

In this issue

Campaigning on Pay!
Building the Campaign
Timetable for Ballot
Unity with Teachers
14 – 19 Diplomas
FE Workforce Development Strategy
New Initial Teacher Training and CPD requirements
ELQ Funding cut
FE Funding
Commission for Disabled Staff in Lifelong Learning
ESOL – Look again say UCU
Staff Governors Conference

Campaigning on pay!

The Further Education Committee (FEC) has confirmed at a special meeting held on Friday 16 November, that UCU will continue to reject the 2007/8 pay offer from the employers and to organise a ballot in January for strike action. The special meeting was held to consider proposals from other FE trade unions to accept the offer, organise joint action on its implementation and to embark on a joint campaign for next year pay round. The FEC decided however that it was important to continue to support the policy recommended by our special pay conference in October.

UCU leafleted the annual conference of the AoC in Birmingham last Tuesday confirming that we continue to reject the pay offer for 2007/8

We made the following points:

- Quite simply as the largest teaching union in FE we cannot accept a pay award that means an effective pay cut for thousands of lecturers in England.
- With inflation currently running at 4.2%, the two stage award 2007/8 means a shortfall over the year of 1.7%.
- Most recent figures show annual average pay levels for FE teachers still fall some £1750 behind schoolteachers.
- With 47 percent of colleges still not implementing new pay scales due over 3 years ago, thousands of lecturers fall even further behind
- At the same time there is mounting evidence that FE staffs are suffering ever increasing workloads and stressful working conditions.
- Unless urgent action is taken to address the situation UCU will be balloting members in January for industrial action.
- We call on the AoC to convene urgent talks.

**FAIR PAY for
College Staff**



Building the campaign

UCU intends to send a Christmas message to the AoC and government. Look out for an electronic card to sign that will be with you shortly.

A Poster – **'It's Time for Fair Pay in FE'** is available to download at:
<http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=1935>

More publicity including leaflets and stickers will arrive in branches shortly. Other planned activities include a national recruitment day and co-coordinated lobbying of MPS.

This campaign is about securing decent pay for all UCU members and the future of the Further and Adult Education sector.

Timetable for ballot

FEC will be meeting again on the 14 December to review the situation but the intention at this stage is to look to ballot members in January to reject the pay offer and take industrial action in the following month. It is hoped that this will coincide with a NUT ballot. To do this we still need to get all the branches to send in their membership checks before the end of December.

Unity with teachers

We are not alone in facing wage cuts. The government has declared a 3 year pay cap on the whole of the public sector. The National Union of Teachers' (NUT) are likely to ballot its members if the government offer them a below inflation rise, which they are expected to do. Our special pay conference agreed to, where possible, ballot UCU members alongside the NUT. The FEC agreed that this would be the best strategy to pursue on the basis that any strike action that is necessary to take, will be far more effective if it is coordinated with teachers.

14-19 Diplomas

In mid October Ed Balls, Secretary of State, announced the introduction of 3 new diplomas and the postponement of the 2008 A level review.

The new diplomas will be in sciences, modern languages and humanities. They will be developed with HE and have probably been introduced to try to garner HE support for diplomas. Like the rest of the educational world, UCU is trying to discern what all this means. We are inclined at this stage to view the latest developments as inching back to something like the Tomlinson recommendations.

The first tranche of 5 diplomas are to be delivered in September 2008 and the second set of 3 in September 2009. All the diplomas can only be delivered by consortia of schools colleges and other providers. UCU is particularly concerned about professional development to support diploma delivery. With only 6 months to go of real lecturer time before actual delivery, UCU is concerned that adequate development is provided for staff in time.

We are asking branches to ask their management if their college is involved in any current or future diploma consortia, and to inform the FE department. We hope to set up an electronic network to push out advice and information as well as gratefully receiving any news you have. Contact dtaubman@ucu.org.uk

FE Workforce Development Strategy

Lifelong Learning UK has just completed a consultation on a new FE workforce development plan. This covers workforce data, recruitment and retention of staff, training and development and workforce equality and diversity (but not a lot on pay and conditions.) To see the strategy consultation document visit the LLUK website at www.lluk.org

The UCU submission can be found on:
<http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2098>

New Initial Teacher Training and CPD Requirements

UCU members should be well aware that new requirements were introduced in Sept 2007 around FE teacher training qualifications for newly appointed full and part time lecturers and for registration with the Institute for Learning (IfL) for all FE lecturers. A FE teaching qualification and IfL registration will amount to a license to practice - QTLS.

These changes aren't optional. For FE they have been introduced by government regulation. For those wanting more information on all the changes, look at the UCU web site at:

<http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2578>

The FE Dept has also produced a very comprehensive branch tool kit to help local negotiations around local implementation of the changes. It is available on the UCU website (click on "Branch And Reps Resources" button and go to FE Toolkits.)

IfL are currently consulting on a draft code of professional practice. UCU is not necessarily opposed to such developments but we have serious concerns about both the content and implementation of any such code. We are in active discussions with IfL on all of this. IfL is a member led organisation and members should look at the code on www.ifl.ac.uk before the consultation closes in December and comment accordingly. Those UCU members involved in ITT may want to join the UCU electronic ITT network. Contact Dan Taubman at dtaubman@ucu.org.uk

ELQ funding cut

Help UCU campaign

In a letter to the Guardian newspaper, UCU, NUS and 26 heads of HE institutions protested against the cuts in funding for HE students studying for qualifications equivalent to, or lower than, qualifications

for which they have previously received an award. Go to for details:

<http://politics.guardian.co.uk/publicservices/story/0,,2214382,00.html>

Working with NUS and institutions, UCU is taking up with government and other decision-makers this threat to lifelong learning opportunities. We urgently need your help to get across the impact of this plan.

We need:

- Human interest stories – case studies of people who wouldn't be funded or would lose access to a course supported by presence of ELQ students
- Local letters sent to MPs and any responses
- Branch motions
- Institution statements
- Details of any other local activity

Please send to Rob Copeland
rcopeland@ucu.org.uk

For more details click on the box on the home page of UCU's web site at:
www.ucu.org.uk

FE Funding

A number of important documents providing details of future FE funding have just been published. These give details of government spending plans for FE in the next 3 years including priorities for various categories of work in the coming financial year.

The documents are:

- LSC remit letter
- LSC annual statement of priorities:
- Adult learning and Skills: *Investing in the First Steps*

These are all available on the UCU website in the FE professional section. The UCU FE Dept is analysing the documents and further information should be available in the New Year.

Commission for Disabled Staff in Lifelong Learning

The Commission for Disabled Staff in Lifelong Learning aims to identify the experiences of and issues relating to the employment of disabled staff working in lifelong learning. Gathering evidence since May 2007 of both positive and negative practice, the Commission - led by NIACE - will be making recommendations for positive change in its final report due in March 2008.

The Commission wants to hear from staff working at all levels in the lifelong learning sector (further and higher education, adult and community learning and work based learning) and has recently launched an interim report which is out for consultation until 7 December 2007. Those with an interest in disability issues in the lifelong learning sector are urged to respond to the consultation to advise whether the Commission has identified the key issues affecting disabled staff and what other issues should be explored and highlighted.

To find out more and to respond to the interim report consultation, visit www.niace.org.uk/commissionfordisabledstaff

AQA

The exam and awarding body is seeking UCU nominees for some of its national and subject committees. If you are interested (you need some familiarity with AQA qualifications) please contact dtaubman@ucu.org.uk

Does it work for you?

The new UCU web site has been up and running for six months. Does it work for you? Comments and ideas welcomed. Please send to:
***webteam@ucu.org.uk**



Look again at ESOL says

UCU - New campaign briefing sent to Minister

UCU asked minister for further and higher education and lifelong learning Bill Rammell to look again at the impact of changes in ESOL funding as the union published new evidence that the current regime is hurting the poorest and neediest in our society.

This document is based on the voices of the members and the students affected. It's your work, so a big thanks to everyone who contributed. UCU general secretary Sally Hunt has now sent a copy of the report to the minister. Let's all hope the government is listening.

Copies of report can be downloaded at <http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2255>

Staff Governors Conference

The annual conference for FE college staff governors

10 December 2007
at UCU Head Office
27 Britannia Street, London

Workshops 14-19, HE in FE, FE workforce development, governance self assessment, employer engagement

The cost is £30 including VAT.

PLACES STILL AVAILABLE

Contact Rana Brentjes at rbrentjes@ucu.org.uk