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Colleges to strike on pay scales

We are confident that eleven colleges across the country will be brought to a standstill on Thursday 5 February if local managements still fail to agree to implement the modernised national pay scales. In a recent industrial action ballot, members in these colleges voted 70% in favour of strike action.

The colleges concerned are Nelson and Colne, Croydon, Greenwich, North West London, Dearne Valley, Doncaster, Rotherham, Evesham, Sandwell, Sussex Downs, and Askham Bryan. In many of these UCU has been engaged in talks, but, at present all 11 have yet to reach agreement on honouring the national pay settlement agreed in 2004.

This is a vital campaign. Our members in these colleges have waited four years for the deal agreed with the national employers to be implemented. This will be followed by further waves of targeted colleges until the union is satisfied that members are benefiting from the agreement we negotiated some four years ago.

What you can do to help your colleagues

- **Email messages of support**
 - **Where possible visit local picket lines**
 - **Donate to the support fund**
- For further details and updates on the campaign; Visit www.ucu.org.uk/iou. Your local branch reps will be coming round collecting for donations.

Success at Sheffield

Through our member's vigorous campaigning, hard negotiating and industrial action, 56% of colleges in England have now reached agreement on the national rates. The latest success has been at Sheffield College where members have voted unanimously to accept a pay deal which closed the gap between their pay scales and the nationally agreed scales. The new deal was achieved after the branch took strike action in September 2008 alongside UNISON colleagues.

Joint Union Initiative

All of the recognised trade unions for FE have now come together to launch a new campaign for the implementation of all national pay settlements. Under the banner "Time to Pay Up", branches are urged to work together locally to put pressure on employers to ensure that all FE staff get the full 3.2% pay rise that has been negotiated for this year as well as the modernised pay scales. Support materials including a dedicated website are to be launched in the very near future. Information is also being collated on which colleges have awarded the full pay deal.

We will be updating the site with details of what will be happening on the day and where and when you can head along to the picket lines to show your support on the day.

Pay News from Northern Ireland

Lecturers in FE in Northern Ireland have been in dispute over pay since May 2006. 7 days strike action has been taken and ongoing action short of strike to try to remove lecturers from government pay restraint. In July 2007 the new Northern Ireland government placed lecturers pay under even tighter control and confined pay awards to a limit of 2%.

Attempts to find a way round the pay restraint using an independent facilitator resulted in proposals from the employers which, while providing a 6% pay increase followed by 2% in the two subsequent years, was rejected by members as it involved changes to conditions of service.

In June 2008 the employers wrote to members calling each one to individual meetings and requiring them to hand over statistical information with-held as part of the industrial action indicating that failure to do so would result in indefinite suspension without pay. A compromise was reached with the employers whereby lecturers suspended the industrial action and the issue was referred to the Labour Relations Agency (The Northern Ireland equivalent to ACAS).

However since then little progress has been made. The Northern Ireland government has maintained the cap on lecturers pay and insists that any deal which takes pay beyond 2% must be financed out of efficiency savings. Those savings government insists must come out of changes to lecturers conditions of service.

Talks continue at the Labour Relations Agency focussing upon trying to establish a link between lecturers pay in Northern Ireland and other groups of education workers. However the government so far have not agreed to such a link.

Meanwhile in Wales...

However it unanimously agreed to carry on the fight for an All-Wales agreement on terms and conditions and plans are currently being drawn up to launch such a campaign.

Campaign Alliance for Lifelong Learning



Lobby and Early Day Motion

On **Wednesday 25 February 2009** the CALL Campaign is holding a mass lobby of Parliament to take our message to MPs across all parties.

We are urging as many UCU members from branches as possible to attend this lobby. More details will be available from your branch reps very shortly.

The lobby will start at **10.30am** with briefings and registration for participants at a venue close to Westminster (to be confirmed soon). The rally in the House of Commons will start at **12.30pm** in Committee Room 14 and the lobby will finish at **4pm**.

An early day motion (EDM) supporting the CALL campaign has now been tabled by leading educational MPs from all three major parties. The motion (**EDM 533: ALLIANCE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING**) says:

"This House welcomes the launch of the Campaigning Alliance for Lifelong Learning (CALL) in September 2008; shares its concern that over 1.4 million places have been lost in the last two years in English adult education due to cuts and fee rises; notes that over 150 organisations are CALL supporters; believes that particularly at this time of recession, affordable access to the life-changing opportunities provided by education is the hallmark of a civilised society; considers that adult learning needs to be simultaneously expanded, resourced and promoted alongside work-based skills training in the Children, Skills and Learning Bill; and calls for immediate action to ensure a full range of learning opportunities for adults to adjust the Personal and Community Development Learning budget to increase with inflation, and redirect any underspend on the Train to Gain programme to meet individual learner demand."

We aim to use this motion to build awareness and support for the campaign amongst MPs. Members are asked to write to their MP asking them to support the motion. A model letter is downloadable at:

<http://www.callcampaign.org.uk>

Your MP's contact details are available on:

www.theyworkforyou.com

For a list of the MPs who have already signed:

<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=37560&SESSION=899>

FE Funding

The Government published their annual grant letter to the LSC in early December. For details of this and the LSC Annual Statement of Priorities go to:

<http://www.dius.gov.uk/policy/furthereducation.html>

For an analysis on the Grant letter and a comparison with what the Government stated about FE funding and student numbers in the summer's Comprehensive Spending Review contact Dan Taubman at Head Office.

Machinery of Government Changes

FE is being split down the middle. Following the split of the old DfES into the Children School and Families Department and the Department of Innovation Universities and Skills, the LSC is being abolished and local authorities are being given strategic leadership of 14-19 education and training and a new body the Skills Funding Agency is being created. FE will be stretched between the 2. Formally it will come under DIUS but its funding and curriculum will be in two different systems.

For more details of the changes to come visit the DIUS website:

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/furthereducation>

and follow the links to the Impact of the Machinery of Government changes.

Staff Governors Conference

Was organised by UCU and took place on the 2 December 2008. The presentations delivered at the Conference on adult learning, 14-19, machinery of government changes, new models of FE governance and the new FE improvement agency LSIS are all on the UCU web site under FE professional pages- Governance.

Diploma Network

More and more colleges will be delivering the new Diploma from September 2009 when the next 5 Diploma lines will go live. UCU has an electronic Diploma Network for those UCU members working and going to be working on the Diploma. Information coming into UCU is sent out to members, and information often asked for so that it can feed into UCU discussions with Government and other bodies. If you are interested in joining contact Dan Taubman at:

dtaubman@ucu.org.uk