

In this issue of HE News

- **National Claim 2012-13**
- **Workload Campaign**
- **Performance Management**
- **Equality**

National claim 2012-13

The results of the ballot announced yesterday indicated that although UCU members are clearly frustrated at another pay cut on offer by the employers, on this occasion they were not prepared to take strike action. They did, however, vote for action short of a strike (ASOS).

Today, the national negotiators and union's officers met and gave careful consideration to the results and have decided not to call action on this occasion.

The national negotiators and officers considered the fact that some employers may respond very strongly to ASOS in the form of threatening punitive deductions from members' pay. They could threaten up to 100% deductions.

The recent ASOS over USS was possible as it included plans for an escalation route to strike action to counter any aggressive move by an employer. Members have at this time voted not to take strike action. The risk associated

with standalone ASOS is considered too high on this occasion.

Branches will be updated next week about the decisions taken by the other HE unions with regards to their ballots, including advice on how branches can take appropriate demonstrative action in support of our colleagues in the other unions.

The national negotiators reflected on recent reports to the Higher Education Committee (HEC) which highlighted the pressing issues members have been raising with their union.

Workload

HEC noted that this year there were more motions to Congress and the Sector Conferences on workload and related matters than on any other subject and that there would be a cross-union campaign on workload. Each region/nation is identifying target branches to provide focussed input to a campaign leading to negotiated improvements to the management of our members' workload.

Already our preparatory work is paying dividends - last week a Times Higher article published the results of a survey of results by HE institution relating to workload demands and hours of work. Follow this link to read more:

<http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=421388&c=1>

Further information about the campaign will be circulated to your branch very soon.

Performance management

The union will be developing updated advice for members to counter the increasing trend among HEIs to introduce aggressive performance management systems.

Equality

Recent UCU research has exposed the inequalities inherent in the current professorial system, both in terms of under-representation of women and BME staff in the professoriate but also the pay gaps that continue to exist. The union will shortly be issuing guidance to branches on tackling the issues raised by our research.

We will be reissuing advice for your branches on pursuing the other equality elements of the national claim such as: ensuring fair treatment for hourly-paid lecturers; tackling the gender pay gap;

and an obtaining disability leave agreements.

In summary, while members have indicated that they are not prepared to strike on this occasion, from experience we know that our members are willing to act on key issues of concern. We will continue to press the employers at all levels that they need to start tackling increasing workloads, poor management practice, and structural inequality. Continuing to ignore our members' concerns on workload and related matters at the same time as cutting real pay is simply storing up trouble for the future.

Michael MacNeil
National Head of Higher Education