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National Pay Negotiations

At a meeting of the National Joint Forum on Wednesday 16 May the Association of Colleges offered 2% from 1 August 2007 plus 0.5% from 1 January 2008 on all scales and allowances.

This offer which is below the current rate of inflation of 4.5%, also falls short of the pay award to school teachers, who will receive 2.5% this year.

The offer has therefore been rejected by all FE trade unions who, wrote to the employers on Friday 18 May calling for a revised offer when they next meet on 26 June.

On London Weighting employers yet again said they were not in a position to make any offer on improving allowances this year due to continuing major funding issues. But for the first time they did offer to join the unions in joint lobbying for funds to deal with the increasing cost of living in the capital.

Some progress was made on some of the non-pay elements of our claim.

The employers' side offered to:

- enter negotiations on a national guideline agreement on workloads and work-life balance (although not including specified contractual hours).
- prioritise completing an agreement on training and development of all staff ready for the implementation of the new staff development arrangements which come into effect in September 2007 (which include the 30 hours compulsory continuous professional development requirements).
- conduct a survey on the use of the advanced teaching scale with a view to developing best practise guidance.
- develop further work with the unions to make more progress on implementing the modernised pay scales.

Adult Funding - the Cuts Continue

The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education has recently released the results of the annual Adult Learners' Week survey on adult participation in learning. 'The Road to Nowhere?' report states that half a million adults have been lost to learning in the last year' (ie 2005/6). NIAICE has also analysed this years LSC data on student numbers showing that a million students may have now have been lost.

Funding allocations for 2007/8 now being finalised locally continue to force through the reprioritisation from adult to youth funding and from planned to market driven provision ie "train to gain".

Reports from our regional offices so far indicate that around 1000 jobs have already been notified as a risk across the country as formal notifications of redundancies are issued by employers.

These include

- Liverpool Community College - 40 full time equivalent lecturer jobs have been notified at risk.
- Bradford College - 93 redundancies notified.
- East Devon – 40 jobs at risk.

Across the London area over 200 job loses have been threatened following a £25 million cut in funding. A ballot for industrial action is being held across 6 colleges - Westminster Kingsway College, CONEL (College of North East London), Lambeth College, Hackney College, Barnet College and Southgate College. Employers in nine London colleges were notified in a letter sent on 24 April

that there would be an official dispute if they could not provide guarantees that there would be no compulsory redundancies in connection with adult education cutbacks.

Three colleges (City and Islington; Ealing, Hammersmith and West London; and Tower Hamlets) indicated that there would not be any compulsory redundancies and these three have been withdrawn from the ballot.

The ballot closes on 31 May with strike action planned for the 13 June. A London wide demonstration is also being called for the 30 June.

UCU will be renewing our national campaigning on adult funding cuts in the next month. Meanwhile visit www.ucu.org.uk for latest news and developments.

UCU Congress 2007

The first UCU Congress is just around the corner and will take place from 30 May to 1 June at the Bournemouth International Centre.

Speakers include;

Sally Hunt and **Paul Mackney**,

UCU joint General Secretaries,

Bill Rammel, Minister of State

(Department of Education & Skills),

Frances O'Grady,

TUC Deputy General Secretary,

Eberto Diaz,

Colombian Trade Union Leader,

Mark Serwotka, General Secretary PCS

will address the event.

Meetings of the Higher Education and Further Education Sectors as well as official fringes will also take place.

Read more at:

<http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2392>

THE WORLD CAN'T WAIT



2 June 2007
pre-G8 mobilisation

Campaigners across the country are joining together again to urge the G8 to take urgent action to deliver on the pledges made two years ago as a result of the Make Poverty History (MPH) campaign (both AUT and NATFHE were signatories to MPH). Campaign groups, charities and trade unions in the UK will call on the Government to lead the G8 summit to deliver on: debt cancellation and more and better aid, trade justice, healthcare, education, water and sanitation for all and firm plans to prevent catastrophic climate change and address its impacts.

On June 2 thousands will attend a major event at Westminster to call on Tony Blair and German Chancellor Angela Merkel (the President of this year's summit), to make the G8 summit a good one for the world's poorest people. The event will centre around a mass moment, where campaigners will join up along the Thames to call for justice for millions around the world living in poverty.

UCU members are encouraged to raise their voices against poverty via a new website and to attend the event on 2 June.

Further details of the campaign, can be found on the website at: www.theworldcantwait.org.uk/.



Fixed-term and Part-time Contract win at Cornwall College

Cornwall College is setting the standard for the way to treat fixed-term and part-time staff by agreeing to offer proper permanent contracts to lecturers with four years or more employment on fixed-term contracts. The majority of part-time staff are also employed on this type of fixed-term contract.

New legislation came into force on 10 July 2002 which is designed to stop employers keeping staff on a series of fixed-term contracts for more than four years. This means that from 10 July 2006 the first staff to have accrued four years continuous employment on fixed-term contracts became entitled to permanent contracts.

Staff in all colleges with more than four years employment on fixed-term contracts are entitled to have their contract made permanent. However for many this simply means their contract is turned into a second class permanent contract rather than a second class fixed-term contract. What UCU Cornwall College branch have achieved through negotiation with management is the transfer of fixed-term staff, with four years employment, to a collectively agreed permanent contract.

New education policy official at UCU

A new policy officer, John Offord has joined UCU as Cross-sector Policy Officer. John was previously FE Official with NUS. Among his policy responsibilities will be HE in FE and Foundation Degrees.

John is anxious to set up an electronic network. If you are working on HE programmes in FE and/or Foundation Degrees and want to join this network, contact John on jofford@ucu.org.uk

Commission for Disabled Staff

NIACE is launching a Commission for Disabled Staff in Lifelong Learning, to identify the issues and experiences of disabled staff working in lifelong learning.

The Commission wants to hear from;

- disabled staff working at all levels and in all roles in lifelong learning
- disabled people who have left their job for reasons relating to their learning difference/impairment/health condition
- disabled people who have been unable to gain employment
- disabled people's advocacy organisations and other professional bodies

It is keen to gather different perspectives and welcomes multiple responses from within the same organisation. A broad definition of disability is being used which includes physical, sensory and cognitive impairments, mental health difficulties, long-term health conditions, learning disabilities and neurodiversity, learning differences or difficulties such as dyslexia or dyspraxia.

To find out more about the commission and to take part in the research, visit www.niace.org.uk/commissionfordisabledstaff.

In order to influence the interim report, it wants to hear from respondents by Friday 27 July 2007. Questionnaires will continue to be available until the end of September 2007.

Harlow College Lecturers Strike to Defend Jobs and Contracts

Teaching staff at Harlow College will be taking strike action starting with two days on 24 & 25 May as part of a campaign to defend their contracts and jobs.

The strike vote follows management attempts to impose contractual changes with huge salary cuts for many staff.

The proposals would:

- cut wages by up to £13,000
- make many staff redundant
- cut leave entitlement by over three weeks
- force staff to work up to 56 hours a week including Saturdays
- remove health and safety protection such as a maximum number of weekly teaching hours

Despite supposedly being in a consultation period with the UCU on proposed new staffing arrangements, the college management has already begun internal advertising of newly defined posts on revised contracts.

It is important for all teaching staff in FE that no college be allowed to get away with such draconian and swingeing cuts to terms and conditions as management at Harlow are attempting, your support for colleagues at Harlow College is vital.

Ways to Support UCU Harlow College Branch

All UCU branches are urged to send messages of support to UCU Harlow College Branch at: luddite8@hotmail.com; adamamor@ntlworld.com

A petition calling on Harlow College Governors to intervene can be found at: http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/docs/r/r/harlowcollege_petition.doc

Further information about the dispute can be found at: <http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2546>

ITT and CPD Changes

There are big changes to FE initial teacher training programmes in September 2007 together with the requirement that all lecturers will have to undertake 30 hours continuous professional development (CPD).

Draft Regulations implementing this new requirement have just been published. The UCU response to this is available on the UCU web site or from Dan Taubman dtaubman@ucu.org.uk

The Regulations giving details of the new initial teacher training changes have not yet been published but a "road map" of the changes plus frequently asked questions and answers is on the Lifelong Learning UK web site at : www.lifelonglearninguk.org/roadmap/

The UCU web site has guidance and information on all the changes which will be updated with the new information when it is all available. The FE Department will be issuing a toolkit on all of the changes to help branches negotiate the changes with college managements.

New Diplomas

The first 5 lines of the new diploma will start to be delivered in September 2008. It will be delivered by partnerships of schools and colleges. There was a lengthy process through which these partnerships came together, sought and gained approval to deliver the first set of diploma programmes. The results of this are now known and available from the DfES web site <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19/index.cfm?sid=36>

UCU is very concerned that the workforce development to support to the delivery of the diplomas is so slow in arriving in colleges. The union has written to Alan Johnson about this. If your college has been successful in the Diploma Gateway and you want support and advice from UCU, contact Dan Taubman at: dtaubman@ucu.org.uk



From the over-subscribed launch event, to the 1000 strong parliamentary lobby in February 2007 activity develops apace and continues to grow. Local community campaigns involving UCU members and branches have sprung up and on the 24 May, during Adult Learning Week a twelve thousand strong petition is being delivered to number 10 Downing Street.

To see what we have achieved so far, including a number of concessions from government, and £15m new money provision in London go to www.ucu.org.uk

ESOL conference

A conference has now been organised the 29 June 2007 at Britannia Street.

- To galvanise further support for the campaign
- To develop an ongoing campaign strategy and plan for future action
- Explore the impact on tutors and potential students following funding changes and possible ways to tackle problems at the grass roots
- Explore some the professional issues around changing face of ESOL provision.

If you would like to register for the conference or find out more details please go to:

www.ucu.org.uk/esolsignup