secretary wrote to the Home Secretary in December putting to set out UCU's position on issues impacting migrant workers. [UCU - Letter to Home Secretary on immigration policies.](#)

6 CPD, webinars and events

- 6.1 UCU has also engaged members with its work on equality through a range of CPD courses we run on topics including: collectively challenging disability discrimination, everyday ableism, challenging sexual harassment and sexual violence, community accountability for racial justice, decolonise your institution, LGBT+ language in use, menopause is a workplace issue, and tackling the hostile environment for migrants.
- 6.2 UCU also continued to deliver equality courses for reps on areas including bargaining for equality in the workplace, reasonable adjustments and challenging sexual harassment in the workplace.
- 6.3 The following webinars have been delivered this year:
 - LGBT+ law and culture webinar was held on 21 October with speakers Sen Raj, Manchester Metropolitan University, Mini Saxena, SOAS, and Adrian Jjuuko, CEO of Human Rights, Promotion and Awareness Forum, Uganda
 - E-visa webinar: UCU worked with Bindmans solicitors to deliver a webinar on Monday 18 November which gave an overview of the UK government's planned transition from physical biometric permits, including Indefinite Leave to Remain, EU settlement scheme and all types of visa to an electronic format.
 - LGBT+ Solidarity webinar on 20th November Tracy Walsh, UCU, Tig Slater and Drew Simms, Sheffield Hallam, and Alex Baird, University of Bedfordshire spoke about how it is possible to develop solidarity actions
 - Holocaust memorial day: In January Zoë Waxman, Professor of Holocaust History at the University of Oxford, explored the pre-history of the Holocaust. The lunchtime webinar was attended by more than 250 UCU members.
 - Education as resistance: Sundos Hammad, coordinator of the Right to Education Campaign shared her personal experiences of living and working in Palestine under occupation. The webinar was delivered shortly after the announcement of a Ceasefire and discussed the challenges ahead in respect to reconstruction and independence for the Palestinian people.
 - In March 2025, we held a webinar on the 'Accessibility as Standard' checklist, a tool designed to increase workplace accessibility.

- Also in March 2025 a webinar on LGBT+ data with speakers Kirstie Ken English, University of Glasgow and Kieran Higgins, University of Ulster.

7 TUC equality conference and ETUCE

- 7.1 UCU once again sent delegations to each of the TUC equality conferences, discussing motions and engaging in activity for Black, disabled, LGBT+ and women members across the movement.
- 7.2 UCU was also represented by the Head of Equality and Policy at the annual ETUCE equality meeting in Brussels in February 2025.

8 Resources for branches

- 8.1 We have produced several new and updated written resources and campaigning materials for members on equality issues, including:
- Menopause model policy
 - Redundancy, pregnancy and new parents briefing
 - Guidance on visible and non-visible disability and impairments
 - Declaring a disability
 - Disability leave (updated)
 - Updated wallchart highlighting disability equality - A poster highlighting members' and employers' responsibilities was produced to support this work.

9 Update on motions

- 9.1 Motion 38: *Composite – in support of the Black members' standing committee.* In September 2024, both UCU and Unite (UCU staff union) committed to progress the work of the Race Review and ensure that any recommendations arising from the Review are acted on quickly. The terms of reference have been agreed by UCU SMT, Unite UCU and BMSC. These were sent to the independent panel on Tuesday 28th January, with a request for them to commence the review despite the ongoing industrial dispute.
- 9.2 Motion 39: *Women, race and intersectionality.* Chairs of the equality standing committees have been engaged to work together on the motion calling for research and CPD on intersectionality.
- 9.3 Motion 40: *Developing perimenopause and the menopause education in colleges and universities.* In February, a letter was sent to all HE and FE institutions calling for training on menopause and perimenopause to be mandatory for all staff.

Section 6: Report of the recruitment, organising and campaigning committee (ROCC)

1 Introduction

- 1.1 ROCC has met twice this year, in October and February, chaired by Saira Weiner (Liverpool John Moores University). Martina Donald (North West Regional College) was elected vice chair. The committee's remit is matters concerning the recruitment and organising activities of the union, and campaigning, subject to the need to work in cooperation with the other committees on campaigns appropriate to their field.
- 1.2 Key areas noted in motion 1 from Congress 2024 were:
- i. to actively support recruitment, campaigning and organising activities nationally, regionally, and locally
 - ii. to engage and involve our diverse groups of members
 - iii. to ensure issues of climate justice and sustainability are integral to our work
 - iv. with other unions to oppose the Strike (Minimum Service Levels) Act
 - v. actively campaign against attacks on the rights of refugees and asylum seekers and other migrants.
 - vi. actively campaign against the increasing casualisation of work in Higher Education, Further Education, Prison Education, Adult and Community Education and support branches in holding meetings with casualised members and submitting anti-casualisation claims.

2 Campaigning

- 2.1 At the time of writing, a major demonstration in support of post-16 education is being planned for early May in central London. Rallies and events in the devolved nations have also taken place – a UCU Scotland organised rally on 29 January, and UCU Cymru rally on FE and HE funding on 4 February.
- 2.2 In FE, the A New Deal for FE campaign has continued to develop. A lobby of parliament on FE, prisons and ACE took place in October 2024, boosting awareness of the issues faced in these sectors ahead of the budget. Branch briefings have been held (February 2025) and the petition will be presented to employers and the DfE in March.
- 2.3 In HE, a detailed 'Stop the cuts – Fund higher education now' campaign plan has been developed. Materials are available at www.ucu.org.uk/stopthecutscampaign Campaign activities are scheduled to take place including a rally and parliamentary lobby, a petition, a week of action, and plans for further evidence-gathering and reporting. The campaign includes a call for the end of the current broken fee-based funding model and urgent government intervention.

- 2.4 A large amount of resource has gone into local campaign support as redundancy threats in a growing number of HE institutions have been announced. Intensive support has been provided to branches at every stage, including increased use of newspaper advertisements, campaign materials and local events. A local defence fund has also enabled branches to work with UCU nationally to produce newspaper advertisements and local events to highlight local disputes. A list of job cuts and redundancy plans and local campaigns is kept up to date at www.ucu.org.uk/your-support-is-needed
- 2.5 The vast majority of branches entering in local industrial action ballots have met the 50 per cent turn out threshold, supported with GTVO (Get the Vote Out) plans, including ThruText messaging, phone-banking and campaign materials. Support has continued to those branches where action is taking place.
- 2.6 Outside of these immediate industrial matters, there has been activity on tackling the far right, following the successful fringe event at the Labour party conference. Work is underway on an anti-sexual harassment campaign which will include materials for branches.
- 2.7 In discussion, there has been an emphasis on the need for the NEC's different sub-committees to find ways to co-ordinate their work.
- 2.8 The union's political work crosses a number of sub-committee remits as UCU works to influence and represent, as well as campaign politically. The committee has received political reports for information. Political activities have included a recorded Q&A session between the general secretary and the Minister of State for Skills, Baroness Smith, recorded in January 2025.
- 2.9 The union continues to be present across social media channels, which are used to promote campaigns and also to promote recruitment.

3 Recruitment

- 3.1 The committee receives regular membership figures. At the committee's request, figures received in February 2025 included information about leavers, reasons for leaving, and the contract types of those leaving. There is a considerable amount of movement in the sector and in membership, which means that strong recruitment is required in order to maintain membership levels, and this must be further developed in order to achieve the aim of growing membership further. All the union's campaigning, including campaigns to protect jobs, presents opportunities to incorporate recruitment. This focus will be incorporated in future work.
- 3.2 UCU's range of recruitment materials remains available to branches via the website.

4 Engaging and organising

- 4.1 The committee has received updates on the union's Building to Win project, in which 20 pilot branches are now engaged. This includes training and briefing sessions with the branches.

- 4.2 Launched in 2024, the UCU Prison Educators: Unlocking Futures campaign calls for a comprehensive review of the delivery of prison education, with a national contract, professional respect, and parity of esteem for prison educators with those teaching in FE. This campaign works in tandem with the considerable organising work carried out with prison educators, which has included a focus on finding new reps and communicating regularly with prison education members.
- 4.3 A branch development fund has made payments to small branches seeking to re-energise their organising, supporting small scale initiatives to boost branch activities and local engagement.
- 4.4 The union continues to organise training for members, focussing on the skills that UCU's reps need. As well as the key initial training for reps, specific course continue to be offered in health and safety, casework, effective negotiating and bargaining, and challenging redundancies, amongst others. A large range of short courses are offered under UCU's CPD programme, and there are openings for non-members to enrol on these courses where this is being used for recruitment purposes.
- 4.5 Challenges in organising and recruitment noted by the committee include the difficulty of securing facilities time in many institutions and barriers to accessing information about new starters.

5 Motions allocated to the recruitment organising and campaigning committee

- 5.1 Motion 1, *Recruitment, organising and campaigning*, was an over-arching motion of themes under the committee's remit, as described in paragraph 1.2 above and reflected throughout the report. (In respect of opposition to the Strike (Minimum Service Levels) Act, the government has committed to scrapping the provisions of this Act.)
- 5.2 Motion 2, *Toolkit for Winning Recognition*, called for the creation of a toolkit on recognition in consultation with the anti-casualisation committee. Some resources on recognition can be found on the UCU website and individual branches are supported.
- 5.3 Motion 3, *Supporting discussion and democratic debate among UCU branches and activists*, called for exploration of digital communications platforms, in-person and hybrid events, with a view to building a culture of civil and collegial debate within UCU, and for the return of the activists' list. Hybrid events have continued to be expanded, including the equality conference, and Congress 2025 will be the union's first hybrid Congress. At the time of writing it has not been possible to dedicate more resources to exploring or developing digital communications platforms.
- 5.4 Motion 4, *Mergers on the dancefloor*, called for more guidance resources to support TUPE processes, briefings for members, and training, on TUPE, and for UCU to argue for increased transparency and union involvement in mergers.

Branches are supported where issues of merger arise. Training is being organised for prisons branches in respect of TUPE where this is arising.

- 5.5 Motion 5, *International and political influencing on climate and ecological emergency*, called for campaigns on the greens skills agenda and a Just Transition, including political influence, media campaigning, material for branches and collaboration with trade union and other groups. HE and FE claims include the demand for a Just Transition commission. There is work planned for a joint parliamentary campaign with other Just Transition unions and the AoC. UCU continues to work closely with Education International's Climate Network and with ETUCE. Best practice sharing has included a meeting with the CAUT (Canadian teaching union).
- 5.6 Motion 6, *Action on Climate Change*, called for the abolition of company cars, free and improved public transport, support for branches in getting a green rep, donations and support for the Campaign for Better Transport and People and Planet. Bargaining advice on institutional travel policies forms part of the Green New Deal. UCU's Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee (CEEC) has been surveying branches to evaluate current approaches to the green rep role and related activities, to identify barriers. Green issues are reflected in UCU's CPD offering. Donations have been made to the two campaign groups as set out in the motion.
- 5.7 Motion 7, *Fighting tax injustice for those on low incomes*, called for work with the National Pensioners Convention and Deaf and Disabled Persons Organisations (DDPOs), to campaign to reserve the freeze on personal income tax thresholds, including lobbying ahead of the 2024 general election. UCU remains affiliated to and actively represented in the National Pensioners Convention (NPC) and campaigned on a wide range of issues ahead of the general election.
- 5.8 Motion 8, *Support NPC Campaign for an Older Persons Commissioner*, called for the union to support this campaign. The general secretary signed the statement in support of an Older Persons Commissioner and UCU remains affiliated to and active within the NPC.
- 5.9 Motion 9, *The use of subsidiary companies by HEIs to circumvent TPS*, called for a working group on the defence of TPS, a campaign against the use of subsidiary companies to avoid TPS and LGPS, support for post-92 branches, government funding of TPS for post-92 institutions and a campaign to end outsourcing in HEIs. UCU is fully engaged on TPS, including work with other unions on issues such as institutional withdrawals from LGPS, and through the TUC and the trade union side of the Scheme Advisory Board. UCU has been proactive on equality and scheme issues for part time employees. Work is ongoing to provide resources for casualised staff about TPS and the implications of short term contracts.

Appendix 1: Membership of the NEC and its subcommittees 2024-25

Officers:

Maxine Looby, Oldham College (president, chair of Congress)

Maria Chondrogianni, University of Westminster (president-elect)

David Hunter City College Norwich (vice president)

David Harvie, University of Leeds (Honorary treasurer, resigned 24 February 2025)

1. National executive committee (NEC)

Chair: Maxine Lobby (president); vice chairs: Maria Chondrogianni (president-elect), David Hunter (vice president)

Michael Abberton, University of Cambridge

Mark Abel, University of Brighton

Vicky Blake, University of Leeds

Donna Brown, Royal Holloway University of London

Philippa Browning, University of Manchester

Lucy Burke, Manchester Metropolitan University

Grant Buttars, University of Edinburgh

Jackie D'Arcy, Warwickshire College Group

Martina Donald, North West Regional College

Joanne Edge, University of Edinburgh

Peter Evans, Ealing Hammersmith and West London College

Janet Farrar, The Manchester College

Andrew Feeney, Northumbria University

Kate Ferguson, Luminate Education Group (Leeds)

Jeanette Findlay, University of Glasgow

Matilda Fitzmaurice, Newcastle University

Safia Flissi, South and City College Birmingham

Agnes Flues, University of Nottingham (to 5 August 2024)

John Fones, Bridgwater and Taunton College

Deepa Govindarajan Driver, University of Reading

Ann Gow, University of Glasgow

Adam Hansen, Northumbria University

Rebecca Harrison, Open University

Estelle Hart, Swansea University

David Harvie, University of Leeds (resigned 24 February 2025)

Julie Hearn, Lancaster University

Marion Hersh, University of Glasgow

John James, Coleg Gwent (Newport)

Dyfrig Jones, Bangor University

Lesley Kane, Open University

Aris Katzourakis, University of Oxford

Helen Kelsall, Trafford College Group

Naina Kent, Hackney ACE

Rhian Elinor Keyse, Birkbeck University of London

Rhiannon Lockley, Birmingham City University

Laura Loyola-Hernandez, University of Leeds

Marian Mayer, Bournemouth University

Richard McEwan, New City College (Tower Hamlets)

Duncan Moore, Central Group FE South

Carlo Morelli, University of Dundee

Sharon Norey, NOVUS prison education branch

Aisling O'Beirn, Ulster University

Juliana Ojinnaka, The Sheffield College

Christina Paine, London Metropolitan University

Bijan Parsia, University of Manchester

Jak Peake, University of Essex

Mark Pendleton, University of Sheffield

Matt Perry, Newcastle University

Regine Pilling, CCCG Westminster Kingsway

Caroline Proctor, University of Warwick

Patricia Roche, Blackpool and The Fylde College

Vivek Thuppil, Bangor University

Suzi Toole, Bolton College

Sean Vernell, CCCG City and Islington

Sean Wallis, UCL

Andrew Ward, Barking and Dagenham College

Doug Webley, South and City College Birmingham

Cecilia Wee, Royal College of Art

Saira Weiner, Liverpool John Moores University

2. Strategy and finance committee (SFC)

Chair: Maxine Looby (president); vice chair Maria Chondrogianni (president-elect)

Mark Abel	David Harvie	Aris Katzourakis	Sean Wallis
Vicky Blake	(resigned 24 February 2025)	Mark Pendleton	Saira Weiner
	David Hunter	Rhiannon Lockley	
		Sean Vernell	

3. Higher education committee (HEC)

Chair: Maria Chondrogianni (president elect); vice chairs: Lucy Burke, Sean Wallis

Mark Abberton	Ann Gow	Dyfrig Jones	Jak Peake
Mark Abel	Deepa	Lesley Kane	Mark Pendleton
Vicky Blake	Govindarajan	Aris Katzourakis	Matt Perry
Donna Brown	Driver	Rhian Elinor Keyse	Caroline Proctor
Philippa Browning	Adam Hansen	Rhiannon Lockley	Mark Taylor-Batty
Grant Buttars	Rebecca Harrison	Laura Loyola-	Vivek Thuppil
Jo Edge	David Harvie	Hernandez	Cecilia Wee
Andrew Feeney	(resigned 24 February 2025)	Marian Mayer	Saira Weiner
Jeanette Findlay	Estelle Hart	Carlo Morelli	
Matilda Fitzmaurice	Julie Hearn	Aisling O'Beirn	
Agnes Flues (to 5 August 2024)	Marion Hersh	Christina Paine	
		Bijan Parsia	

4. Further education committee (FEC)

Chair Maxine Looby (president); vice chairs: Helen Kelsall, Richard McEwan

Martina Donald	John Fones	Sharon Norey	Sean Vernell
Peter Evans	David Hunter	Juliana Ojinnaka	Andrew Ward
Janet Farrar	John James	Regine Pilling	Doug Webley
Kate Ferguson	Naina Kent	Patricia Roche	Elaine White
Safia Flissi	Duncan Moore	Suzi Toole	

5. Education committee (EDC)

Chair: Vicky Blake; vice chair: Peter Evans

Grant Buttars	Adam Hansen	David Hunter	Sharon Norey
Maria	David Harvie	Lesley Kane	Christina Paine
Chondrogianni	(resigned 24 February 2025)	Rhian Elinor Keyse	Regine Pilling
Matilda Fitzmaurice		Maxine Looby	Mark Taylor-Batty

6. Equality committee (EQ)

Chair: Rhiannon Lockley; vice chair: Peter Evans

Maria Chondrogianni	Saifia Flissi	David Harvie	David Hunter
Jo Edge	Rebecca Harrison	(resigned 24 February 2025)	Lesley Kane
Laura Loyola-Hernandez	Julie Hearn	Mark Pendleton	Maxine Looby
Juliana Ojinnaka	Christina Paine	Pat Roche	Suzi Toole
	Bijan Parsia	Vivek Thuppil	
	Jak Peake		

7. Recruitment, organising and campaigning committee (ROCC)

Chair: Saira Weiner; vice chair: Martina Donald

Michael Abberton	Estelle Hart	Naina Kent	Caroline Proctor
Phillipa Browning	David Harvie	Maxine Looby	
Maria Chondrogianni	(resigned 24 February 2025)	Carlo Morelli	
Ann Gow	David Hunter	Christina Paine	
		Jak Peake	

Trustees and Congress business committee

UCU Trustees:

Chair: Angie McConnell, Open University

Neil MacFarlane, Nottingham Trent University

Martin Ralph, University of Liverpool

Angela Roger, University of Dundee

Steve Sangwine, Eastern and Home counties retired members' branch

Congress business committee:

Chair: Alan Barker, University of Nottingham

Vice chair: Hazel Raven, Doncaster College

Anita Jarvis, City of Bristol College

Chris Jones, NPTC Group

Sylvia de Mars, Newcastle University (to 4 April 2025)

Julie Milner, Trafford College Group

Linda Moore, Ulster University

Mark Pendleton, University of Sheffield

Appendix 2:

Subscription rates for members of UCU 1 September 2024– 31 August 2025

	Annual earnings band	Monthly national subscription including political fund	Monthly national subscription excluding political fund
Full members F0	£60,000 & above	£30.48	£30.17
F1	£40,000-£59,999	£26.32	£26.05
F2	£30,000-£39,999	£22.60	£22.36
F3	£22,000-£29,999	£17.50	£17.32
F4	£15,000-£21,999	£10.48	£10.38
F5	£5,000-£14,999	£4.54	£4.50
F6	Below £5,000	£1.00	£0.99
Retired/attached members		£3.08	£3.03

Appendix 3:

Current affiliations 2025

Abortion Rights	Labour Research Department
Action for Southern Africa	Liberty
Alliance for Inclusive Education	Love music hate racism
Amnesty International	Maternity Action
Anti-Academies Alliance	MENA (Middle East North Africa)
Burma Campaign UK	Solidarity Network
Brazil Solidarity Campaign	Movement Against Xenophobia (Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants)
Campaign Against Climate Change	National Assembly for Women
Campaign Against the Arms Trade	National coalition of anti-deportation campaigns
CND	National Pensioners Convention
Campaign for trade union freedom	Palestine Solidarity Campaign
Centre for Labour and Social Studies	Patients not Passports
Committee for Defence of the Iranian Peoples' Rights	People's Assembly
Cuba Solidarity Campaign	Public Services Pensioners' Council
Disability History Month	School's Out
Disabled People Against Cuts	Share Action
Education International	Shrewsbury 24 Campaign
End Violence Against Women	Solidarity with People of Turkey
Fast Food Rights	Stand Up To Racism
Fawcett Society	Stonewall
Frack Off	Stop the War Coalition
Friends of Bir Zeit University	The Age in Employment Network
Friends of Durham Miners Gala	Trade Union Coordinating Group
Greece Solidarity Campaign	Trade Union Disability Alliance
Health Campaigns Together / Keep our NHS Public	Trade Union Friends of Hope Not Hate
International Brigades Memorial Trust	Trades Union Congress
Institute of Employment Rights	Unite Against Fascism
International Centre for Trade Union Rights	United Families and Friends Campaign
International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA)	Unite the Resistance
Irish Congress of Trade Unions	Venezuela Solidarity Campaign
Justice for Colombia	War on Want
Justice for Sarah	We Are Somebody

Appendix 4:

UCU membership statistics at 30 April 2024 and 30 April 2025

Membership statistics at 30 April 2024

Membership status/sector	Attached	Full	Honorary	Retired	Student	Total
Further education	200	25405	15	590	463	26673
Higher education	840	76113	24	2704	7397	87078
No sector	215	3022	113	3891	109	7350
Total	1255	104540	152	7185	7969	121101

Gender/sector	Female	Male	Other	Unknown	Total
Further education	16521	10063	89	0	26673
Higher education	44029	41759	1164	126	87078
No sector	3158	4132	27	33	7350
Total	63708	55954	1280	159	121101

Membership statistics at 30 April 2025

Membership status/sector	Attached	Full	Honorary	Retired	Student	Total
Further education	233	25289	15	591	530	26658
Higher education	1030	76666	23	2764	7116	87599
No sector	227	2683	113	3865	187	7075
Total	1490	104638	151	7220	7883	121332

Gender/sector	Female	Male	Other	Unknown	Total
Further education	16527	10029	102	0	26658
Higher education	44649	41596	1257	97	87599
No sector	2969	4046	31	29	7075
Total	64145	55671	1390	126	121332

Appendix 5: Acronyms and abbreviations

ACAS Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service

ACC Anti-casualisation committee

ACE Adult and continuing education

ACP Academic commitment of Palestine

AI Artificial Intelligence

ARPS Academic-related and professional services staff

ASCL Association of School and College Leaders

ASOS Action short of strike

AoC Association of Colleges

BDS Boycott divestment and sanctions

BMSC Black members' standing committee

BRICUP British Committee for Universities of Palestine

BSL British Sign Language

CBC Congress business committee

CCCG Capital City College Group

CEEC Climate and ecological emergency committee

CMC Conduct of members committee

COP Conference of the Parties

CPD Continuing professional development

CPI Consumer Price Index

CI Conditional Index

DB Defined Benefit

DDPO Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations

DfE Department for Education

DMSC Disabled members' standing committee

EdC Education committee

EDI Equality, diversity and inclusion

EHRC Equality and Human Rights Commission

EI Education International

EIS Educational Institute of Scotland

EqC Equality committee

ETUCE European Trade Union Committee for Education

FE Further education

FEC Further education committee

FESC Further education sector conference

FOI Freedom of information

GJA Greener Jobs Alliance

GND Green New Deal

GRA Gender Recognition Act

GTAs Graduate Teaching Assistants

GTVO Get the vote out

HE Higher education

HEC Higher education committee

HEI Higher education institution

HESC Higher education sector conference

HERA Higher Education Role Analysis

HESA Higher Education Statistics Agency

HSE Health and Safety Executive

IA Industrial Action

IAL Institutes for Adult Learning

IJC International Court of Justice

ILO International Labour Organisation

JTC Just Transition Commission

JNCHES Joint Negotiating Committee for Higher Education Staff

JUAC Joint Union Asbestos Committee

JUPA Joint Unions Prison Alliance

JUPG Justice Union Parliamentary Group

LGBT+ Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, or any other non-heterosexual or non-binary identity

LGBT+MSC LGBT+ members standing committee

LGPS Local Government Pensions Scheme

MAB Marking and Assessment Boycott

MENA Middle East and North Africa

NASWUT National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers

NEC National executive committee

NEU National Education Union

NPC National Pensioners Convention

NUS National Union of Students

OBIS Organising and Bargaining Information System

OFSTED Office for standards in Education

ONS Office for National Statistics

PGRs Post graduate researchers

PES Prison Education Service

PSC Palestine Solidarity Campaign

REF Research Excellence Framework

RMB Retired members' branch

RMT National Union of Rail Maritime and Transport Workers

ROCC Recruitment, organising and campaigning committee

RPI Retail Price Index

SCAPE Superannuation contributions adjusted for past experience (rate)

SFC Strategy and finance committee

SORG Standing orders and rules group

SWG Superannuation Working Group

TPR Transactional Protection Remedy (known as McCloud)

TPS Teachers' pension scheme

TUC Trades Union Congress

TUPE Transfer of Undertaking Protection of Employment Rights

UCEA University and Colleges Employers Association

UFFC United Friends and Family Campaign

UKRI UK Research and Innovation

UNCRPD United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

USC Ukraine Solidarity Campaign

USS Universities Superannuation Scheme

UUK Universities UK

VP Vice president

WEA Workers' Educational Association

WMSC Women members' standing committee