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SALLY HUNT ELECTED AS FIRST UCU GENERAL SECRETARY

The result of the General Secretary election was announced on 9 March. Sally Hunt was elected as General Secretary and will take office from June 1 2007. Until such time, Paul Mackney and Sally Hunt will remain in office as joint General Secretaries. The result has been published in full on the UCU web site <http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=1854>

The results of the NEC election including those for the officer positions of President, President-elect and Treasurer will be included in our next issue.

FIXED-TERM REGULATIONS SUCCESS

Since the introduction of the fixed-term regulations which gave such staff the right not to be discriminated against in comparison with permanent staff, UCU has been looking for a test case. We now have it.

In the case of Andrew Biggert against the University of Ulster (case ref 00778/05) a tribunal in Belfast found that Andrew had been unfairly dismissed from his fixed-term contract and that he had suffered less favourable treatment on the basis of his being employed on a fixed-term contract. In this landmark judgement the tribunal found that the less favourable treatment was that Andrew had not been offered redeployment or an appeal as would have happened if he were a permanent employee.

The case is worth reading in its entirety; severe criticisms were levelled at the Director of HR and there are particular lessons that came from this decision.

- The tribunal rejected the university's claim that, because of the Equality Commission's Code of Practice, it had to advertise a suitable post instead of redeploying Andrew directly into it.
- That when a comparator is sought for the purposes of proving less favourable treatment, the comparator does not have to be in exactly the same situation in relation to his or her circumstances as the fixed-term employee.

Both these pointers as well as the criticisms of the University over the lack of procedure for dealing with redundancies in the case of fixed-term contracts should be used by branches and local associations. In particular the requirement to redeploy fixed-term employees before considering advertising vacant posts is a welcome clarification of the law and the duty laid on employers.

ACADEMIC-RELATED STAFF – Calling all librarians, computing services, student support and administration members

The term '*academic-related*' was not as widely used in post 92 universities, but covers a wide range of roles in information services, computing, student support and administration in grades represented by UCU. These roles are categorised as '*academic-related*' because of the level of knowledge and skills involved in these roles and in recognition of the vital role that these members make to the university academic team. If this description sounds like your role, please sign up to the academic-related email list, to find out more about these issues. You can sign up to the list by sending an email to mmcaulay@ucu.org.uk.

The work of the AUT's Academic-related committee has fed through into the UCU and work continues on promoting the Academic-related manifesto (see http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/html/n/q/arstaff_manifesto05.html) and recruiting and organising academic-related staff with events planned in Northern Ireland and the inaugural UCU Congress in the coming months. If you would like to find out more about the work of the academic-related committee, please send an email to Nick James, Chair of the committee at njaj1@leicester.ac.uk.

We are also closely monitoring the effect of Framework implementation on our academic-related members. Despite attempts by a large number of employers to try and impede career progression, we have successfully maintained progression from grade 6 (the equivalent of ALC1) to grade 7 (the equivalent of ALC2) in every agreement. Members of the Academic-related committee will be conducting a survey amongst members to assess the terms and conditions of Academic-related members of UCU.

We have also been faced with the employers (and in some cases sister unions) resisting the maintenance of the term '*academic-related*' to describe our members' job family. Our academic-related members are part of the academic team and we will continue to refer to them as such, despite pressure from employers to devalue their status. One area of continuing concern is the level of red-circling or down-grading that academic-related staff are

facing – especially in institutions who have insisted on individual job evaluations rather than adopting academic-related role profiles. We will continue to monitor this and to take action when and where appropriate. For more information contact Moray McAulay on mmcaulay@ucu.org.uk

UCU SUPPORT FOR NHS TOGETHER DAY OF ACTION (3RD MARCH)

UCU supported the day of action organised by the TUC sponsored NHS Together campaign. A series of regional events throughout the UK highlighted the impact of cuts in NHS funding on patient services and jobs. Many local NHS Trusts are still in financial deficit, local services are being cut in order to reduce those deficits and many Trusts are now consulting unions over the need to reduce staffing levels. UCU is particularly concerned that the actions of Strategic Health Authorities within England (who are cutting the MPET training budget by as much as 30%) will result in a significant reduction in training places for health professional students. A small number of institutions have already indicated that a reduction in training places may result in the loss of academic jobs. UCU will shortly be launching a national survey of NHS provision within HE to ascertain the extent to which reductions in the MPET budget might impact on student places and job security for academic staff.

This national survey will provide UCU with an accurate overview of the situation relating to each contract between an institution and the NHS for the provision of non medical and dental education and training. Branches/LAs who are aware of any potential cuts in NHS funding affecting their institution should contact Andy Pike apike@ucu.org.uk

DUNDEE REDUNDANCY THREAT AVERTED

Dundee University and the campus trade unions (AMICUS, UCU and UNISON) met on Friday 2 March in a consultation meeting which focused on the avoidance of redundancies and related matters.

It was noted that, while approving the Sustainability Review Report the University Court had not supported compulsory redundancies and had asked officers to strive to achieve the targets set out in the report by voluntary means.

The consultations are being conducted with a view to reaching agreement.

At this initial consultation meeting, agreement was reached on the avoidance

of compulsory redundancy, in the following terms:

The University will work in consultation with the campus unions to achieve any financial savings that impact on staffing by purely voluntary means, with an emphasis on methods which can retain staff in the University. In the unlikely event that the financial savings are not achieved by voluntary means, whether in the staffing budget or elsewhere, the University would bring the whole issue back to the table for further consultation with the unions, with an open mind as to how the situation would be addressed and bearing in mind our mutual intention to avoid compulsory redundancy.

Further consultations will take place on an ongoing basis.

Scotland's First Minister pledges real terms increase in funding

Jack McConnell, Scotland's First Minister, told a conference on widening access on 26 February:

"I also believe it is time to consider raising the cap on student numbers in higher education, to open the door to more Scots-young and old- to the benefits of knowledge and learning and to increase funding in real terms year on year."

Oppose HE Privatisation:

'One of the most useful courses I've ever attended' - UCU's first anti-privatisation seminar:

Feedback from activists attending UCU's first anti-privatisation seminar, held on Tuesday 27 February, has been extremely positive. Attendees were given a briefing on the causes, consequences and extent of the recent attempts to privatise course provision (in English language centres in particular). This was combined with sessions that provided them with advice on the campaigning techniques and legislation that can be used to counter the threat from private companies. Another described it as a '*useful combination of a strategic approach and hands on, common sense advice*'.

To date, over 4000 members have responded to the web petition campaign to confirm that their university will not seek to privatise or contract out any aspect of key support function in any department.

The UCU HE campaigns team will now be rolling out this seminar across the country. Priority will obviously be given to those HE members who contact us and are currently facing privatisation (or fear it is on the agenda), but if you are interested in attending or hosting a seminar in your branch/LA or region, please contact UCU Head of Campaigns Justine Stephens at jstephens@ucu.org.uk A campaign resource pack (as launched at the first anti-privatisation seminar) can be found at this link:
<http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2064>

The College and University Support Network (CUSN) has had 3,830 visitors to its website since its launch at the end of October. CUSN, set up by a partnership of UCU and Teacher Support Network, offers round-the-clock telephone counselling, fact sheets, online coaching, money advice and needs-based grants and loans specifically for college and university academic and related staff and their families.

Out of all the calls/emails in this period, the top issues were:

- Working conditions - 30.5%
- Money - 30.5%
- Careers - 10%
- People and relationships - 9%
- Information call - 7.5%
- Health and wellbeing - 7%
- Personal - 5.5%

Find out more at <http://www.cusn.info> Branches and Local Associations will have received boxes of leaflets and posters from CUSN. Please take every opportunity to distribute these among your members. If you have not received any promotional

material please contact
enquiries@cusn.info

CUSN facilities complement the support provided by UCU and members are always referred to the union for advice and help where appropriate. The statistics on issues raised will help UCU develop its bargaining and campaigning work.

MORE on our HE TEAM In our first edition of HE News, we introduced our team members. Here's more on the team:-



Malcolm Keight is part of UCU's Senior Management Team. He is the *National Head of the Higher Education Department*. Apart from being Head of the head office HE Team, he also has direct responsibility for eleven Higher Education Regional Offices that cover the branches. Malcolm also co-ordinates HE work in three other offices that also cover FE branches. Malcolm leads national HE negotiations and is the academic trade union secretary of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Higher Education Staffs (JNCNES).

Rachel Curley is the HE Assistant General Secretary. Rachel is currently on maternity leave.



Jane Thompson is HE Assistant General Secretary (maternity leave cover). Jane currently leads on terms and conditions in the pre-92 sector and post-92 sector in Scotland including implementation of the 2003/04 Framework Agreement. She is also involved with fixed-term and hourly-paid issues, academic-related members and members of the Medical Research Council.

Andrew Pike is Senior National Official of HE. Andy leads on terms and conditions in the post-92 sector and is a lead negotiator in the implementation of the Framework Agreement in the post-92 sector. Andy is also responsible for industrial relations in the post-92 sector; he participates in national pay negotiations within the JNCNES structure and is responsible for the implementation of the pay framework agreement in post-92 institutions and health academic issues across both sectors. *Unfortunately, Andy will be leaving UCU in April to take up the post of Assistant General Secretary with the Irish union IMPACT. We are grateful for Andy's considerable contribution to UCU and NATFHE and wish him well in his new job.*



Also part of the HE Team and Senior Research Officer is **Stephen Court**. Stephen is involved in a number of different research areas across further and higher education, including pay, conditions of employment, public funding and institutions' finance. He is responsible for conducting surveys and writing reports and briefings as well as for ordering research publications and overseeing UCU's library.

A Developing Activist Network (DAN)
- event for new members
Friday 11 – Saturday 12 May:

To register for this course and get more details, fill in the online form at this link
<http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=1974>



Rob Copeland is a policy officer at the UCU's Bloomsbury office. His main area of responsibility is professional and education policy. He covers a range of issues including research policy and funding, widening participation and admissions, governance, student fees and funding as well as teaching and learning. Rob is also part of the international team at UCU, with particular responsibility for international development, such as the recent DfID-funded brain drain project.



Moray McAulay is currently Policy Officer (Maternity Leave Cover) on the HE Team. As Policy Officer, Moray will be working with branches and local associations to support their negotiations on the Framework Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding. He will be researching issues that need to be resolved post Framework Agreement, such as the inclusion of hourly paid staff and ensuring that all institutions conduct equal pay audits. Moray will also be working with colleagues on changes to university statutes, fixed term contracts and issues facing hourly-paid staff.

Louise Hunt provides secretarial and diary support to the National Head of Higher Education, Malcolm Keight. She also supports the HE team in terms of administration and minute taking for the higher education committee and specialist group meetings, liaison with colleagues in regional offices and assisting the Senior Research Officer in the maintenance and organisation of research materials.

Also providing administrative support to the National Head of HE and designated members of the Higher Education Team and to Bernadette Newman, National Head of Finance is

Christine Bernabe. Christine has recently joined UCU and will work closely with members of UCU's Senior Management Team. She will also work along with other team members to support the work of UCU committees and representation groups.

And our Regional Officials - supporting HE Branches and LA's.

David Bleiman – Scotland and NE England.

Sue Davis - Midlands.

Iain Owens - Northern England.

Martin Machon - Midlands

Jimmy McKeown - Northern Ireland.

Jim McCracken – Exeter.

Brian Everett – North West.

John Perry - Southsea region.

Adrian Jones – North West.

Ben Monks - Anglia and South East England.

Margaret Phelan - Wales.

Barry Jones - London North.

Barry Johnson - Birmingham & Wales.

Jenny Golden - London South.