

UCU West Midlands Newsletter



Introductions

Hello West Midlands UCU members! I'm Laura Lewis Alvarado and have taken over as Branch Development Organiser after Leslie Foley's retirement. I would also like to welcome my colleague Jane Inskip who has started her new role as Regional Support Official, taking over from Teresa Corr who also retired a few months ago. Jane has worked in prison education for many years and was one of our prison education reps, so is joining UCU with invaluable experience and knowledge.

This is the first of a new series of newsletters that we will be sending out to keep you up to date on the goings on in the West Midlands region and general UCU news.

If you'd like to get in touch with me or with the West Midlands team, you can email:

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Picket Lines

Last month our two branches at South and City College Birmingham and our branch at City of Wolverhampton College went on strike as part of the New Deal for FE campaign. Despite the freezing temperatures, our members turned up to the picket lines and made themselves heard.



Pay Negotiations

As a result of the Industrial Action carried out at South and City College Birmingham and City of Wolverhampton College, UCU has been asked to attend pay negotiation talks with the senior management at both colleges at the end of this month.

Regional Meetings

On Saturday the 31st of January we were happy to welcome our branch reps to the first hybrid Regional Committee meeting at Edmund House. Two motions were passed at the meeting which will go to Congress in May: one in the plenary session against the selling off of Council housing in Birmingham, and one in the FE sector meeting in support of new teachers.

In addition, delegates who will be attending Congress this year were elected.

The hybrid meeting was well attended and we expect it to be the first of many to come.

The West Midlands Retired Members branch will also be meeting in Edmund house on the 24th of February and we look forward to seeing them then.



Indefinite leave to remain

The government is carrying out a consultation on Indefinite Leave to Remain. UCU is preparing a response, and we would love for your thoughts to feed into this. If you would like to give us your opinion on this subject, please email Mary Meekings: mmeekings@UCU.ORG.UK

Events

- UCU FE Branch Briefing - 18:30-20:00 on Wednesday 4th of March
- Confronting Redundancies workshop with Helena Ifeka of Counsel, a barrister at Cloisters chambers. Online on Wednesday 11 March 2026 at 5pm. More details in Friday email.
- March to Stop the Far Right - Together Alliance, on the 28th of March in London. Find out more at: <https://www.togetheralliance.org.uk/>
- Midlands Together Against The Far Right- Unity march and rally - Midday on Sunday 8th March, Victoria Square, Birmingham
- TUC Webinar: Employment Act Update on 12th March, 14:30



Training

We're running a variety of activist training training in the Midlands and in our head office in London

February

Workload: 1

13th February - Online

Reps: 2

24,25,26th February - In Person

March

Workload: 2

13th of March - Online

Challenging Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

4th of March - Online

Health and Safety: 2

17,18,19th of March - In Person

April

Introduction to Casework

23rd April- Online

Job Evaluations

28th April- In Person

May

Reps: 1

12,13,14th of May - Online

Challenging Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

21st of May - Online

To sign up, please visit the [UCU activist education programme page](#)