

...and related

THE NEWSLETTER FOR **ACADEMIC-RELATED STAFF** IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Representing administrators, librarians, computing and other professional staff in HE

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Are you an academic-related member of staff? If you aren't already a UCU member join us today at www.ucu.org.uk/join Encourage your academic-related colleagues to join us too!

to take on the role. Academic-related staff must remain high profile within UCU to make sure our issues remain on the national agenda in times of increasingly difficult industrial relations.

In the last year my own branch (LSHTM UCU) saw the largest and angriest branch meetings in living memory, including the first ever resolution empowering the local negotiators to call for a ballot for industrial action. A restructuring of numerous central services meant over 80 staff, almost all academic related, were put at risk of redundancy by an unjustified and badly handled restructuring process. The fall-out saw many dedicated colleagues leave the institution as they no longer trusted senior management and could no longer face coming to work. With tremendous support from our regional officer we were able to secure agreement from management for no compulsory redundancies, agree considerably better pay protection, and support numerous colleagues through an unnecessarily drawn out process to redeploy them to roles in the new structure. Many colleagues' relationship with LSHTM has been irreparably damaged, and I hope no-one reading this ever has to go through what our branch has been through in the last year.



FROM THE CHAIR

In a year when we are likely to see more and more attacks on the jobs and terms and conditions of academic-related (AR) staff it is more important than ever that we support UCU's current campaign

to recruit as many of our colleagues as we possibly can. On the back page of this newsletter is a summary of the Academic Related Manifesto and I would encourage you to use this and encourage your AR colleagues to join UCU.

The major objective of the Academic-related Committee for this year is to build a network of academic-related reps. This will allow us to establish the issues facing AR staff and to more effectively campaign to retain and improve their terms and conditions. If your branch doesn't already have an AR rep, please either volunteer or encourage a colleague

I would also remind everyone reading this that the next academic-related annual meeting will take place on 6 March 2013 and I would strongly encourage you to make sure your branch sends at least one rep to the meeting. It is important that the Academic-related Committee has a clear mandate for its work in the coming year and we can effectively put the case for academic related staff within UCU.

Dan Arthur,
Chair, Academic-related Committee

Annual meeting for academic-related staff – 6 March 2013

The annual UCU members' meeting for AR staff will take place on Wednesday 6 March 2013 at UCU headquarters in London.

The meeting will provide an opportunity to debate the challenges facing the union in general and academic-related members in particular, such as strategies to defend jobs, improve pay and conditions, and build the union; and outsourcing and the wider marketisation of the sector.

Each HE branch/local association (LA) may send two voting representative to the annual meeting.

Branch/LA representatives must have been approved either by a quorate branch meeting, quorate branch committee meeting or by a properly constituted meeting of members that work in an AR role.

Branches/LAs are encouraged to use our on-line service to register each representative. Please go to: <https://ucu.wufoo.com/forms/the-academic-related-annual-meeting/>

The deadline for registration is 20 February.

Elections...

Elections will be held at the annual meeting for five two-year terms on the Academic-related Committee, and two one-year 'casual' terms. We would encourage nominations from all academic-related categories: library, computing, administrative and other professional staff. For further information on Committee membership and all that it entails, feel free to contact any of the members of the Committee (details on page 7).

Each HE branch/local association can nominate up to three members to the committee, one for each of three categories identified above.

The deadline for nominations to the Academic-related Committee is also 20 February.

HE branches/local associations can also submit up to three motions for consideration to the annual meeting, limited to matters of direct concern to staff in academic-related roles.

The deadline for submission of motions is Wednesday 13 February.

For further details on registration, the process for nominating to the Academic-related Committee and sending motions, and further details on the meeting see the calling notice here:

www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2729

Academic Related Committee at UCU Congress and HE Sector Conference, Manchester, June 2012

Motions adopted at the academic-related staff annual meeting in 2012 were subsequently re-tabled in modified form as AR Committee motions to Congress and HE Sector Conference. The motions, all of which were adopted, were as follows:

i) Congress

- **Motion 15.** Attacks on professional staff (calls on NEC to build links with sister unions to defend academic-related staff in the face of attacks on jobs, outsourcing, shared services, deprofessionalisation and career path destruction)
- **Motion 87.** Opposition & strategy against outsourcing, shared services and restructuring (calls on NEC to collect data on outsourcing and shared services, and develop branch resources and strategies for opposing these developments)

Committee amendments were also tabled and adopted in relation to motions 95 (Managing Sickness and Leave) and 32 (Sustainable Working Lives)

ii) HE Sector Conference

- **HE33.** Academic-related terms and conditions (calls on HEC to defend parity between AR and academic staff, seek to ensure that the employers keep to framework agreement commitments on progression for academic-related staff, and survey the status of academic-related staff in HEIs).
- **HE34.** Academic-related representation (calls on HEC to gather data to fight attacks on academic-related staff and develop a network of academic-

related reps in the branches to improve communication with academic-related members).

Committee amendments were also tabled and adopted in relation to motions HE11 (Grade Drift) and HE19 (Gendered impact on the HE workforce of cuts). For the full texts of these motions see: www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=5860

Academic-related reps network



Could you be an academic-related rep?

The Academic-related Committee is seeking to establish a network of AR reps or branch contacts for AR members in order to exchange campaign ideas and gather and disseminate information about issues affecting AR staff. All pre-92 branches are asked to identify an officer with responsibility for AR issues or someone who can act as a point of contact between the Committee and their local branch members. If you are an AR rep or are willing to act as a contact for AR matters for your branch/HEI please contact **Dan Arthur: Dan.Arthur@lshtm.ac.uk**, or **Stefano Fella: sfella@ucu.org.uk**

Academic-related members who do not currently hold positions in their branch are also encouraged to get active, and become our local contact for AR matters (if you are interested, please contact your branch officers or contact us and we'll put you in touch).

Survey for branches on the status of academic-related staff

The Academic-related Committee is seeking to gather information on the status of AR staff in HE institutions, their level of engagement with the union, and the key issues affecting them. HE branches/local associations at HEIs where we have academic-related members are asked to read the questions

below, and send responses, comments and any additional information to the Committee.

To download a Word copy of this survey go to: www.ucu.org.uk/media/docs/c/n/acrelbranchsurvey_jan13.doc

Responses should be sent to: sfella@ucu.org.uk

1 ACADEMIC-RELATED STATUS

Does your institution recognise academic-related status? If yes, is this in your Statutes?

If this has changed, was there consultation with the unions?

Have meetings taken place at your institution about the future of academic-related status?

Are academic-related staff now known by another term such as Support, Professional, Managerial, Professional Services, or Non-academic?

2 PARITY WITH ACADEMICS

Do your academic-related staff have different terms and conditions from academics? If yes, please give details.

Do academic policies at your institution apply to academic related staff? If no, which ones do not?

Are academic-related staff represented on your university governing bodies? If so, which ones, and how are they selected?

3 ATTITUDES OF STAFF/ENGAGEMENT

Do staff at your institution see themselves as academic-related?

Are academic-related staff more or less active in UCU than academic staff?

Are academic-related staff represented on your branch committee?

How does your committee engage with academic-related members? Are there specific meetings, leaflets, campaigns, or newsletters?

Do your academic-related members engage with UCU nationally, for example attending the academic-related committee or annual meeting?

4 UCU ACADEMIC-RELATED CAMPAIGNS

What campaigns has your branch run regarding academic-related members?

What national campaigns or support for local campaigns would be useful to your academic-related members?

5 SPECIFIC ISSUES AFFECTING AR MEMBERS

What particular issues do your members have, and in what areas? Please give details.

Examples could be: regrading vs promotion; downgrading/red-circling; lack of defined career progression; trouble getting time off for union activities? – more so than academics?; outsourcing; falling numbers of staff; replacement of AR staff with lower grades (and deprofessionalisation of the role).

Shared services do not make savings ...

...and the reason to implement this method of delivery must be to improve services and not try to cut cost.

This was the consensus from a conference I attended in December 2012 entitled "Shared Services in Higher Education". The speakers were from the purchasing consortiums, large HE institutions and national bodies such as HEFCE and UUK. The speakers from institutions had tried and commonly failed to use shared services as a cost saving exercise. To be fair, there were some examples of success but these were to enhance or add new services at cost and were not cost-cutting projects. The audience was largely made up of members of senior HE leadership looking to find out if there were ways of making savings following the government removal of VAT for shared service providers in July 2012 (where outsourced services remain subject to VAT).

The speakers spoke of why attempts to share services have failed. Some spoke of services they currently run or are developing that could potentially be shared but the examples given that did work had huge resources of local government backing them, had taken several years to develop and were yet to show a saving. The major points of the meeting were:

- Those who have explored shared services could not see a saving.
- Set-up costs were huge.
- Initiatives failed because institutions want to maintain their individuality and control.
- Building trust relationships between institutions that are currently competitors was difficult.
- Saving money could not be the driver as this would lead to failure.
- Initiatives should start small with non-essential services to build a workable framework and trust between partners.
- Shared services could be used to share expertise and build services in a collegiate way by better using the experience of staff but this would not save money.

- Continuous changing of service providers is damaging to morale.
- Continuous changing of service providers destroys the dedication of academic-related staff which institutions require to succeed.

A common misconception among senior managers is that shared service providers are the same as outsourcing providers. Shared service providers are not-for-profit, tax entities that are formed by the institutions using the service. All institutions using the service must be members though not necessarily equal partners. The government believes that by setting these companies up HE can move closer to making the 30% cost reductions that have been set for the next three years. Outsourcing is now the old religion (and made less attractive by the VAT rules).

The services in the firing line are staffed by academic-related members and members of our sister unions. These involve traditional estates and building services (cleaning and maintenance were particularly mentioned), although libraries, IT, student services and payroll were all mentioned as being on the agenda. I have doubts that the lack of evidence that these services work will not deter some management from thinking that they can somehow make it work. The hidden costs of providing these services will be overlooked, as will the damage to morale, increased stress and workload and job security of AR members.

Dan Arthur, Chair, Academic Related Committee

We would welcome more examples and case studies from academic related members on how outsourcing or the shared services agenda has impacted on your institution, and local union campaigning strategies implemented in relation to these developments.

Please send any examples, cases studies and information to Stefano Fella: sfella@ucu.org.uk

Academic-related staff and facilities time... or lack of it

Many UCU academic-related (AR) members hold senior positions in their local branches as officers or reps. As a trade union officer/rep you are legally entitled to 'facility time' (reasonable paid time off work) to undertake union duties. The 'facility' may be a block of time which can be allocated to branch officers or it can be financial so that officers can pay hourly paid staff to cover their teaching commitments. Note I said 'teaching commitments' – not usually undertaken by AR staff. The commitments of

AR staff are not usually teaching but Administrative, Library and IT. Are then AR staff actually receiving facilities time or not?

My experience as an UCU officer and AR member of staff working in a busy university department was a good one. I had a supportive line manager. This is not the case for all AR members of staff. Some have negotiated time off but are expected to carry out a full time job in addition to their UCU commitments. Others have been denied the financial part of facilities time, ie the department will get the money but the UCU officer/rep will not be able to use it in a way that would seem most helpful. Academic-related staff find that all kinds of obstacles can be put in their way to prevent them getting the 'facilities time' remuneration.

Another arm of the facilities time payments is reasonable time off to undertake not only trade union duties but training. In some cases line managers will not give permission for AR staff to undertake union duties or training that will take them away from their workplace.

Facilities time – in all its forms is an amazing right but the actuality of AR staff receiving all or part of their facilities time payments is still to be realised.

Patricia Hulme, Vice Chair,

Academic Related Staff Committee

Have you had difficulties as an academic-related member in receiving proper facilities time arrangements when acting as a UCU rep? Let us know your experiences. Send any information or comments to Stefano Fella: sfella@ucu.org.uk.

Towards a UCU policy on professionalism: how do academic-related members fit?

The UCU Policy Department recently produced a paper on professionalism, 'Towards a UCU policy on professionalism: a discussion paper for UCU members'. The intention is to use members' responses to the paper to inform a policy position on professionalism for submission to UCU Congress in June 2013.

We would be interested in hearing from academic-related members as to how such a policy can reflect their own professionalism. What does an academic-related concept of professionalism look like? And can it be linked into the development of a broader

UCU concept of professionalism applying to all members? Can we develop a unified concept of professionalism for all UCU members, reflecting the diverse roles performed by academic-related members as well as that performed by academic staff?

Key points and questions highlighted in this paper are summarised below. A fuller summary, and a longer version of this paper can be found on the UCU website here: www.ucu.org.uk/professionalism.

The main propositions underlying this discussion paper are:

- that professionalism in our education service is under serious attack from a culture of managerialism, a lack of respect for the expertise, views and commitment of professional staff and the imposition of ever-increasing workloads
- that we suffer from an absence of institutional arrangements that would support the development, defence and recognition of our members' professionalism
- that we need our own clearly-articulated, persuasive version of professionalism that we can deploy effectively to campaign for the effective provision of those means of support, defence and recognition
- that we should be pro-active in promoting the contribution that our members make to delivering and supporting high quality teaching and research – their professionalism is the foundation of that contribution.

The UCU alternative

The sectors in which UCU members work are littered with the corpses of failed attempts at institutionalisation and regulation (or deregulation) of professional requirements and recognition. Too often the arrangements have been dominated by employers or government and have resulted in the imposition of demands on staff that merely add to their ever-increasing workloads with little or no regard to their actual professional needs. They have been about productivity rather than quality; prescription rather than autonomy; being called to account, rather than genuine accountability.

A concept of professionalism that UCU puts forward must be one that UCU members can own. It is one that will arise from their experiences and knowledge, but within the context of, and informed by, current social and political realities.

There are a number of characteristics that are normally taken to define a profession:

- The use of skills based on theoretical and applied knowledge in accordance with the professional values and ethics through which accountability is exercised.
- Through this accountability, the profession and the professionals are accorded trust and freedom from unnecessary employer or state micro-management and interference.
- This allows the professionals to have autonomy in their work and to safeguard their values and standards on behalf of the wider public good while resisting political interference.
- The updating and extension of the specialist knowledge and skills through properly supported and funded continuing professional development.
- A code of professional conduct and an expectation that the members of the profession will observe the code.
- At times some professions have also controlled entry into their ranks and the arrangements for the award of recognised qualifications and professional accreditation.

Members might find it useful to think about how these (and possibly other) characteristics might find relevant expression in their area of work.

Your views

We welcome all views on the issues raised in this paper. Some of the questions that members may want to address might include:

- What are the key elements in any alternative UCU definition of the professionalism of the members that we represent? How do we take account of the different professional needs and aspirations of our members?
- Is a single concept of professionalism, embracing all members, feasible?
- How do we balance professional autonomy and legitimate demands for accountability?
- What structures (professional bodies and regulatory regimes), if any, should we be advocating in order to ensure that we can defend and promote our professionalism effectively?
- Should we be considering mechanisms for controlling to some degree or other entrance to the profession and the award of qualifications and accreditation?

- Are there models and experiences from other professions on which we could usefully draw, particularly professional bodies with which UCU members are already involved (nursing, medicine, law, engineering etc)?
- What is the proper role of UCU in this project?

Please send your comments to: Dan Taubman, Senior National Education Official, dtaubman@ucu.org.uk

Profiling academic-related members

The academic-related category covers a swathe of professional staff operating in a myriad of roles in HE, many of which have become more prominent in recent years. Some of these staff may not initially realise that UCU is the union that represents them. It is important that we spread the message that they can join and also play an active part in the union. We want to profile members employed in different academic-related roles. In this issue we get a view from an active AR member employed as a marketing manager. If you have any ideas for other roles that should be profiled and can provide us with a profile, please contact **Stefano Fella, sfella@ucu.org.uk**.



Jeni Aldridge – Marketing Communications Manager, The Open University

Born in Northampton in 1976 with a brother a year older than me, my mother's a mortgage adviser and my father an engineer. I started work straight from school as I had older friends with jobs, cars and money and I wanted the same. It's such a shame that I didn't know about The Open University at the time!

Shortly after moving near Milton Keynes in 2000 I saw a role within the marketing department at the OU advertised in the local paper. At the time I was working for a very small company of just me and 5 men and I felt at bit lonely - so I applied and was successful.

Soon after joining the OU, my role progressed from PA to marketing assistant, then to publications manager, and finally to a campaign manager. I'm currently managing campaigns that focus on reaching under/unemployed adults with the message that the OU is a viable and affordable way to study and it boosts skills and employability. I also manage campaigns aimed at under 21s with the message that we're a flexible, credible and affordable alternative to attending full-time university.

Working in marketing, which is generally considered a non-traditional department within HE has its challenges and sadly, as in many cases, my union membership was as a result of turmoil in the workplace.

Without the support of my UCU rep at the time, I doubt whether I would still be working here – his intervention at the time was invaluable.

I've now been employed at the OU for 12 years and most of these I've been a member of UCU. Early this year I was invited to join our branch's Recruitment, Organisation & Campaigns Committee (ROCC) and shortly after that I joined the exec.

I truly believe that together we are stronger and think it's important that academic related staff are aware that UCU membership can provide invaluable support, not just in times of turmoil. As my team imminently faces yet another re-shuffle, I'm glad to have UCU on my side.

Academic-related Committee members 2012-13

Dan Arthur, Chair dan.arthur@lshtm.ac.uk	London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine	Computing category
Patricia Hulme, Vice chair patriciahulme@gmail.com	Nottingham University	Administrator category
Jo Taplin-Green, Vice Chair J.Taplin-Green@lse.ac.uk	London School of Economics	Library Category
Terry Duffy terenceduffy@hotmail.com	Glyndwr University	Administrator Category
Greg Howard g.howard@bham.ac.uk	Birmingham University	Administrator Category
Dom Kingsmill-Stocker d.p.j.kingsmill-stocker@lboro.ac.uk	Loughborough University	Computing Category
Lesley McGorrigan l.mcgorrigan@leeds.ac.uk	Leeds University	Administrator Category
Helen MacCarthy h.maccarthy@hull.ac.uk	Hull University	Computing Category
Jesse Oldershaw ucbtess@ucl.ac.uk	University College London	Computing Category
Bethan Norfor b.norfor@open.ac.uk	Open University	Administrator Category

NEC representatives (two committee members are elected annually by NEC)

Joe Gluza joe.gluza@ucs.cam.ac.uk	Cambridge University
Roger Walters R.J.Walters@open.ac.uk	Open University

WHO ARE **ACADEMIC-RELATED** STAFF?

Academic-related staff work across all parts of higher education. We are professionals with expertise and experience in developing and delivering research, teaching and learning. We:

- build library collections
- advise students and potential students
- provide space for study and research
- make and purchase resources
- determine infrastructure
- advise on computing techniques
- manage people and facilities
- promote our institutions
- negotiate with government and industry
- enforce health and safety
- ensure quality and plan for the future

We share the same interests as academic colleagues in uniting to defend higher education against deprofessionalisation, redundancies, reduction of services, and closures.

We demand that our employers:

- recognise our expertise and professionalism which we provide in-house
- maintain the link between academic and academic-related staff terms and conditions and career progression
- recognise us on governing bodies
- examine staffing levels to address our excessive workloads

We expect our union to build membership, and encourage active participation and representation of academic-related staff at all levels of the union.

For more on the important role that we play, take a look at our Academic-related manifesto:
www.ucu.org.uk/media/pdf/d/b/ucu_acrelmanifesto.pdf

Spread the message!

Please pass this newsletter on to other academic-related members (or potential members).

Encourage them to join or get more involved!

To join UCU see:

www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2283

See also the UCU webpages on academic related matters: <http://bit.ly/I7s7ZF>

To be added to the academic-related mailing list, for hard copies of this newsletter or the academic-related manifesto, or if you have any questions on academic-related matters contact Stefano Fella, National Industrial Relations Official (with responsibility for academic related matters), sfella@ucu.org.uk

Also contact Stefano if you have ideas for articles and/or wish to contribute to a future edition.

To contact the Academic-related Committee, either to get more involved or to talk about recruiting academic-related staff see the committee list overleaf.

