

...and related

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

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Chairs welcome

As the new chair of the Academic Related, Professional Staff (ARPS) Committee, I would like to welcome you to the latest issue of '...And Related', whether or not you see yourself as Academic Related, Professional Staff.

It is not so long since the concept of 'academic related' was fundamental to Higher Education. Academic related staff fell into one of 3 categories: Administrative, Library or Computing. Parity with academics was taken for granted, and academic related staff were recognised as being a vital part of the academic team. Since those halcyon days, we have seen the introduction of pernicious job evaluation, the constant erosion of our status, and in many institutions the abolition of the term 'academic related'.

There is a growing trend within HE to think of staff as falling into just two groups: academics and 'the rest'. The ARPS Committee has an important role to play in fighting this. The committee changed its name last year to reflect the fact that we cover many 'professional' staff who may not see themselves as 'academic related'. The changing face of ARPS is something that UCU needs to address, not least the fact that staff in many 'new' roles within our sphere of influence may not think of themselves as potential union members.

ARPS are a vital part of UCU. The union needs us as much as we need the union. We need to keep on reminding people both within and outside UCU that we are here, and that we have equal status with academics. Whatever our roles may be, we have a right to a career rather than just a job.

Helen MacCarthy,
Chair, ARPS Committee
academicrelated@ucu.org.uk

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

Report from the meeting

This year's annual meeting of Academic Related, Professional Staff (ARPS) took place on 11th March. The meeting saw presentations and workshops on the theme of career development, and debate on a range of motions.

The meeting was a great success, but it was a shame that there were not more delegates present to hear the excellent speakers and join in the lively debate. Now more than ever, ARPS members need to make their voices heard within UCU, and this meeting represents their main opportunity to do this. The meeting also provides the chance to meet other ARPS members from all over the country, and to compare notes on what is happening at different institutions.

The out-going chair, Dan Arthur, gave an overview of the last year, and emphasised the need to raise the profile of Academic Related, Professional Staff at meetings at all levels of the union.

A number of motions were debated by delegates before being passed unanimously. In summary, these were:

Motion 1 The changing face of academic related, professional staff

The changing face of Academic Related, Professional Staff presents untapped potential for recruitment to UCU membership within existing spheres of influence, especially among 'new' roles, and managerial grades, where staff may not see themselves as potential trade union members. UCU was therefore asked to investigate the growth of new roles, update the academic related manifesto, target recruitment activity, develop a bargaining position, and communicate with branches to raise awareness of the changing face of ARP staff.

Motion 2, Use of consultants by HE institutions

UCU was asked to raise awareness of the extensive and often inappropriate use made of consultants in HE institutions, to determine the amount spent by

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universities on consultants and campaign to reduce their use where it is inappropriate.

Motion 3, Professional Support for Academic Staff

This motion highlighted the essential role of ARPS as part of the academic team, and highlighted the need to maintain the academic link. It called on UCU to investigate the adverse effect of job evaluation on ARPS and the academic link, and to develop a bargaining position to include career development and promotion criteria in job evaluation for ARPS.

Motion 4, ARPS priorities for 2015

This motion laid out the priorities for the ARPS committee for the next year:

- Recruiting new and active members,
- Protecting terms and conditions of employment for academic related, professional staff, protecting the status of academic-related staff in University statutes and in recognition agreements and resisting grade-drift,
- Campaigning to resist de-professionalisation and outsourcing and raise awareness of its damaging impact (based on case studies where implemented)
- Playing a full and equal part in action and campaigning to maximise the impact of industrial action,
- Communication via newsletters and other means, and development of a network of academic-related reps.

Motion 5, Membership of professional bodies

The motion highlighted the desirability of membership of professional bodies to both the individual and the employer, and noted that in some jobs it may be mandated by the employer. The UCU Higher Education Committee (HEC) were therefore asked to investigate the current practice and policies and the impact on ARP members, and to develop a policy and bargaining position in relation to payment of fees.

Motion 6, Taking Charge of our Own Careers

The continuing deprofessionalisation and attacks on conditions of service of ARPS was noted, and the need for employers to provide fair and equal access to meaningful professional and career development opportunities to ARP staff. UCU was asked to develop a model policy for professional and career development of ARPS, along with bargaining materials, to support branches, and to continue to develop an accessible CPD programme to support members' professional and career development. CPD Presentations and Workshops

CPD discussion at the annual meeting

The meeting heard a presentation from Learning and Development consultant Theresa Mellon on Continuous Professional Development (CPD). She

emphasised that the aim was to involve staff in what they needed to fulfil their aspirations, as well helping them to deliver their current job more effectively. She cited positive examples of institutions where career development was taken seriously, but this was clearly not the case everywhere. It was noted that UCU was developing CPD bargaining guidance, which it was hoped could be adapted specifically for ARPS staff.

There followed questions from the floor. Delegates raised concern about the perceived passivity of academic related staff in terms of career development. It was often the case that people felt stuck and it seemed development opportunities were only open to academic staff, where there was a defined career pathway. In some cases academics were given paid time to train and managers picked likely candidates for courses so that training regularly went to the select few. Delegates discussed the lack of succession planning when consultants were brought in to fulfil certain functions without the knowledge being brought in house.

The meeting then heard a presentation by UCU National Organiser (and former ARPS Committee member) Patrick Moule about CPD courses available through UCU. These comprise both 'in person' courses and online material. It was noted that downloads are free to members and can be found at <http://cpd.web.ucu.org.uk>. Ideas for further CPD courses were discussed. In terms of general campaigning and useful material, Patrick alerted delegates to the 'Build the Union': <http://btu.web.ucu.org.uk>.

In the afternoon, the meeting heard a talk from Janet Newsham, UCU Learning Development Organiser, about the UCU Learning Fund, which focuses on professional development and is being subsidised by the government. Janet spoke about the positive environment surrounding CPD, and her experience that even where institutions were involved in fundamental industrial disputes, they quite often wanted to be perceived as learning champions. Janet also spoke about the statutory rights of an appointed Union Learning Representative. Similar to Health and Safety Reps, representatives are entitled to reasonable paid time off for training and for carrying out their duties.

The meeting split into workshops to discuss a bargaining strategy to take back to their branches, as well as comparing their experiences at their institutions. The workshops identified good practice, obstacles to learning development and access to training opportunities across a variety of institutions. It was again notable, as in the previous debate, how attitudes at different institutions varied widely, with some taking CPD far more seriously than others.

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Summary

Several themes emerged during debate at this year's meeting. Many delegates complained of a lack of opportunities for career progression, with promotion being replaced by re-grading and role evaluation. There were reports of red-circling and down-grading, out-sourcing and grade creep. Delegates repeatedly emphasised that ARPS are professional staff, and have a right to meaningful career development, with technical and specialist competence being recognised.

ARPS members can play a vital role in reinvigorating the CPD provision at their institutions and ensure that the learning culture the employer prizes so highly for students, also extends to its staff.

Watch this space. UCU are producing bargaining guidance on CPD and the Committee are aiming to produce an ARPS specific version in due course.

Motions for Annual Congress/HE Sector Conference

Use of consultants by HE and FE institutions

This meeting notes the extensive, and often inappropriate, use made of consultants in HE and FE institutions and expresses concern at the cost and at the deleterious effect on the careers of UCU members.

In order to gauge the extent of the problem, this meeting calls on UCU to:

- Determine the amount spent by institutions on consultants, using FOI requests if necessary
- Raise awareness of the issue, including naming and shaming of institutions, where appropriate
- Campaign to reduce inappropriate use of consultants, and to ensure that knowledge is transferred to staff where possible.

Membership of professional bodies

UCU notes that membership of professional bodies such as the CIPD or the IEEF is highly desirable, and in some cases membership may be mandated by the employer as a requirement for the role.

UCU believes:

membership of professional bodies can bring benefits to institutions as well as to the individual. Institutions should pay for all reasonable requests for membership of professional bodies and certainly where the institution is requiring such membership to refuse to support such membership is a further attack on the professional status of staff.

We call on NEC to:

- investigate the current practice and policies regarding membership of professional bodies, and the impact on UCU members
- develop a policy and bargaining position in relation to the payment of fees of professional bodies.

The changing face of academic related, professional staff

This meeting notes the growth of new academic related, professional roles in HE institutions, and the opportunities for recruitment to UCU membership that they could offer.

This meeting acknowledges that staff in many of these roles may not see themselves as potential trade union members, and that recruitment to union membership may therefore pose specific challenges. In order to address these challenges, it is first necessary to understand the changing nature of ARPS roles.

This meeting calls on UCU to:

- Investigate the changing face of ARP staff, in particular the growth of new roles
- Update the academic related manifesto to reflect these new roles
- Target recruitment activity at these new ARP roles
- To develop a bargaining position in relation to these new ARP role
- To communicate with branches to raise awareness of the changing face of ARP staff.

Taking Charge of our Own Careers

This Union notes the continuing deprofessionalisation and attacks on conditions of service of Academic Related, Professional Staff (ARPS).

This Union reasserts its belief that we as professionals and employers should provide fair and equal access to meaningful professional and career development opportunities to ARP staff.

This Union resolves:

- To develop a model policy for professional and career development of ARPS
- To develop bargaining materials and training to support ARPS in attaining a policy
- To support branches in negotiating a professional and career development policy
- That access to professional and career development opportunities is of paramount importance to ARP staff
- To continue to develop an accessible CPD programme to support members' professional and career development.

Introducing your new Committee members

Introducing the new chair – Helen MacCarthy



My name is Helen MacCarthy, and I work as a programmer in the ICT department at the University of Hull, where I am the UCU branch secretary. I have been a UCU (and previously AUT) member since I started working at the university in 2002, having come from a background in the manufacturing sector, where I was a member of MSF.

I have been a union member all my working life, and an activist from a very early stage, after I complained once too often that I could do a better job than the existing union rep, and was challenged to prove it. I learned to stand up for myself (and others) very early on, as a woman working in a male-dominated environment, where I was accused of thinking myself to be the equal of a man (to which the flippant response has to be: “No, I aim a bit higher than that!”).

I served for 3 years as the elected non-academic staff representative on the University of Hull Council, where I found that I spent most of my time constantly reminding Council members that non-academic staff are human too, a fact of which some of them (both lay members and senior academics) seemed to be shockingly ignorant.

I have been a member of the Academic Related, Professional Staff Committee for 3 years now, serving as vice-chair for the last year. I believe passionately in the need for workers to stand together to fight for their rights: we are so much stronger together than alone. As ARPS, we need to make our voices heard within the union and beyond.

Finally, I would like to thank the out-going chair, Dan Arthur, for the sterling work he has done over the last few years. Our rules limit the length of continuous committee service, and so Dan has been forced to stand down this year. I wish him all the very best, and hope to see him back on the committee in the future. We have lost a number of committee members over the last year, some in very sad circumstances as has been noted in previous newsletters, and so this year's committee has a number of new faces and a new chair. Together we will continue to strive to do our best for ARPS members.

Tim Barrett



I've been working as a programmer and systems developer in the Computing Services department at the University of Bath for just over 15 years, and I have been a member of AUT/UCU for most of that time. I became Treasurer of the Local Association a few years after joining the union by means of sitting too close to the front in the AGM.

It wasn't long before I was asked if I'd like to shadow a caseworker, which I did to a couple of meetings before - naturally - finding myself suddenly dropped in the deep end with complex cases to handle all by myself. Since then I've handled many cases, but the ones that needed the most work - with the member being treated the most badly - almost all have one thing in common: they involve academic related, professional staff.

In my time at the University of Bath there have been many (invariably heavy-handed) departmental restructurings, and again these almost without exception have been in the professional services departments rather than the academic ones.

As a union officer in an institution with, by many metrics, probably the highest-paid Vice Chancellor in the land I see first-hand the way that the roles and the conditions of work of those actually delivering services get downgraded whilst the rewards trickle to the top.

As such, I consider the work of the ARPS committee to be amongst the most important done by the union, and I hope I can make a positive contribution to it.

NEC members

As well as welcoming new members to the Committee we are also saying goodbye for now to Joe Gluza and Roger Walters. Although they remain on the Committee as NEC representatives until July, the meeting held at the end of April was their last official meeting. They have both worked tirelessly for Academic Related, Professional Staff members and we extend our thanks to them both. We especially send our best wishes to Roger who has not been in the best health lately.

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](https://twitter.com/UCU_ARPS)



2015 – 2015 Academic Related, Professional Committee

Helen MacCarthy (Chair)	University of Hull
Kamie Kitmitto (Vice Chair)	University of Manchester
Eyad Abu-Khiran	Queens University Belfast
Tim Barrett	Bath University
Joe Gluza	Cambridge
Matthew Grew	Goldsmiths
Patricia Hulme	Nottingham
Sue Moron-Garcia	University of Birmingham
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 twitter feed: [UCU Academic Related \(@UCU_ARPS\) | Twitter](https://twitter.com/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