



Bargaining & Negotiations Department

Gender pay briefing

A UCU bargaining guide for branches

February 2016

In brief...

This document provides a quick briefing on gender pay in higher and further education including links to more detailed guidance and resources and suggested actions to be taken by branches and women members.

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Introduction:

UCU wants an end to pay discrimination in our sectors. Although equal pay legislation has been in place for over 40 years, the gender pay gap in Britain remains among the highest in the European Union at 16.4%. The gap between women and men in full-time work is equivalent to men being paid all year, while women work for free after 2 November (Fawcett Society).

In Higher Education, for all academics the overall gender pay gap is 12.6% (women are paid 87.4% of men's wages) but it is much wider in many institutions. In Further Education, in England we know that in 132 colleges men are paid on average £1000 more than women.

There are many reasons why the gender pay gap exists including discrimination against women in the workplace, discrimination in pay systems, the value placed on work predominantly undertaken by women and interrupted careers.

The data we are making available to members through the *Rate for the Job website* demonstrates that the gender pay gap in many higher and further education institutions remains unacceptable.

In Higher Education, in this year's pay claim we are demanding nationally-agreed action for institutions to close the gender pay gap by 2020. In further education, we have written to the Association of Colleges for talks with the same aim.

As part of our campaigns we are encouraging women to find out how pay difference affects them personally. Using the data on the website, it is possible to see what the overall situation is at most institutions and across the sectors.

Action for branches:

As branches begin to discuss pay with members and the data on the website is shared, make sure equal pay is part of the conversation.

Branches will be familiar with the tools that UCU has produced to support identifying equal pay gaps.

These include in Higher Education the JNCHES Equal Pay Review guidance and for equal pay reviews to be undertaken regularly which can be reinforced by the Public Sector Equality Duty. Scottish HEI's can also seek advice from the Scottish Government's funded body Close the Gap to conduct equal pay reviews and formulate action plans. Scottish HEI's are also required to publish the gender pay gap every two years.

In Further Education there is a national guidance agreement on equal pay.

Call for an equal pay audit:

Equal pay audits can provide the pressure needed to make employers act. They are set to become compulsory from April 2016 for organisations with over 250 employees.

We suggest that branches write to their employer calling for them to conduct an equal pay audit now. Let Dave Ratchford know if you have taken this step by emailing: equalpay@ucu.org.uk

Women members – why are you paid less?

Where the rate for the job site shows a gender pay gap, women members will want to know why they are being paid less than their male colleagues. Questions need to be asked on how pay is determined and if the employer can justify the pay gaps in base pay? Women members can click on the link below which will be used to start gathering basic information of those who may be interested in addressing their own pay inequality.

<https://ucu.custhelp.com/ci/documents/detail/5/6/12/3d59acc925ccbfd3f780e854ed1be3795a3be5a7>

Raising questions on equal pay is a long process but this is the start. UCU will be producing a further report for International Women's Day. We shall also be advising members who are concerned about equal pay with questions to ask their employer.

Further information:

UCU Support Centre:

<https://ucu.custhelp.com/>

Public sector equality duties toolkit:

https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/4883/UCU-Equality-Duty-Toolkit/pdf/ucu_equalitydutytoolkit_update_sep15.pdf

JNCHES equal pay reviews guidance:

https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/1923/JNCHES-equal-pay-reviews-guidance-Mar-07/pdf/jnches_equalpayguidance.pdf

Guidance for equal pay in FE (in England) and the Checklist for carrying out equal pay reviews can both be found here:

<https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/1865/Site-search?q=equal+pay&go=search>

FE joint agreement on guidance on equality:

https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/5258/FE-Joint-Agreement-on-Guidance-on-Equality-in-Employment/pdf/Joint_Agreement_on_Guidance_on_Equality_in_Employment_May_2012.pdf

Should your branch have queries concerning the content of this circular then please contact Dave Ratchford: equalpay@ucu.org.uk

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