

University and College Union

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To	Branch and regional committee secretaries
Topic	Unconfirmed minutes of UCU higher education sector conference, 28 May 2023
Action	For information; for adoption at higher education sector conference 2024
Summary	Minutes of UCU Higher Education sector conference held 28 May 2023
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Meeting of the Higher Education Sector Conference (Congress)

SEC Centre, Glasgow

28 May 2023

FIRST SESSION OF CONFERENCE, SUNDAY MORNING, 28 MAY

OPENING BUSINESS

1 WELCOME AND ADDRESS FROM JUSTINE MERCER, PRESIDENT ELECT

- 1.1 Justine Mercer, president elect and chair of sector conference, welcomed delegates and addressed sector conference.
- 1.2 A UCU video on the USS pensions dispute was played which was applauded by conference.
- 1.3 Sector conference appointed those regional officials and regional support officials of the union present to act as tellers.
- 1.4 The proposal to suspend Congress standing orders to reduce speaking times to three minutes for movers of motions and two minutes for all other speakers was **CARRIED**.
- 1.5 The chair reminded colleagues of UCU guidance on expectation of members' conduct and Congress standing order 36. The chair read out a statement from the disabled members' standing committee on access and inclusion.
- 1.6 Marian Mayer (HEC and chair of disabled members' standing committee) spoke to Conference about access and inclusions issues and the implementation of the statement from the disabled members' standing committee.
- 1.7 The chair reminded delegates of standing order 37 in relation to the distribution of papers.

2 REPORT OF THE CONGRESS BUSINESS COMMITTEE

- 2.1 Alan Barker (University of Nottingham), chair of the Congress business committee (CBC), moved the reports of the Congress business committee relating to HE sector business set out in UCU/2091 and UCU/2091B.
- 2.2 The chair noted that 'blacklisting' was not a word used by UCU in respect of its own procedures.
- 2.3 John Narayan (King's College London) moved that motion HE42 be taken after motion HE17. Deepa Govindarajan Driver (HEC) raised a point of information. The chair responded. The proposal was **CARRIED**.
- 2.4 The reports of the Congress business committee relating to HE sector business were **ADOPTED**.

3 MINUTES

- 3.1 The minutes of HE sector conference held on 12 June 2022 set out in UCU/2087 were **ADOPTED**.
- 3.2 The minutes of special HE sector conference held on 19 April 2023 set out in UCU/2090 were **ADOPTED**.

4 ADDRESS BY SHAHENDA SULIMAN, HEAD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Shahenda Suliman, head of higher education, addressed conference.

This was followed by an update from Jenny Lennox, bargaining policy and negotiations official, on the USS pensions dispute.

5 DEBATE OF MOTIONS TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE SESSION

The chair reminded delegates that UCU was an active union across the four home nations. Some of the motions for debate applied across the UK, others may not. Movers were advised to be specific where possible, and branches encouraged to bear in mind the impact of devolution when drafting their motions.

New JNCHES and pay

- 5.1 Motion HE1, *National Claim/New JNCHES*, was moved by Sean Wallis (HEC) and seconded by Marian Mayer (HEC).

Motion HE1 was **CARRIED**:

HE Sector conference notes the report and approves the recommendations of the national negotiators contained in UCUBANHE84 (New JNCHES HESC2023).

- 5.2 Motion HE2, *Bargaining over increased money pay not percentages*, was moved by David Harvie (University of Leeds) and seconded by Bijan Parsia (HEC). Robyn Orfitelli (HEC) spoke in the debate.

Motion HE2 was **LOST**:

Conference notes:

1. 2021/22's HE joint union claim that sought 'A pay uplift of £2,500 on all pay points'.

Conference believes that: `

- a. Problems of eroded pay, structural inequalities and casualisation intersect.
- b. Thus, marginalised groups are less likely to be able to mitigate the impact of eroded pay for university staff through means of promotion and 'automatic' progression up the salary spine.
- c. Formulating pay claims in terms of flat-rate money increases is a way of lessening (not abolishing) these inequalities, since, for given cost to the employers, staff on below-average salaries benefit disproportionately.

Conference resolves to:

- i. Develop a pay campaign for 2024/25 onwards that centres money, not percentage, increases. This would include:
- ii. Produce or commission research that investigates the advantages (and disadvantages) of the approach;
- iii. Liaise with other sector unions.

5.3 Motion HE3, *Future of pay disputes*, was moved by Jak Peake (University of Essex). The motion was seconded by Dyfrig Jones (Bangor University) who also proposed that the motion be taken in parts and resolves a. voted on separately. Sean Wallis (HEC), Matthew West (University of Exeter) and Sam Marsh (University of Sheffield) spoke in the debate. Saira Weiner (HEC) moved remittance of motion HE3.

Motion HE3 was **REMITTED** (141 for; 56 against; 6 abstentions):

Conference notes that 'A new strategy and plan of action for the Four Fights dispute' report (20.04.2022) outlines how a 'significant amount of time and resources needs to be committed to prepare properly for any UK-level dispute'.

Conference believes that:

1. Pay erosion is a direct consequence successive UK Tory governments failing to properly fund higher education.
2. Employer movement on pay and conditions is a result of our successful aggregated ballot and action.
3. The early imposition of an offer for 2023-24 provides potential breathing space to build for an effective campaign in 2024-25, when we are also likely to have a new UK government.
4. Achieving real improvements in our pay and conditions will be reliant on policy change as well as our industrial leverage

Conference resolves to:

- a. Develop an 18-24 month campaign focused on achieving significant movement on the issues beyond the current dispute, including an

above inflation pay rise, concrete advances on progress related to casualisation, an end to hourly contracts, unequal pay, workload and a 35-hour working week, with a focus on growing membership and member confidence.

- b. Lobby UK Labour and other parties at Westminster for a renewed higher education settlement beyond 2024-25 that addresses shortfalls in funding and allows for material improvement in staff pay and conditions.

- 5.4 Motion HE4, *Defend national HE bargaining!*, was moved by Rhiannon Lockley (HEC) on behalf of Birmingham City University and seconded by Chris Pritchard (Nottingham Trent University). Matthew West (University of Exeter), Roddy Slorach (Imperial College London) and Joanna de Groot (HEC) spoke in the debate.

Motion HE4 was **CARRIED**:

HESC notes

- 1. The dispute at BCU which has been outside national pay negotiations since the 1980s; isolating the branch and producing inferior terms and conditions**
- 2. BCU management's continual refusal to rejoin**
- 3. University of Gloucestershire, Nottingham Trent University and Staffordshire University have left or indicated they will leave national pay negotiations**

HESC believes

- a. National negotiations are vital for UCU collective bargaining, to prevent sector fragmentation and undermining of national terms and conditions**
- b. Fragmentation of national negotiations is a fundamental threat to the future of HE**
- c. Branches fighting outside of national bargaining must be supported as a key line of resistance to fragmentation**

HESC resolves

- i. Risk to national bargaining to be dealt with as a matter of urgency with a nationally resourced strategy group**
- ii. GS to investigate institutions' plans to leave national negotiations**
- iii. Disputes at branches outside of national bargaining to be given national significance in terms of resourcing and amplification**

- 5.5 Motion HE5, *Oxford and Cambridge Colleges and higher education disputes*, was moved by Hannah Fair (University of Oxford) and seconded by Lorena Gazzotti (University of Cambridge). Mark Walmsley (University of East Anglia) raised a point of information.

Motion HE5 was **CARRIED**:

Conference notes:

- 1. The constituent colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, have historically not been involved in Higher Education sector disputes.**
- 2. This is an unusual situation, as they conduct a large proportion of the teaching in these universities, are USS employers, and in many cases have pay linked to the national pay scales.**
- 3. Industrial action leverage in Oxford and Cambridge is greatly reduced due to the continuation of teaching in the colleges during industrial action.**

Conference resolves:

- a. To construct future sector wide disputes in Higher Education in such a way that Oxford and Cambridge constituent colleges are included in the ballots and possible resulting industrial action.**
- b. To amend membership databases so that employees of both a university and a constituent college, have a record of this status.**
- c. To campaign nationally so that the constituent colleges recognise UCU.**

The president elect read out a statement in relation to motions HE6 and HE7:

Motion HE6 refers to UK-wide strike action in response to the MAB deductions made by individual employers. Industrial action can only be provided with legal protection if it is in respect to a trade dispute between an employer and their employees. Deductions from salary are dealt with at the level of the individual employer. It is not an issue on which we can establish a dispute on a UK wide basis.

Motion HE7 is understood to propose national strike action instead of a marking and assessment boycott, from a particular date, as an alternative strategy in the dispute.

- 5.6 Motion HE6, *Challenging punitive pay deductions for ASOS*, and motion HE7, *Strike action during marking period instead of MAB*, were taken in the same debate. Motion HE6 was moved by Chloe Wallace (University of Leeds) on behalf of the Yorkshire and Humberside HE regional committee and seconded by Morgan Powell (University of Manchester). Mark Pendleton (University of Sheffield) proposed that the motion be taken in parts and agrees ii. be voted on separately.

The proposal to take the motion in parts was **CARRIED**.

Agrees ii. was **CARRIED**. Motion HE6 was **CARRIED**:

Conference notes:

- 1. Leeds University's plan to deduct 100% pay, and Hull University's implementation of 20% deductions for refusing to reschedule teaching missed during the Feb 2023 strikes.**

2. **Leeds University UCU has sought legal advice, advised members not to report their strikes via the online system and agreed to take indefinite strike action if the deductions are implemented.**
3. **Previous motions addressing this were passed in May 2014(remitted), May 2015, Dec 2019, June 2022.**

Conference re-asserts:

- a. **Punitive pay deductions require a UK-wide response**

Conference agrees to:

- i. **create a simple proforma for branches to report such threats. This should trigger an immediate UK-wide response comprising:**
 - launch a UK-wide media offensive against the employer.**
 - calls for all members to send objections to the offensive employer.**
 - discussing academic boycott with the branch concerned.**
- ii. **implement already agreed policy on this including calling UK-wide strike action.**

Motion HE7 was moved by Maria Giatsi Clausen (Queen Margaret University) and seconded formally. Duncan Adam (Staffordshire University) spoke in the debate. Marion Hersh (HEC) moved remittance of motion HE7 which was seconded formally.

The chair reminded conference that motion HE7 is understood to propose national strike action instead of a marking and assessment boycott, from a particular date, as an alternative strategy in the dispute.

Motion HE7 was **REMITTED:**

HE sector conference notes with concern the escalation at local level of national MAB action by some employers by punitively deducting 100% of pay of staff participating in MAB, with others deducting lower amounts, some more and some less proportionate with the time normally spent on marking and assessment.

As a result, UCU branches have had to take local strike action given that members would not be paid anyway if 100% deductions went ahead. However, given the two-week notice required for strikes, their timing means that a lot of the assessment linked activities will have been done therefore the impact of strikes is not as high as it could have been.

HE sector conference calls for national strike action instead of MAB starting at the earliest marking and assessment date in line with when the very first deadline is set for any one university.

- 5.7 The chair reminded conference that 'blacklisting' *was not a word UCU used in respect of its own procedures.*

Motion L3, *Blacklisting*, was moved by Melissa D'Ascenzio (University of Dundee) and seconded by Maria Chondrogianni (HEC).

Motion L3 was **CARRIED**:

Conference notes:

- 1. Dundee is threatening to deduct 100% for participating in the MAB**
- 2. changes to the Academic Regulations to award degrees without marks and/or without external examiners**
- 3. including 'Where it is identified that External Examiners resign from post as part of their taking strike action they will not be reappointed.'**

UCU believes Dundee is breaking the Scottish Government's Fair Work Agenda and acting illegally in compiling a blacklist of trade unionists.

UCU and HE officers resolve to liaise with UCU Scotland to:

- 1. call on the Scottish Government to immediately enforce its Fair Work Agenda with respect to requiring Dundee University to withdraw its punitive deductions and end its blacklisting of external examiners**
- 2. publicly 'name and shame' the institution.**

- 5.8 Motion HE8, *Supporting strike action by externally funded staff: ring-fencing deducted pay*, was moved by Ben Pope (HEC) on behalf of the Anti-casualisation committee and seconded by Jeff Pocock (University of Bristol).

Maria Chondrogianni (HEC vice-chair) was in the chair.

Sean Wallis (HEC) raised a point of information.

Motion HE8 was **CARRIED**:

Conference believes that funding provided to employers by external bodies to support research and other staff should be dedicated to supporting these staff, including any pay deducted as a result of strike action.

Noting Branch Action Notice HE82, conference calls on employers to calculate the amount of external research funding not used to pay wages due to strike action and ring-fence a commensurate amount to support staff, especially those on casual contracts, in consultation with UCU.

Conference resolves to continue to support branches to formulate demands appropriate to their local circumstances regarding use of the ring-fenced funds. Approaches taken by branches may include a preference for (or combination of):

- a. individual contract extensions (by no less than the number of days lost to strike action) within project budgets, or**
- b. the use of commensurate funds for (further) bridging/underwriting, extended notice/redeployment periods, or enhanced redundancy payments.**

Justine Mercer (president elect) was in the chair.

- 5.9 Motion HE9, *Lobby research councils on reasons for taking industrial action*, was moved by Scott Hurrell (University of Glasgow) and seconded formally.

Motion HE9 was **CARRIED**:

HESC notes:

- 1. Research council money is being spent and project deadlines not met due to the necessary UCU industrial action. The impact of this is often invisible to Universities as it does not affect teaching but has significant impact on collaborating institutes and industry UK-, Europe- and world-wide.**
- 2. Going on strike primarily affects a researcher's ability to meet project deadlines and long-term ability to obtain future funding to sustain their work and employment.**
- 3. UKRI is a large research funding body close to government with a budget of £8bn per annum**

HESC believes to lobby UKRI and other research councils on the work being lost due to Universities failure to support their Academic and research staff through fair working conditions.

HESC calls to:

- a. Determine the primary funders of University research.**
- b. Lobby UKRI and other significant research funders over universities failure to support their staff through fair pay, pensions and working conditions.**

- 5.10 Motion HE10, *HEC and negotiators consultation with members on disputes and offers*, was moved by Dyfrig Jones (Bangor University) on behalf of UCU Cymru (HE) and seconded by Joanna de Groot (HEC). Julie Hearn (HEC) spoke in the debate. Teige Matthews Palmer (University of Oxford) proposed remittance of motion HE10. Sam Morecroft (University of Sheffield International College) raised a point of information.

Remittance of motion HE10 was **LOST**.

Motion HE10 was **LOST**:

Conference notes that:

1. National UCU negotiators in the dispute with UCEA have rejected recent pay offers without consulting members on these offers.
2. Without this the membership may lose a sense of control of the dispute which will be damaging to support further industrial action.

Conference resolves that:

- a. The HEC meaningfully consults with members before rejecting any substantively new offers on any of the five areas of industrial dispute: pay, conditions, equality, casualisation, pensions.
- b. The offer in each areas is clearly distinguished in the consultation.

- c. On pay, membership should be consulted on the current pay offer, and every offer above this that averages an increase of 2% (across the sector) on the previous offer.
- d. The HEC imminently clarifies and publicises the minimum thresholds that need to be met by UCEA and UUK to satisfy UCU demands in each of the five areas of the dispute.

- 5.11 Alan Barker (University of Nottingham), chair of the Congress business committee, requested the immediate removal from twitter of a video of Congress posted yesterday and any other videos of Congress/sector conferences posted on social media. Conference were reminded that filming of Congress and the sector conferences was not permitted.
- 5.12 Motion HE11, *UCU HE members to decide future HE strike action*, was moved by Jamie Melrose (University of Bristol) and seconded by Natasha Willmot (University of Reading). Nalini Vittal (UCL), a delegate who did not provide their name, Jordan Osseman (University of Essex), Philippa Browning (HEC), Amanda Brunton (University of Cambridge) and Sarah Joss (Heriot-Watt University) spoke in the debate.

Motion HE11 was **LOST**:

HESC notes:

- 1. UCU's HEC 'has the power to authorise or endorse sanctions including industrial action' as regards our current HE disputes.

HESC believes:

- a. before HEC takes any decision regarding industrial action, it must consult with all HE members in branches with a mandate for strike action by e-consultation.
- b. such a HE members' consultation would better inform HEC members, ensuring that UCU takes the most representative decision.
- c. such a HE members' consultation is more inclusive than Branch Delegates Meetings.

HESC resolves:

- i. before any decision on the timing or duration of strikes, HEC must consult with all members in HE branches with a mandate for strike action in an e-consultation.
- ii. any e-consultation must ask whether the member is willing to take further action, and what strike action, its timing, duration and nature, the member wishes to take.

Graham Kirkwood (Newcastle University) raised a point of information. The chair responded.

- 5.13 Motion HE12, *Strike Committees*, was moved by Bee Hughes (HEC) and was seconded by Peta Bulmer (HEC). Chris Grocott (HEC) and Vicky Blake (immediate past president) spoke in the debate. Joanna de Groot (HEC) proposed that the

motion be taken in parts and resolves point ii. voted on separately. Andrew Feeney (HEC) proposed remittance of motion HE12.

Remittance of motion HE12 was **LOST**.

The proposal to take motion HE12 in parts was **LOST**.

Motion HE12 was **CARRIED**:

HESC notes:

- 1. The establishment of strike committees by many UCU branches to build action in the #ucuRUSING campaign**
- 2. The call by NEU GS Kevin Courtney for the establishment of strike committees to support the unions latest action**

HESC believes:

- a. That strike committees can play an important role in widening participation of members in strike action/ASOS**

HESC resolves:

- i. To encourage all HE branches to establish strike committees while in dispute**
- ii. To establish a UK wide committee in all national HE disputes to increase members involvement and participation in building disputes and shaping their direction**

USS

- 5.14 The chair asked delegates to respect the long-standing convention that only delegates from USS institutions vote on motions and amendments which relate to USS. This applied to motions HE15-HE18, not to motion HE19 which refers to both disputes.

- 5.15 Motion HE15, *Report and recommendations of SWG*, was moved by Mark Taylor-Batty (University of Leeds) on behalf of HEC and seconded by Jackie Grant (University of Sussex). The chair reminded delegates to vote in ballots taking place during Congress 2023 and read out the names of all candidates standing for election to the USS SWG. Deepa Govindarajan Driver (HEC) spoke in the debate.

Motion HE15 was **CARRIED**:

HE Sector conference notes the report and approves the recommendations of the SWG contained in UCUBANHE83 (SWG HESC2023).

- 5.16 Motion HE16, *USS motion on Conditional Indexation*, was moved by Mark Pendleton (University of Sheffield) and seconded by Mark Taylor-Batty (University of Leeds). Donna Brown (Royal Holloway, University of London) and Chris Grocott (HEC) spoke in the debate.

Motion HE16 was **CARRIED**:

Conference notes:

1. **HESC September 2021 passed a motion to initiate the exploration of the feasibility and promise of Conditional Indexation for the USS pension scheme.**
2. **recent exploratory work by USS for the JNC of UUK and UCU negotiators indicates the possibility of significant accrual improvement.**
3. **CI offers potential increased pensions and greater sustainability of contribution levels.**

Conference believes that:

- a. **seeking accrual above 1/75th for affordable member contributions is in the interests of all USS members**
- b. **Conditional Indexation has the possibility to strengthen the status of USS as an open, collective, mutual, multi-employer scheme with an ability to invest for the long term in a larger percentage of growth-seeking assets.**

Conference therefore encourages UCU JNC negotiators' engagement in preparations toward more detailed analysis and consultation in the medium-term on models of CI, with no pre-condition of ultimate acceptance.

SECOND SESSION OF CONFERENCE, SUNDAY AFTERNOON, 28 MAY

6 DEBATE OF MOTIONS TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE SESSION

USS (continued)

- 6.1 Marion Hersh (HEC) raised a point of information. Saira Weiner (HEC) proposed that motion HE19 be taken after HE17. The proposal was CARRIED.

A further point of information was raised by a delegate. The chair responded. Deepa Govindarajan Driver (HEC) spoke.

- 6.2 Motion HE17, *USS divestment*, was moved by Michael Kyriacou (University of East Anglia) and seconded by Marion Hersh (HEC).

Motion HE17 was **CARRIED:**

Conference notes:

1. **that the portfolio of public and private investments by the pension fund USS continues to invest its members' contributions in climate-wrecking fossil fuel companies and biodiversity-wrecking utility companies;**
2. **that by allowing USS investments in known polluters to go unchecked, we are contributing to climate breakdown.**

Conference believes:

- a. **in the Paris Agreement and the moral obligation of the higher education sector to contribute to climate justice.**

Conference resolves:

- i. **to call on USS to immediately cease investments in fossil fuel companies;**
- ii. **to demand in its negotiations with USS that a transparent and accountable body with UCU representation is formed to monitor and guide future investments so that they are invested into companies with sustainable and renewable resources and practices;**
- iii. **to issue a public statement in support of actions, campaigns, and protests that call for no new licensing for UK oil and gas.**

- 6.3 Motion HE19, *Long reballot over summer, industrial action at start of term*, was moved by Sean Wallis (HEC) on behalf of University College London and seconded by Peta Bulmer (HEC). Jo Edge (HEC), a delegate who did not give their name, and Saira Weiner (HEC) spoke in the debate.

Joanna de Groot (HEC) proposed remittance of motion HE19.

Sam Morecroft (University of Sheffield International College) raised a point of information.

Remittance of motion HE19 was **LOST**.

Motion HE19 was **CARRIED**:

HESC resolves to ballot members for industrial action in a long ballot commencing as soon as possible and ending in September 2023 over the outstanding USS and JNCHES disputes, in order to be able to take strike action from the start of the autumn term.

- 6.4 Motion HE42, *Demilitarise and democratize USS and HE sector*, was moved by Alexandra Vukovich (King's College London) and seconded formally.

Motion HE42 was **CARRIED**:

HEC notes that:

- 1. **USS and HE institutions have investments in companies profiting from imperialist wars, occupation, borders and environmental destruction**
- 2. **USS reform enhanced pensions' dependence on profitable investment**
- 3. **Following Russia's imperialist invasion of Ukraine, USS has written off £450 million of its equity investments in Russia;**
- 4. **Some universities suspended relationships with Russian universities;**

HEC believes that:

- a. **The lack of a coherent divestment policy contributes to escalating the conflict in, and beyond, Ukraine;**
- b. **Targeting Russian universities fails to support anti-war efforts within and beyond Russia.**

HEC resolves:

- i. To campaign for democratising USS and HE institutions;**
- ii. To push USS and HE institutions immediately to divest from arms companies and companies profiting from imperialist wars, occupation, borders and environmental destruction;**
- iii. To demand a coherent ethical investment and voting framework for USS and the HE sector.**

6.5 The president elect read out the following statement from CBC's second report:

As previously reported to branches, the UK officers have decided unanimously, following legal advice, that it is not possible to proceed with support for the case referred to in motion HE18 below, a decision endorsed by a majority of the union's trustees. The motion poses too great a financial risk to the union. In light of the previous similar motion passed by HESC, CBC decided that this motion should be placed into the agenda, however, as also noted by CBC, if passed, motion HE18 will not be implemented.

Motion HE18, *Support USS Legal Action*, was moved by Julie Hearn (HEC) on behalf of Lancaster University and seconded by Marion Hersh (HEC). Sam Marsh (University of Sheffield) raised a point of information. The president elect responded, reminding delegates of the statement from CBC's second report.

Motion HE18 was **CARRIED**:

Conference notes that:

- 1. The legal case against USS has a date set for the Court of Appeal hearing from 13th June.**
- 2. The USS legal fund has raised £170,000, but still needs to raise the remaining £180,000 for the hearing.**
- 3. There is wide support among UCU members for the USS legal action.**

Conference believes that the decision by UCU national officers and the GS not to implement the HESC 2022 motion L5 is:

- a. In breach of UCU's rules.**
- b. Risks a complaint to the certification officer under section 108A sub-section 2(d) of TULRCA act 1992.**

Conference instructs the UCU national officers and the GS to:

- i. Immediately enact the lawful decision to implement the HESC and NEC 2022 motions on support for USS legal action.**
- ii. Allocate the necessary funds for the USS legal action.**
- iii. Publicise UCU's support for USS legal action among its membership.**

7 DEBATE OF MOTIONS TO BE TAKEN IN OPEN SESSION

7.1 Caleb Day (Durham University) proposed that motions HE23, HE24 and HE25 be taken as next business.

Alan Barker (University of Nottingham), chair of the Congress business committee, raised a point of order.

The proposal to take motions HE23, HE24 and HE25 as next business was **LOST**.

TPS

- 7.2 HE20, *Defence of the post-92 contract –no to fragmentation of post-92 work force*, was moved by Maria Chondrogianni (HEC) on behalf of the University of Westminster and seconded by Christina Paine (London Metropolitan University). Douglas Chalmers (Glasgow Caledonian University) spoke in the debate.

The president elect confirmed that all members could vote on the motion.

The chair reminded delegates that UCU was an active union across the four home nations. Some of the motions for debate apply across the UK, others may not.

HE20 was **CARRIED**:

Conference notes:

- 1. the post-92 contract stipulates explicit maxima for teaching week and year; a 35 -days leave; 5+ weeks research and scholarly activity**
- 2. the commitment of post-92 institutions to TPS**
- 3. that Staffordshire and Falmouth are using a subsidiary company to employ new staff, thus circumventing commitment to TPS and fragmenting the workforce.**

Conference agrees that:

- a. defence of the Post-92 contract is of national importance**
- b. post-92 disputes are of national importance.**

Conference resolves to:

- i. implement motion HE14 (2022) and convene a national meeting of post-92 branches to discuss developments affecting the contract and commitment to TPS**
- ii. inform in writing, and via the UCU website, all post-92 members about the contract on the maximum working week and year, and the right to a minimum 5 weeks self-directed research/scholarly activity**
- iii. offer national support to any post-92 UCU branch facing a pensions, redundancies or conditions attack.**

Anti-casualisation

- 7.3 Motion HE21, *Conditions of casualised research staff*, was moved by Nick Rush Cooper (Newcastle University) and seconded formally.

Motion HE21 was **CARRIED**:

HE sector conference notes:

- 1. Nationally, 66% of research staff are fixed-term (HESA 2020/21). The use of fixed term contracts in research can mean that staff face**

insecurity and exploitation, which in turn can cause stress and anxiety beyond the workplace.

- 2. As part of the Four Fights, the casualisation that research staff face is of key importance in our dispute with the employer.**
- 3. As it does not serve its members best interests, UCU is not a signatory of the current Research Concordat.**

This branch proposes:

- a. That HEC establish a task and finish group to explore the issues faced by casualised research staff.**
- b. That this task and finish group aim to develop a concordat that serves to improve security and working conditions of casualised research staff.**

- 7.4 Motion HE22, *Reinforcing organising for improved research staff conditions*, was moved by Peter Wood (Open University) and seconded by Ben Pope (HEC).

Motion HE22 was **CARRIED**:

Conference notes:

- 1. The policies adopted and guidance produced in support of sustainable research careers**
- 2. That UCU has had little success in bringing employers to move research staff onto secure contracts, with the numbers on fixed-term contracts remaining relatively static**
- 3. That moves by some employers to move staff from FTC to open ended contracts with an identified 'at risk' date does not necessarily improve security of employment**
- 4. Staff require paid time to adapt careers to changing conditions, such as the Climate and Ecological Emergency**
- 5. We need new ways to pressure employers to meaningfully engage, nationally and locally, on this issue.**

Conference resolves to:

- a. Assess support for research staff at each institution, with a view to ranking employers on levels of support**
- b. identify and share examples of better practice**
- c. update current materials on supporting research staff and develop a Research Staff manifesto that we can use as a campaigning and negotiating tool.**

- 7.5 Motion HE23, *PGRs as staff campaign*, motion HE24, *The Future of PGRs as Staff and Organising in HE*, and motion HE25, *Defend the Rights of Outsourced PGRs*, were taken in the same debate. Motion HE23 was moved by Emma Battell Lowman (HEC) and seconded by Rhian Elinor Keyse (HEC). Motion HE24 was moved by Ben Pope (HEC) and seconded by Fleur Martin (University of Warwick).

Amendment 24A.1 was moved by Cecilia Wee (Royal College of Art) on behalf of the Black members' standing committee:

Add after 'notes' point 4:

'5. PGRs work in precarious conditions, change membership status frequently thus often lose access to UCU's benefits.'

Add after 'resolves to' point a. (renumber accordingly):

'b. adopt the principle that student members should not lack access to UCU's structures on the basis of precarious employment status

Motion HE25 was moved by Teresa Pilgrim (University of Surrey) and seconded by Sam Morecroft (University of Sheffield International College).

Motion HE23 was **CARRIED**:

HE Sector conference notes the report on the PGRs as Staff Campaign and approves the report's recommendations as set out in UCU2085.

Amendment 24A.1 was **CARRIED**. Motion HE24, as amended, was **CARRIED**:

Conference recognises the progress made to date by the PGRs as Staff campaign, including:

- 1. organising PGR members;**
- 2. engaging effectively with UKRI;**
- 3. supporting PGRs to win a 13% increase in UKRI stipends;**
- 4. linking campaigning, bargaining and organising, providing a model for other pieces of work;**

Conference notes that:

- 1. PGR members have secured significant wins at local and national levels;**
- 2. some of this PGR activity has occurred outside of formal branch structures;**
- 3. some branch committees don't have dedicated PGR or GTA positions or these positions are vacant;**
- 4. some branches don't have an agreement with their employer to provide PGRs and hourly-paid workers with 'paid time on' facility time.**
- 5. *PGRs work in precarious conditions, change membership status frequently thus often lose access to UCU's benefits.***

Conference reaffirms i) the principle that original postgraduate research should be acknowledged as labour and ii) the campaign for PGRs to be recognised as members of staff with full employee rights.

Conference believes that:

- a. PGR member campaigning should be supported;**

- b. PGR members and issues should be integrated within branch committees;**
- c. PGR members should be equally entitled to receive facility time;**

Conference resolves to:

- a. continue the campaign on the basis of HESC 2020 motion 11 and the PGR manifesto;**
- b. adopt the principle that student members should not lack access to UCU's structures on the basis of precarious employment status***
- c. adapt the organising techniques developed by the PGR campaign to other casualised groups in HE, such as fixed-term research and teaching staff, updating and augmenting existing guidance for branches;**
- d. identify further opportunities to integrate organising with campaigning, lobbying, bargaining and negotiating involving funding bodies and/or multiple employers.**

Further, conference resolves that branches should be supported in:

- i. Establishing PGR and GTA committee positions and actively recruiting to fill these positions**
- ii. Training and mentoring PGR committee members to effectively campaign on matters relating to casual employment and postgraduate research**
- iii. Negotiating with their employer on the provision of 'paid time on' facility time, where no such mechanism already exists.**

Motion HE25 was **CARRIED**:

Conference notes that:

- 1. Five motions opposing the practice of outsourcing have been passed at congress and both sector specific conferences since 2009.**
- 2. Despite important wins, Further and Higher Education employers, including the University of Surrey, continue to outsource staff and services via third-party agencies (e.g. Unitemps) or subsidiary businesses.**

Believes that:

- a. Outsourcing in this way excludes PGRs from many employment rights and entitlements, including their ability to engage in industrial action or join national disputes.**
- b. Members require coordinated support to campaign for the eradication of outsourcing in Further and Higher Education.**

Resolves to:

Support local efforts to end outsourcing through:

- i. **Use of national press and social media campaigning.**
- ii. **Providing organising support to all branches wishing to submit relevant local claims.**
- iii. **Collecting data over a six-month period from outsourced PGRs on pay rates, workload, training opportunities, welfare and recognition to support local bargaining.**

7.6 Motion HE26, *Research Funder*, was moved by a delegate from the University of Glasgow and seconded formally.

Motion HE26 was **CARRIED**:

HESC notes:

- 1. **Job insecurity and a hyper-competitive research culture negatively impact on research integrity and wellbeing.**
- 2. **68% of research only staff are on fixed-term contracts.**
- 3. **Universities try to justify use of insecure contracts based on insecure funding.**
- 4. **Funders and Universities vary in the degree to which they support researchers job security.**
- 5. **UCU members sit on funding review panels and review grants.**

HESC resolves to:

- a. **Build a consensus through methods such as a researcher working group and surveys on a set of criteria which would improve job security for researchers and to which research funders and employers should adhere to.**
- b. **Explore ways in which we can put pressure on the funders (UKRI and others) and employers to adhere to these core criteria. This should include a consideration of asking members to withdraw from participating in reviewing grants with funders that are unwilling to adhere to these criteria.**

Lucia Pradella (King's College London) raised a point of information in relation to motion HE18. The chair responded.

Academic related, professional services staff

7.7 Motion HE27, *Campaigning on Academic and Academic Related Professional Services Staff*, was moved by Billy Proctor (Bournemouth University). Vicky Blake (immediate past president) seconded the motion and moved amendment HE27A.1 on behalf of the Academic related, professional services staff committee:

Insert the word "Services" in the title.

Insert the following after point 4 of Conference notes:

"Conference further notes:

The ongoing work of the ARPS committee to address these issues including the ARPS Model Claim template and Job evaluation training."

Insert at the beginning of point a of "Conference calls on UCU to:" "Analyse previous feedback and surveys and further"

Maria Chondrogianni (vice-chair, Higher education committee) was in the chair for the vote on HE27 and amendment HE27A.1.

Amendment HE27A.1 was **CARRIED**. Motion HE27, as amended, was **CARRIED**:

Conference notes:

- 1. The longstanding commitment of ARPS members to UCU campaigning and industrial action**
- 2. Year-on-year grade drift for ARPS members**
- 3. Grade suppression**
- 4. In many institutions, the lack of a framework for career progression and promotion**

Conference further notes:

The ongoing work of the ARPS committee to address these issues including the ARPS Model Claim template and Job evaluation training.

Conference calls on UCU to:

- a. Analyse previous feedback and surveys and further survey ARPS members to better understand their needs as members**
- b. Provide the ARPS standing committee with any and all resources needed to undertake work streams on behalf of ARPS members**

Justine Mercer (president elect) was in the chair.

7.8 Motion HE28, *Relationships with other unions*, was moved by Kevin Ward (Middlesex University) on behalf of the Academic related, professional services staff committee and seconded by Grant Buttars (HEC). Joanna de Groot (HEC) spoke in the debate.

Motion HE28 was **CARRIED**:

Conference notes:

UCU ARPS members often work closely with members of other unions, e.g. Unison, and face many shared issues including:

- 1. increasing, unsafe workloads**
- 2. casualisation**
- 3. pay inequality**
- 4. unequal opportunities for advancement**
- 5. workplace bullying**
- 6. pay deterioration**

7. downgrading of roles

We are in the same fight for decency in our workplaces, but there are few formal structures beyond Joint Negotiating Committees, and varying degrees of communication, co-operation and co-ordination between unions. These risk contributing to division, where unity is needed.

Conference instructs HEC to:

- a. contact Unison, Unite and GMB to propose the establishment of a non-academic, professional and support staff-led Working Group to look at how co-operation could happen.**
- b. produce guidelines for branches wishing to collaborate more closely with unions in their own branch.**

Student distribution and HE funding

7.9 Motion HE29, *To campaign for a student distribution system in HE*, was moved by David Hitchcock (Canterbury Christ Church University) and seconded by Balihar Sanghera (University of Kent).

Mark Abel (HEC) and Sophia Woodman (University of Edinburgh) spoke in the debate. Sean Wallis (HEC) proposed that the motion be taken in parts and resolves part i. be voted on separately, followed by a vote on resolves parts ii. and iii together. Marion Hersh (HEC) spoke in the debate.

The proposal to take the motion in parts was LOST (86 for; 90 against; 8 abstentions).

Motion HE29 was **CARRIED**:

Conference notes that student recruitment patterns:

- 1. mean some universities hoard undergraduate students, while others struggle to recruit.**
- 2. have led to greater uncertainty and instability in the sector which has been used to systematically undermine pay and conditions**
- 3. have been used by management as a pretext to cut staff costs, including department closures and redundancies**
- 4. translate to poor learning conditions for students, unsustainable workloads for staff at universities that over-recruit and increased casualisation across the sector.**

The current system is designed to bankrupt small HEIs.

Conference believes:

- a. the removal of university caps on student numbers by the Tories in 2014 in their pursuit of marketising the sector has been detrimental to higher education and had a negative impact on university staff and students.**

- b. the UK and devolved governments must reintroduce a managed system of student distribution across the sector based on fairness and equality.**

Conference resolves to:

- i. commission research on models of student distribution which can create recruitment balance in HE.**
- ii. begin a high-profile campaign for the better management and distribution of students numbers across all HEIs to protect jobs via the reintroduction of student distribution this coming year, including branch resources, intense lobbying efforts, and media.**
- iii. instruct HEC to lobby government and opposition parties to adopt such measures.**

7.10 Motion HE30, *Defend social sciences, humanities and arts-based courses*, was moved by Cecilia Wee (Royal College of Art) and seconded by Hannah Cross (University of Westminster).

Amendment HE30A.1 was moved by Mark Pendleton (University of Sheffield) on behalf of the LGBT+ members standing committee:

In the title and wherever it appears in the motion delete the word 'Soft' and replace with the word 'Social'

After 'Humanities' in resolves i delete the word 'and'

After 'Arts Based' in resolves i add the words

And LGBT+ studies

After courses in resolves ii add

Including LGBT+ studies

In Conference resolves add new point

- i. support the continued organising of UCU Equality and LGBT+ research conferences with the aim of promoting such studies and enabling those researching in these areas to share and promote their work.*

Amendment HE30A.2 was moved by Gordon McKelvie (University of Winchester) on behalf of Southern regional HE sector committee:

Insert after conference resolves ii., ending in "adversely and disproportionately impacts them." the following text:

"iii. instruct HEC to lobby government and opposition parties to adopt such measures."

Amendments HE30A.1 and HE30A.2 were **CARRIED**. Motion HE30, as amended, was **CARRIED**:

Conference notes:

- 1. Two years after the DoE decision to cut 50% of OfS funding to higher education arts subjects in England, HE has faced waves of course**

closures and redundancies in social sciences, arts and humanities departments, including at the universities of Birkbeck, Goldsmiths, Hertfordshire, Huddersfield, Roehampton, UEA, Wolverhampton, De Montfort, and Dundee.

2. Conference agrees that provision of Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts-Based courses in HE including in post-92 institutions is of national importance for UCU. These closures predominantly affect students from marginalised and wider participation backgrounds, removing the opportunity to develop the understanding and skills to engage with societal and political change critically.
3. Three motions were passed to fight these cuts in 2021 (2 at UCU Congress, 1 at HEC) but resolutions have yet to be actioned.
4. The oversubscribed Protect the Arts and Humanities session due to take place at the cancelled Cradle to Grave conference September 2022 has not been rescheduled for another occasion.

Conference believes:

- a. Attacks on the arts and humanities directly impact jobs of UCU HE members and are part of the government's broader defunding and politicised attacks on the arts and humanities.

Conference resolves to:

- i. defend the provision of Social Sciences, Humanities, Arts-Based and LGBT+ studies courses in all institutions, including post-92 institutions;
- ii. urgently set up an Arts and Culture Campaign Group, including representatives of HE institutions affected and threatened by the cuts, to launch and coordinate a campaign to Defend the Arts and courses including LGBT+ studies that ensure marginalised citizens have the skills and knowledge to critically engage with social and political change that adversely and disproportionately impacts them.
- iii. instruct HEC to lobby government and opposition parties to adopt such measures.
- iv. support the continued organising of UCU Equality and LGBT+ research conferences with the aim of promoting such studies and enabling those researching in these areas to share and promote their work.

7.11 Motion HE31, *Supporting students to demand fee reimbursement around industrial action*, was moved by Phillip Allsopp (Cardiff University) and seconded formally. Chris Grocott (HEC) and another delegate *who did not give their name* spoke in the debate.

Motion HE31 was **CARRIED**:

Conference notes:

1. Many students and students unions are lobbying their universities for

fee reimbursements for lost contact hours owing to industrial action.

- 2. NUS supports our industrial action as do many local students unions.**
- 3. The chief executive of the Office for Students recently backed students' demands for refunds.**

Conference believes:

- a. We oppose tuition fees and the marketisation of HE.**
- b. Having been forced to pay tuition fees, students should not bear the further cost of our employer's unwillingness to provide reasonable pay and working conditions. Students are within their rights to complain about missed teaching.**

Conference resolves:

- i. To offer support and practical assistance to NUS and local students unions to demand fee refunds for teaching and wider services lost due to industrial action. This includes e.g. public statements of support.**

7.12 Motion HE32, *Kick Capitalism Out Of HE!*, was moved by Jessica Kent (University of Sheffield) and seconded by William Proctor (Bournemouth University). Richard Wilson (University of Chester), Alberto Pezzotta (University College London), Teige Matthews Palmer (University of Oxford) and Arthur Kaletzky (University of Cambridge) spoke in the debate. Sam Morecroft (University of Sheffield International College) proposed that the motion be taken in parts and resolves point i. be voted on separately.

The proposal to take the motion in parts was **CARRIED**.

Motion HE32 resolves point i. was **CARRIED**. Motion HE32 was **CARRIED**:

Conference notes:

- 1. The increasing role of privatisation, profit and the market in Higher Education (HE)**
- 2. Alongside this, we have seen increasing attacks on pay and pensions, rampant casualisation, outsourcing, course closures, redundancies, and systemic pay inequality**

Conference believes:

- a. This marketisation of HE and, ultimately, capitalism itself are the driving forces behind these issues that are proliferating throughout our sector**
- b. The only way to achieve lasting change is to tackle the root causes of issues plaguing our sector and fight for free, fully-funded HE**

Conference resolves:

- i. To launch a sector-wide campaign to "Kick Capitalism Out Of HE", calling for sister unions and students to join this**

- i. **This campaign should have the explicit goal to reverse all funding cuts; abolish tuition fees; kick out private companies and interests; and replace university bureaucracies with democratic bodies made up of HE staff and students to run universities for social good, not profit.**

7.13 Motion HE33, *Subsidiarisation of staff at Coventry University*, was moved by Simon Smith (Coventry University) and seconded by Dianabasi Nkantah (Coventry University). Peter Crowther (Birmingham City University) spoke in the debate.

Motion HE33 was **CARRIED**:

Conference notes that:

1. **Since 2015, Coventry University staff have systematically been moved from core functions to subsidiaries.**
2. **New and promoted staff are being recruited into subsidiaries.**
3. **Employment in subsidiaries is on worse terms and conditions with limited career progression.**
4. **There is a consequential loss of professional role, academic freedom, research opportunities & trade union recognition**
5. **Profits are gift-aided back to the University.**

Conference believes that:

- a. **Academic roles are being systematically privatised for profit.**
- b. **Students should be taught by academic subject specialists employed directly by the university.**
- c. **Subsidiarisation impacts academic freedom, terms and conditions of employment and job security. This "business" model is a serious threat to the wider HE sector.**

Conference resolves to:

- i. **condemn the model of subsidiarisation especially at Coventry University.**
- ii. **call on UCU to mount a national campaign to fight against the subsidiarisation of Higher Education of the form instigated by Coventry University.**

7.14 Motion HE34, *Building a National campaign for recognition in Study Group*, was moved by Sam Morecroft (University of Sheffield International College) and seconded by Rhiannon Lockley (Birmingham City University).

Motion HE34 was **CARRIED**:

Conference notes:

1. **The proliferation of outsourced private education providers in UK HE represents a clear threat to terms and conditions.**

2. **UCU has taken big steps forward in one provider (Study Group) with the successful recognition campaign at Sussex International College and the first ever strike in an outsourced higher education provider in the UK at the University of Sheffield International College, which secured a pay award of 10% for staff and 8% for managerial staff over two years.**
3. **Ongoing grassroots efforts to win recognition in further Study Group institutions.**

Conference resolves:

- a. **To begin a campaign for national recognition in Study Group.**
- b. **To remind branches in institutions which Study Group has agreements with that it is UCU policy to support staff in private providers to unionise.**
- c. **To instruct HE Officers to attempt to initiate discussions with Study Group on a national recognition agreement.**

Equality

7.15 Motion HE35, *Equalities Data*, was moved by Cecilia Wee (Royal College of Art) on behalf of the Disabled members' standing committee and seconded by Marian Mayer (HEC).

Amendment HE35A.1 was moved by Bee Hughes (HEC) on behalf of the LGBT+ members' standing committee:

*Believes a. - add after gender: LGBT+ identities,
Change 'equalities' to 'equality' throughout.*

Christina Paine (London Metropolitan University) spoke in the debate.

Amendment HE35A.1 was **CARRIED**. Motion HE35, as amended, was **CARRIED**:

Conference notes:

1. **Equality reps face barriers to accessing equality data about staff in UK Higher Education institutions.**
2. **Equality reps are having to resort to Freedom of Information requests to obtain equality data as HEIs are not routinely collating or making such data accessible**

Conference believes:

- a. **Lack of agreed standards for equality data about staff obscures the extent and impact of gender, LGBT+ identities, disability and ethnicity inequalities in HEIs**
- b. **Data about inequalities in pay, progression and retention are crucial to collective bargaining and fighting inequality within Higher Education.**

Conference calls on:

- i. **UCU to develop a standardised data request for HEIs to collate and make equality data about staff pay, progression and retention available to trade unions**
- ii. **UCU to work with UCEA and HEIs to ensure that HEIs collate and provide equality data, as part of their responsibility to disclose information to trade unions for collective bargaining.**

7.16 Motion HE36, *Navigating bureaucratic processes in HE*, was moved by Ben Pope (HEC) on behalf of the disabled members' standing committee and was seconded by Bijan Parsia (HEC).

Motion HE36 was **CARRIED**:

Conference notes that many common university workplace processes (e.g. promotion and probation, procedures surrounding fixed-term contracts) can be complex and hard to navigate, especially for disabled and neurodivergent members (further disadvantaging them).

Conference resolves to develop process-specific, fully accessible resources that include:

- 1. A brief overview of any relevant legislation, negotiated agreements and sector norms that underlie any individual institution's policies.**
- 2. A checklist of questions to ask and issues to look out for in your own employer's policies and procedures.**
- 3. Case studies and/or practical hints and tips from other members who have been through similar processes.**
- 4. A dedicated document and/or webpage on navigating university bureaucracy, which will also link to any similar information that has already been produced.**
- 5. Guidance for branches on developing similar resources on employer-specific policies.**

7.17 Motion HE37, *Supporting parents and challenging inequality in HE*, was moved by Christina Paine (London Metropolitan University) on behalf of the women members' standing committee and seconded by Vicky Blake (immediate past president). David Law (Liverpool John Moores University) spoke in the debate.

HE37 was **CARRIED**:

HESC notes:

- 1. Existing UCU policy and extensive research highlighting persistent discrimination and gendered disparities in pay, conditions, and career development**
- 2. High casualisation, real terms pay cuts in HE, and shortcomings in workplace health and safety disproportionately affect all who wish to plan and care for a family**

- 3. These issues underpin sizeable gender pay and other inequality driven pay gaps, compounded by employers' failure to properly support workers through pregnancy, reproductive health concerns, parenthood, and caregiving**

HESC calls on HEC and EQC to coordinate a campaign with equality/employment advisory committees, and allied organisations to:

- a. Publicly report unequal provision of parental leave across HEIs**
- b. Investigate unsafe heavy workloads after birth**
- c. Publish guidance and run bargaining and negotiation workshops for branches on securing additional maternity pay and other parental leave policies**
- d. Demand equal access to fully paid parental leave paid for all HE workers and PGRs.**

7.18 Motion HE38, *Equalities, the cost of living, and HE industrial work*, was moved by Victoria Showunmi (HEC) on behalf of the women members' standing committee and seconded by Joanna de Groot (HEC).

Amendment HE38A.1 was moved by Richard Wild (University of Greenwich) on behalf of the London regional HE sector committee.

Add to the end of the motion:

Members of equality strands and part-time students/staff are likely to be disproportionately impacted when strike days are not evenly spread.

Conference resolves

i. Future strike days should be evenly spread across weekdays within any term/semester.

ii. Where strike days within a term/semester are not divisible by five, some weekdays can be scheduled for a maximum of ONE additional strike day.

iii. Any other exception must be approved by HEC, and a rationale for disproportionality provided.

Rhian Keyse (HEC) raised a point of information. Baliyar Sanghera (University of Kent), Ross Gibson (University of Strathclyde), Lena Wångren (University of Edinburgh) and Mark Walmsley (University of East Anglia) spoke in the debate.

Amendment HE38A.1 was **LOST**.

Motion HE38 was **CARRIED**:

Conference notes:

- 1. the cost of living crisis as an added threat to our incomes which are already reduced by years of real value pay cuts**
- 2. that vulnerable groups like women take on roles as the 'shock absorbers' of this crisis and of 13 years of austerity on their households and families**

3. **that low pay and insecure employment are worsened by the intersectional impacts of gender, race, sexuality, disability and migrant status**
4. **that equality issues are central to industrial campaigns on HE pay and pensions**

Conference expects HEC, HE negotiators, and HE branches to ensure that

- a. **equality issues are at the forefront of all HE industrial work**
- b. **our campaigning, bargaining, and publicity material highlights the issues noted above and is directed at all membership groups facing equality injustices**
- c. **the views and interests of our equality groups are sought when planning HE campaigns and other industrial work.**

The president read out the names of all candidates standing for election as national negotiators.

- 7.19 Motion HE39, *LGBT+ in HE* was moved by Gina Gwenffrewi (University of Edinburgh) on behalf of the LGBT+ members standing committee and seconded by Marion Hersh (HEC) on behalf of the LGBT+ members standing committee.

Nalini Vittal (University College London) and David Law (Liverpool John Moores University) spoke in the debate. Bettina Friedrich (University College London) proposed that the motion be taken in parts and point i. voted on separately.

The proposal to take the motion in parts was **LOST**.

Motion HE39 was **CARRIED**:

Conference notes with concern that

1. **numerous HEIs have withdrawn from Stonewall following pressure, including from media**
2. **UK slipped down the ILGA Europe Rainbow Europe chart**
3. **there is limited research on the experiences of LGBT+ members in HEIs**

Conference believes that

- a. **Stonewall has taken a strong trans and non-binary inclusion stance. This has been reflected in some progressive measures in HEIs.**
- b. **Nobody should be subject to anti-LGBT+ discrimination at work**
- c. **HEIs should be doing everything to create and develop working environments everywhere that support and defend all LGBT+ people**

Conference calls for UCU to

- i. **send a message of support and promote Stonewall's work**
- ii. **survey HE members on topics including trans and non-binary inclusion, international work, and experiences of LGBT+**

discrimination in HEIs.

- iii. work with other education unions to advocate for LGBT+ protections across Europe and beyond**
- iv. collate information about international LGBT+ rights and illustrate with experiences of LGBT+ members in HEIs.**

7.20 Motion HE40, *UCURising, Four Fights and LGBT+ pay gaps*, was moved by Bee Hughes (HEC) on behalf of the LGBT+ members' standing committee and was seconded by Daryl Hodge (University of Liverpool).

Motion HE40 was **CARRIED**:

HESC notes the

- a. success of Four Fights and UCU Rising disputes in raising the profile of gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps in HEIs**
- b. lack of data collection on sexual orientation and gender identity by HESA and varied data available around LGBT+ staff at HEIs**
- c. historic and contemporary reasons why LGBT+ staff may not feel confident that it would be safe to disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity in the workplace**
- d. LinkedIn commissioned poll showing a UK-wide LGBT+ pay gap of 16%**

HESC resolves for

- a. UCU to lobby HESA for better data collection on LGBT+ identities**
- b. UCU to lobby OfS and UCEA on improving safety and confidence to support data collection**
- c. UCU to add LGBT+ pay gap to HE industrial campaigning**
- d. UCU to conduct research to better understand LGBT+ pay gaps in HE.**

Other matters

7.21 The chair reported that Cardiff University had requested the withdrawal of motion HE41. This was **AGREED** by conference.

8 DEBATE OF MOTIONS TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE SESSION

New JNCHES and pay (continued)

8.1 All business to be taken in open session having been completed, the chair returned to those motions to be taken in private session which had not been reached.

Motion HE13, *Maximising participation*, was moved by Grant Buttars (HEC) on behalf of the UCU Scotland executive committee and seconded formally.

Motion HE13 was **CARRIED**:

Conference believes:

- 1. Maximising participation and democracy within the UCU is vital to**

ensuring UCU is a member-led union.

- 2. UCU Scotland has encouraged this with regular branch delegates meetings on specific issues over and above its regular voting delegate based Scottish Executive meetings.**

Conference resolves to explore ways in which Branch Delegate Meetings prior to HECs can inform HEC deliberations.

- 8.2 HE14, *For democratic control over disputes*, was moved by Josh Bunting (University of Manchester) and seconded by Vicky Blake (immediate past president). Bijan Parsia (HEC) spoke in the debate.

Motion HE14 was **CARRIED:**

HESC notes:

- 1. That both the move to negotiation through ACAS and the “pause” in strike action were imposed with no prior consultation of members or HEC.**
- 2. Official UCU social media platforms have been used to advance certain positions on future strategy and argue with individual members.**

HESC further notes:

- a. Democratic control over disputes empowers members and builds union density through the solidarity engendered by collective decision making.**
- b. Members learning that they have been stood down via social media is disempowering and demoralising.**
- c. Official union channels debating strategy on social media makes the union appear weak.**

HESC resolves to:

- i. Affirm the sovereignty of members and our democratic processes.**
- ii. Commit to ongoing democratisation of the union, empowering members and creating proper processes for democratic decision-making during disputes.**
- iii. Remind employers that they are negotiating with a collective, not individuals, and they must wait for our democratic processes to make decisions on disputes.**

- 8.3 The higher education committee’s section of the NEC’s report to Congress was **ADOPTED.**

9 CLOSING BUSINESS

- 9.1 The chair announced that there would be a solidarity photoshoot with the Justice for Sheku Bayoh Campaign at 8.45 am on Monday.
- 9.2 The chair thanked delegates, UCU staff, and the vice-chairs and members of HEC.