

Research staff make a huge contribution to education but are often undervalued and employed on short-term contracts.

**This leaflet contains key information about your rights at work.**



Not a member? Join us today!  
[join.ucu.org.uk](http://join.ucu.org.uk)

## Five great reasons to join your union...

**1 UCU gives you peace of mind** We are officially recognised by your employer to negotiate your pay and conditions and we can represent you if you have a problem at work. Our legal scheme is provided by specialist employment lawyers and covers employment rights, personal injury and police enquiries.

**2 UCU helps you to develop your career** Free training for our members includes *classroom management, voice care* and *help getting published*. We see it as our job to look after you in your job and help you to have a rewarding career. See: [cpd.web.ucu.org.uk](http://cpd.web.ucu.org.uk)

**3 UCU is your voice at work** We are the collective voice of the profession – campaigning to defend education and lobbying government for more funding for colleges and universities. We stand up for your pension rights and work to protect your work-life balance.

**4 UCU gets you a better deal** Research shows that union members in the UK receive higher pay, better sickness and pension benefits and more holiday entitlement than staff who aren't union members. It makes sense to be a member of UCU.

**5 As a UCU member, you are not alone** At a time when life in our profession is becoming harder, joining UCU makes you a member of a special community, one that understands what it means to be an educator and stands up for your interests.

[join.ucu.org.uk](http://join.ucu.org.uk)

# Are you a researcher?



and working in higher education?

**UCU**  
University and College Union

# Researchers are a priority for UCU. We campaign for better career development and greater job security for these staff including the use of open-ended contracts



## YOUR RIGHTS

**Your university is your employer and has duties towards you.**

### Your terms and conditions

You should have a contract with a full statement of your terms and conditions when you start your job.

### Your health

Employers have a legal responsibility for the health, welfare and safety of their staff – YOU. This includes workload and stress issues. There is more information on this at: [www.ucu.org.uk/safemembers](http://www.ucu.org.uk/safemembers)

### Your contract

Fixed-term (temporary) contracts have a specified date on which they are due to end. Your employer is obliged to consult with you about the potential ending of your contract and to seek ways to avoid your dismissal.

They should also consult with UCU about any potential redundancies.

### Redundancy pay

If you have been working for more than two years you are entitled to redundancy pay.

### What the law says

**The Fixed-Term (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2012** state that:

- Employees on fixed-term contracts have the right to be treated no less favourably to comparable employees on permanent contracts unless such treatment can be objectively justified. This relates to all terms and conditions including your pay, and benefits such as career development and training.
- Once you have four years' continuous service on two or more contracts (or have had your contract renewed) the contract automatically becomes indefinite unless the continued use of a fixed-term contract is objectively justified.

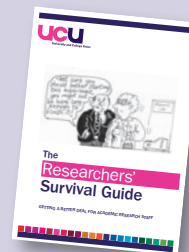
You can be continuously employed even where there is a gap between successive contracts. This is determined on a case-by-case basis.

UCU provides guidance to members wanting to challenge their employer's 'objective justification'.

For more information download a copy of UCU's **Researchers' Survival Guide**: [www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=3228](http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=3228)

For a free hard copy email: [campaigns@ucu.org.uk](mailto:campaigns@ucu.org.uk)

Follow **UCUAntiCasualisation** on Twitter @**UCUAnti\_Cas**



## WHAT UCU IS DOING

Researchers are a priority for UCU and we are:

- campaigning for improvements
- negotiating policies that move the majority of fixed-term staff onto open-ended contracts
- increasing job security for researchers through redundancy avoidance agreements and effective redeployment procedures
- winning legal cases for researchers' rights
- lobbying the government and research councils.

### Improving career opportunities

Increased job security can be achieved by using pools of researchers, forward-planning, active redeployment policies and bridging funds. This will improve the research environment and reduce the wastefulness of the current system that regularly loses talented researchers. UCU urges research councils and institutions to address this issue and works with those employers willing to tackle it.

### Join UCU's anti-casualisation network

Link up with others across the UK: [www.ucu.org.uk/elists](http://www.ucu.org.uk/elists)

### Join us

Invest in your career and join your union today:



For information about membership benefits: [www.ucu.org.uk/join](http://www.ucu.org.uk/join)

### Get involved

To get involved contact your branch or email [anticasualisation@ucu.org.uk](mailto:anticasualisation@ucu.org.uk)