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No Teaching on the Cheap National Pay Rates for All

Our renewed campaign to ensure that colleges pay nationally agreed salary scales in England has got off to a good start.

Out of a number of colleges recently targeted for failing to implement the national pay scales agreed in 2004, over a quarter (5), have now entered negotiations or reached a settlement with UCU.

There have been breakthroughs in Aylesbury, Warwickshire, Tamworth and Lichfield, and Bolton colleges. This followed the national union writing to tell principals that UCU would declare a dispute unless we received confirmation that the colleges would implement the national agreement. Meanwhile a positive vote for industrial action in Hugh Baird College has also produced negotiations.

Eleven colleges however refused to provide this confirmation to the union and a ballot for industrial action therefore opens across these branches on 11 December 2008. If members vote yes, a one day strike will be held before the end of January in all these colleges.

This is a vital campaign. The national pay scales significantly narrow the gap between FE lecturers and schoolteachers pay by providing higher salaries for new lecturers and faster progression to the top points.

56% of colleges in England have now reached agreement with UCU on these scales, with another 11% in negotiations or reached interim arrangements. It is totally unacceptable that a minority of colleges have failed to introduce these scales leaving staff providing first class teaching but getting second class salaries compared to colleagues elsewhere.

Colleges have now had some 4 years to honour the agreement and the union has consistently made it clear that we are willing to be flexible in agreeing the details of implementation and to take into account any local circumstances. Agreements have been made on the pay scales at other colleges with serious financial difficulties. It is a matter of priorities and UCU members have simply waited long enough.

Further colleges will be identified for action in the next couple of months and colleagues in colleges who have agreement on the new scales will be asked to support colleagues in action by contributing to hardship funds and supporting lunchtime protests.

The following colleges are being balloted:

Nelson and Colne, Croydon, Greenwich, North West London, Dearne Valley, Doncaster, Rotherham, Evesham, Sandwell, Sussex Downs, Askham Bryan.

UCU Chair Suspended at Epping Forest College

UCU members at Epping Forest College have vowed to defend suspended branch chair Hugh Hobson in what it sees as an explicit attack on the union.

New principal Peter Sadler was appointed in August 2008. Over the past couple of months UCU members at the college have begun reporting concerns about the use of college disciplinary procedures.

This has culminated in the suspension of UCU branch chair Hugh Hobson for alleged gross misconduct. UCU has questioned both the evidence central to the charge, and the college's breach of procedure by circumventing its own policy on suspensions. The decision on whether to dismiss the charge or to dismiss Hugh Hobson now rests with the principal.

During Peter Sadler's previous appointment as principal of Bicton College, the former UCU branch chair was also dismissed.

The branch resolved to take industrial action should Hugh Hobson not be reinstated to his position immediately:

The branch resolves to organise a campaign in defence of Hugh Hobson to ensure that he is reinstated to his position without detriment and that the college ceases to misuse the college's disciplinary procedure in an arbitrary and unjustified way.

PLEASE OFFER YOUR SUPPORT

Please support Hugh and sign the petition at:

<https://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=3638>

Send messages of support to the branch:

Hugh Hobson, branch Chair:
hobson355@btinternet.com

Di Hayter, branch secretary:
mistril@ntlworld.com

Send messages protesting the unjustified suspension of Hugh Hobson to:

Peter Sadler - principal, Epping Forest College:
psadler@efc.ac.uk

Rising charges and course cut backs have seen two million learners' places lost from further and adult education in England since 2005. Now groups representing students, staff and local communities have come together to campaign for the right of everyone to access to learning irrespective of class, gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, asylum status or employment.

Campaign Alliance for Lifelong Learning



After the successful launch of CALL by UCU and other organisations at the end of September, the campaign, to raise the profile of all adult learning, continues to grow in size and influence. Over 100 organisations including unions, adult learning centres, community groups and charities have now joined CALL. The Secretary of State John Denham, publicly acknowledged. CALL in his speech to the AoC Annual Conference last month and has asked the CALL founding organisations to meet with him. UCU's meeting is set for 11 December.

The next stages of the campaign will focus on generating local activity leading up to a national lobby on 25 February and support for an Early Day Motion to be launched in the New Year.

The 2-6 February has been designated a CALL week of activities. UCU branch materials are being prepared and will be sent to branches in January 2009. These will include suggested local activities, model letters for MPs, leaflets, posters and speaker notes. Branches will be urged to join together with the NUS, other college unions and college managements, to organise lobbies of MPs and other local events. A recent meeting organised by local colleges in North East London attracted over 100 people, most of them students. For more information on the CALL campaign go to:

www.callcampaign.org.uk

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