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The Newsletter for **Academic Related, Professional Staff** in Higher Education

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

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FROM THE CHAIR



I was unable to attend Congress this year but it was good to see that our committee continued to enjoy unanimous support from the floor. There were numerous motions that are, sadly, increasingly relevant to ARPS. Grade drift and the use of private providers are areas we have been aware of for some time. An area which has created a little discussion amongst the committee is whether ARPS are now being moved to fixed term or zero hours contracts (casualised). It would be good to hear any feedback on that (please email academicrelated@ucu.org.uk).

Our Fringe meeting this year focused on the role ARPS play in Industrial Action, particularly Action Short of Strike (ASoS). Many thanks to Helen MacCarthy (Hull) for Chairing and Jo MacNeill (Liverpool), Gordon Watson (Strathclyde) and Patrick Moule (ARPS) for excellent speeches that generated a useful and informative debate.

Notes from this meeting have been used to develop guidance for ARPS which is below and will hopefully

also be circulated separately. By the time this newsletter goes to press it's likely that the assessment boycott will have started so I hope branches find this useful.

Focusing on one of our priorities, career progression, the last committee meeting heard an interesting talk from Theresa Mellon, Head of Talent and Educational Development at my own institution, LSHTM. Theresa gave us her thoughts on good practice in professional development, which we hope to turn into advice for ARPS members. I personally feel that in institutions where we feel trapped a good CPD program can allow members to take more control of their career, whether within the institution or give them skills to move on. This is explored more thoroughly in the article below.

On a sad note, I must express my condolences to the friends and family of Deb Viney who passed away over the summer. Deb was only a committee member for a short time but made some excellent contributions to our discussions and raised our awareness of the issues around supporting students during their studies. She was particularly passionate about the government's decision to cut the Disabled Student Allowance.

A valued branch and committee colleague, Patrick Moule, has decided to swallow the pink and purple pill and accept a job in the campaigns team at UCU. Within the branch Patrick was a very active membership secretary and negotiator whose judgment I came to rely on. On the committee his fresh outlook and grasp of social media was equally useful and will be missed. Whilst I congratulate Patrick on his new role I think it is downright rude to leave me in the lurch in both of my areas of UCU involvement!!!

Finally can I remind you to make sure your branch has an ARPS rep, if you don't have a rep in place, get one! We continue to try and build a network of contacts. Remember also that the ARPS Annual meeting is in early March and we need delegates to guide our work and nominations for the committee for the coming year.

Dan Arthur,
Chair, Academic-related Committee

Standing together for our pensions

How can ARPS members get involved in action short of strike?

The last few years have seen UCU members voting to take industrial action on several occasions. Action Short of Strike (ASoS) in the form of assessment boycotts has proved to be successful in the past and we are set to take such action again from 6th November.

However, Academic Related, Professional Staff (ARPS) can be left wondering just how they can participate.

The question was raised at a fringe meeting at the 2014 UCU Annual Congress, in which members explored the wider issues around taking action, and shared their experiences and ideas.

It was pointed out that many staff in ARPS roles feel more vulnerable and isolated than academic staff, and it was emphasised that the key to successful action is academic and ARPS members working together, and knowing that they have the backing of the national union, which will support all members participating in legitimate industrial action.

All UCU members can take part in strike action and picketing, and participate in a work to rule. Even if the specific form of ASoS makes it difficult for many of us to participate, there are still things we can do to support the action, such as organising meetings and stalls, actively recruiting new members, publicity and awareness raising, and so on.

During a marking ban, ARPS members could refuse to handle marks or facilitate assessment. Many ARPS roles are key to the smooth running of an institution, and suggestions have been made that timely disruption of certain key functions (email? Clearing?) could bring a university to its knees. But this could of course render some individual staff very vulnerable.

Branches need to consider how they can get more ARPS members involved in action at a local level. Some suggestions for branches were made at the fringe meeting. Branches could:

- make sure meetings are arranged to maximise attendance of ARP members
- ensure all staff know what is happening via leaflets & newsletters
- Ask ARPS members locally for suggestions
- Circulate the names of ARPS members in different areas to local reps, so ARPS

members can take action together, increasing visibility and participation, for example in open plan areas.

- Make sure they are taking best advantage of Academic and ARP staff in carrying out branch duties and activities
- Consider what administrative activities support the action under boycott and how ARP staff can be part of the boycott.

All members can participate in publicity stunts, which can be an effective way of maximising publicity while causing embarrassment to university management. A few recent examples from branches include:

- letting off helium balloons in the middle of a reception for new students
- forcing members to sign into a meeting at the door, causing long, highly visible queues to form
- lining the route to high profile meetings such as Court, Council or Senate.
- presenting the VC with a large slice of cake to reflect his pay rise,
- dressing up as fat cats on the picket line.



Please contact the ARPS committee if you have any examples you would like to share with us, or any ideas for forms of ASoS in which ARPS members could participate.

To reiterate, the key to successful action is for members to support each other and take action together. People can feel exposed when taking action, and so it is important to avoid isolating individual members. But collective action can still be creative.

If you are not sure if you can participate directly in an assessment boycott please contact your Branch Officers who will seek advice from UCU officials where needed.

Annual meeting for academic related staff, professional staff – 11th March 2015

Annual meeting

The annual UCU members' meeting for ARPS members will take place on Wednesday 11th March 2015 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. This may include strategies to defend jobs, USS, professional development, performance management, build the union, and outsourcing and the wider marketisation of the sector.

Each HE branch may send two voting representatives to the annual meeting. Branch 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 ARPS role.

Further details will follow soon.

Elections

Elections will be held at the annual meeting for several positions on the Academic Related, Professional Staff Committee. We encourage nominations from all academic-related categories: library, computing, administrative, student support 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 overleaf).

Further details will follow soon.

Motions

The deadline for motions to Congress and HE Sector Congress 2015 is 13th March. This is a tight turnaround following the ARPS annual meeting. The Committee are already planning as much of this work in advance as it is possible to do.

If you or your branch have any issues or concerns that could form the basis of a motion to the annual meeting and potentially to Congress and Conference please contact us by Friday January 9th 2015 academicrelated@ucu.org.uk

For further details on registration for the annual meeting, the process for nominating to the Committee, sending motions and details of the meeting will be sent in a Friday e-mail to members.

ARPS motions 2014

Motions adopted at the ARPS annual meeting in 2014 were subsequently re-tabled in modified form as ARPS Committee motions to Congress and HE Sector Conference. The motions, which were adopted, were as follows:

HE33 (EP) Fighting de-professionalisation and down-grading

Conference notes with sadness that staff are increasingly regarded by management as interchangeable units of production. This attack on staff members' professionalism, status and dignity represents a particular threat to academic-related staff, who are viewed as either managers or service providers, with little control over their own work. With responsibility removed, downgrading ensues. New staff are recruited into lower grades, with little prospect of advancement. Individual expertise is actively discouraged, with staff treated as a homogeneous group, able to be deployed into any role.

Conference:

- reiterates its belief in the parity of academic-related staff with academic colleagues, and the right of all staff to be recognised as professionals working within their area of expertise
- calls on UCU to fight attempts to downgrade and de-professionalise staff, and to support members facing such attacks
- calls on HEC to campaign for the maintenance of a non-managerial career path for all.

18 (EP) Fair terms and conditions for all staff

UCU is appalled by the cynical use of reviews and restructuring to make redundancies and replace these staff with temps or casualised staff within universities & colleges. UCU questions the legitimacy of this practice as many of these posts are not in any way short term and there is a substantial more permanent job available.

UCU sees this as an attack on employment rights of these staff as they are unlikely to have proper contracts or paid holiday and are unable to afford decent pensions.

UCU calls on the NEC and all branches/local associations to fight against this practice at local level, shaming managements that indulge in this shoddy employment practice.

Towards professionalism

ARPS members taking charge of their professional development

Continuing Professional Development, or CPD, was the subject of a lively debate at the last meeting of the Academic Related, Professional Staff Committee, following a presentation on initiatives being pioneered at LSHTM (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine).

Initial research there had shown that staff were under-developed and with low morale, and their management confused about CPD. Discussions with staff soon showed that the confusion was not confined to management: a culture change was necessary. It was recognised that training was also needed for managers.

The LSHTM approach is that 'career planning and development' is the individual's responsibility, whereas



responsibility for 'professional development' is shared by the individual and management. This provoked some discussion amongst committee members unsure of the difference, which seems to revolve around individuals being responsible for their own long-term career path. The aim is to support people who want to develop their careers, and help them to navigate through their existing structure; it is not about changing the structure.

The LSHTM presentation also mentioned assisting people to develop their careers outside the organisation, which appeared to some members to be suggesting that jobs outside the university sector are easy to come by. After a little gentle prompting from committee members from outside London, it was admitted that this may not be the case everywhere, with low wages and a dearth of opportunities in some areas having a significant effect on how likely staff are to leave and find work outside the sector.

There is a need to look across the sector at career opportunities, training, best practice, and so on, as clearly the situation differs widely in different institutions. Staff from some universities have reported 'brainwashing' being substituted for training, especially in areas such as ICT; links between job evaluation and training were also reported, with a risk of training opportunities being

used as a way of leap-frogging into management. Some members feel that career development should be linked to progression opportunities, and that there would not be much interest in training without the chance of more pay.

The issue of professional development is clearly a thorny topic, with members from some universities reporting few opportunities for non-managerial promotions, and a lack of encouragement for staff to develop technical or specialist expertise. What made LSHTM different? It appeared that the school had learned the hard way that using consultants instead of investing in staff development did not work. Leadership and cost were also important factors, and the fact that the unions were working with the learning and development department. Feedback and communication were also recognised as important.

What is clear is that there is a need to share best practice on CPD for Academic Related, Professional Staff. UCU nationally need to come up with a set of principles and a model agreement that can be shared with members across the sector. UCU will be looking for institutions willing to take part in a pilot study: members at Hull are already looking at submitting a claim around career progression for 'academic related' staff.

We need to make it clear to our employers that Academic Related, Professional Staff deserve careers rather than just jobs, and professional development rather than stagnation.

Is your University providing good CPD opportunities for ARPS members?
Are your branch planning on putting CPD on the negotiating agenda?

Get in touch and let us know what your branch and University are doing and share any success stories or good practice with us.

E-mail: academicrelated@ucu.org.uk

Twitter: UCU_ARPS

What motivates you?

Performance management can be an integral part of the drive towards professionalism. Where it is skillfully implemented as part of an ethos of support and professional development ARPS members will thrive.

Sadly, in the current climate of new managerialism we too often see punitive and controlling performance management leading to loss of self-esteem and professional status for our members.

UCU is concerned that there appears to be an increase in the link between performance and pay. HEC have approved plans to undertake further research into how pay progression is being implemented in HE.

The union would be interested to hear from any ARPS members who have any experiences they can share. Please e-mail Kerith Allen kallen@ucu.org.uk

Anti-casualisation day of action



UCU held a day of action against casualisation in universities and colleges on Wednesday 5 November.

Casualisation is increasingly hitting academic related, professional staff roles and it is crucial that ARPS members stand with their academic colleagues to halt and reverse this situation.

Tell us what you did: If your branch organised an event for the day of action, make sure we know about it and can help you give it profile. Email: anticasualisation@ucu.org.uk

For further details and campaign materials see: <http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=7247>



Assessment boycott set to start on 6th November

After talks between UCU and the employers' representatives failed to provide a guarantee that the employers were making any effort to protect USS pensions, UCU has announced that an assessment boycott will begin on Thursday 6th November. The assessment boycott will stop students being set coursework or receiving formal marks and feedback, as well as halting exams.

UCU is unhappy with the way employers had presented their proposals as a fait accompli, especially as much of their work has been discredited by statisticians, universities and UCU.

The University of Warwick is one of several to find fault with the employers' proposals and their attempts to promote them. Warwick criticised the lack of alternatives put forward by UUK and how unattractive the reformed scheme will look compared to another scheme available in HE.

The next negotiating meeting is set for Friday 7th November. However, UCU is happy to clear its diary and meet sooner.

Are private providers impacting on ARPS members?

UCU maintains a principled and effective opposition to the penetration of private and for-profit providers in higher education. However, to deny that private providers are increasing would be to bury our heads in the sand.

The potential risks to the quality of provision and terms and conditions for our academic colleagues has been explored and debated.

The impact of private providers on academic related, professional staff has not been scrutinised and is not clear.

Do you have any experiences or observations of private or for profit providers that you can share? Please e-mail Kerith Allen kallen@ucu.org.uk

Introducing your new Committee members

We have the great pleasure of welcoming Amy Chamier and Kamie Kitmitto onto the ARPS Committee and we look forward to working with them.

Amy Chamier

Hello, I'm Amy Chamier and currently UCU branch secretary at the Institute of Education, University of London. I've worked as a web editor in the Marketing department, for the past 8 years.

I was inspired to become a trade union activist by the brilliant support I received from a branch caseworker when my line manager tried to block my redeployment to a new post in a team restructuring. The whole grim experience made me realise how vulnerable staff in junior roles are



to bullying or incompetent local bosses, who seem to be able to ignore employment law and HR procedures with impunity.

Like other members of the ARPS committee I'm deeply concerned about the way in which departmental restructures so often cut and downgrade the roles of those who deliver the day-to-day services, while protecting and enhancing the benefits of those at the top. These restructurings often go hand in hand with the crassest sort of job redesign in which professional staff are reimagined as generic, inter-changeable office drones, with no respect for their specialist knowledge, qualifications and career paths.

Cuts in the workplace have also, increasingly, meant cuts in space standards and this has hit professional staff particularly hard as they are crammed together, ever more tightly, in large open plan offices with little privacy, a lot of ambient noise, disruption and often very poor lighting and ventilation.

I believe passionately that intelligent and wily trade union resistance does make a difference. I have seen this for myself, here at my institution. So let's say a big no to apathy and cynicism and fight all the way, especially in solidarity with the poorest paid, who've suffered the most, from extreme outsourcing and casualisation.

Kamie Kitmitto

My undergraduate degree was a 5 years Civil Engineering program in the Lebanon, then a Masters degree at Cardiff and finishing with a PhD at UCL. I finished my PhD in 1990 vowing not to come back to a University ever again; after 9 years at University you can understand why I had had enough of being in an educational establishment. I wanted the discipline of a professional company. I started working in Civil Engineering company including 3 months consultancy in Hong Kong working on the then new Airport. I very quickly got to understand that a company atmosphere is no different academia and the things that irritated me in academia were also the same in industry!



I came back to HE, having worked on Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in industry, as academia realised how essential these systems were becoming. I first worked at the University of Leicester writing training materials for GIS. I was recruited to The Victoria University of Manchester to provide coordination, consultancy and support for UK academia. I supported and trained lecturers, researchers and PhD students on the use and applications of GIS.

During the mid nineties I worked on the first online mapping systems 1.5 years before Multimap. Towards the end of the nineties, 1999/2001, and before the flurry of open data I came up with the idea of creating national scale mapping using only satellite images. A solution that allowed countries, without a mapping base, to create national maps, within a year. The UK was probably the best mapped country in the world; however, academics had little access to those maps due to an oppressive licensing model. I put together Landmap, in collaboration with UCL, a project, which created national maps from satellite imagery and provided one of the most liberal licensing models at the time.

Later I managed the Landmap service, which provided on line access to the data derived in the Landmap project and other data acquired from various providers. By this time Google Maps arrived on to the scene (2004) and people started realizing the importance of utilising maps in the various infrastructures that are being built. I negotiated licenses with companies, and the terms and conditions of sublicense to various academic partners, built the technical infrastructure that utilises Open Geospatial Consortium standards to deliver data and services to users. In 2011 the Landmap Service and sister service serving OS data from Edina were described as "state of the art".

In the late-nineties I started working at the University of Manchester AUT as a committee member. After that I became the Equalities Officer at the Branch then graduated to be the Treasurer and am now additionally the Pensions Officer. I also served on the University of Manchester Board of Governors between 2007 and 2010. I also obtained an MBA from Manchester Business School in 2010.

If you are still reading here is the reason for this long-winded history; I feel that one of the biggest struggles of ARP Staff in Academia is the "Class System" that we have come to accept and work within. The lack of proper recognition of the work Academic Related staff is evidenced in the absence of career paths for non-academic staff heralded by the mindless application of HERA.

The dynamic nature of the Higher Education with technology changes, new areas of research and services, from Big Data to Graphene to MOOCs will require more and more highly trained professionals to create and support these services. The current model of ARPS employment in HE is not sustainable and we need to be at the forefront of engaging with progressive academics and management. A paper by Bickford and Whisnantin in The Chronicles of Higher Educations has articulated similar issues back in 2010 (<http://chronicle.com/article/Building-a-Corps-of/124902/>)

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

To be added to the academic-related mailing list, for hard copies of this newsletter or the Academic Related manifesto e-mail

kallen@ucu.org.uk

If you have any questions on ARPS matters, have ideas for future articles, want to get more involved or talk about recruiting ARPS members contact us by:

e-mail: academicrelated@ucu.org.uk

Twitter: UCU_ARPS



2014 – 2015 Academic Related, Professional Committee

Dan Arthur (Chair)	LSHTM
Helen MacCarthy (Vice Chair)	University of Hull
Eyad Abu-Khiran	Queens University Belfast
Amy Chamier	Institute of Education
Terry Duffy	Glyndwr University
Joe Gluza	Cambridge
Patricia Hulme	Nottingham
Kamie Kitmitto	University of Manchester
Marie Morley	Bath
Roger Walters	Open University

The Committee Secretary is Kerith Allen, Bargaining and Negotiations Official, kallen@ucu.org.uk

If you have any questions or queries for the Committee please e-mail: academicrelated@ucu.org.uk

You can also contact us and keep up to date with all the latest ARPS news on our brand new twitter feed UCU_ARPS

WHO ARE **ACADEMIC-RELATED** STAFF?

Academic related, professional 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
- 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 de-professionalisation, pension cuts, redundancies, reduction of services and closures.

We will work with all parts of our union to build membership, and encourage active participation and representation of academic related, professional staff at all levels of the union. We:

- undertake casework and local negotiations
- support the administration and promotion of the branch
- are active members of UCU national committees
- send motions to Congress and contribute to UCU policy

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

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