

University and College Union

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To	Branch and local association secretaries
Topic	Proposed budget for the year ending 31 August 2026
Action	For information; for approval at Congress 2025
Summary	This report informs on the proposed budget for the financial year ending 31 August 2026 and the proposed subscription rates from 1 September 2025
Contact	Gareth Storey, Head of Finance (email: gstorey@ucu.org.uk)

Dear Colleague

The Budget for 2025/2026

The proposed budget agreed by the National Executive Committee forms part of this circular and can be found at:

https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/15032/BUDGET-31-08-26-CONGRESS-UCU-2169-wo-fs/pdf/BUDGET_31_08_26_CONGRESS_UCU_2169_wo_fs.pdf

Congress will be asked to approve this budget.

If you are unable to access documents in PDF format please contact Sue Bajwa (sbajwa@ucu.org.uk).

Introduction

It is envisaged from the current perspective that 2025/26 is likely to be another difficult year for all our members as they continue to experience a turbulent period of industrial relations in both sectors, together with the as yet unknown ramifications of the current industrial action and the difficult to predict ripples emanating from this, which will impact the budget. The union is not immune to these factors and whilst we have honoured Congress policy we must also continue to be realistic about income and expenditure and the strength of the financial position of UCU.

The budget for 2025/26 has therefore been constructed realistically with a view to allowing for some element of the unexpected, coupled with expenditure proposals where possible. The budget for this year has been built with the assumption that the union will continue both in person and remote interaction. The budget is set within the confines of the expected subscription income, together with the continued operation of the cost control procedures in place; it should therefore be possible to offset the pressures of both of the above and together with the greater utilisation of UCU resources necessary to support the membership at this time, such that it is the intention to make as small an increase as possible to subscriptions. We have

therefore constructed a subscriptions proposal for a limited increase, but will result in the required income needed to support the budget, using projected member numbers according to band. This remains in accord with the long term policy set by SFC to maintain the financial resources of UCU in order to face the challenges ahead, with sufficient backing. We have continued to review subscription levels and present this budget which incorporates a further progressive movement in subscription rates as agreed by NEC.

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the importance of membership support has continued to be a particular focus in the construction of the Budget for 2025/26 and to this end several specific areas have been allocated continued, additional resources in response to this. Therefore, for the 2025/26 Budget, extra funds remain allocated to Legal costs, Branch and regional support and of course the Fighting Fund. More specifically these are in anticipation of additional industrial legal challenges to the union and strategic legal cases on behalf of members, extra support for branches at the grass roots level and on a wider basis to look at devolved and localised negotiations, provide technical advice and assistance to the regions. We are looking to continue to focus our provision for member training and development with a particular emphasis on young members professional development and contribute to skills required for localised training and local negotiations. Finally and very significantly we have maintained the increased standardised funding to the Fighting Fund to the maximum hypothecation rate of 2% of subscription income allowed under agreements, for the year. It should be noted that as was undertaken last year, we have reserved the ability and flexibility in the current budget year to transfer into the Fighting Fund excess subscription income.

The additional funds allocated within the Budget 2025/26 have been directed towards the strategic political objectives set by NEC and Congress, whilst maintaining the existing operations of UCU at its' current levels.

Yours sincerely

Maxine Looby
President