

The Higher Education Committee (HEC) met on 4 March and made a number of important decisions in regards to the next steps in the pay campaign for 2016/17.

Previous reports on the development of the claim and campaign can be found here:

<https://www.ucu.org.uk/he2016>

Pay campaign

The HEC considered the submission of the early claim, feedback from the four regional/national pay briefings and the direct member consultation that closed on 1 March.

HEC noted that both branch representatives and members feel strongly that an offer of 1% on pay this year is not acceptable.

HEC also approved a specific timetable and action plan. This timetable was based on agreement that previous New JNCHES negotiations have followed a long drawn-out timetable of three set piece meetings in March, April and May in which no meaningful offer is made until the last meeting.

HEC's action plan is based on a recognition that the union needs to move more quickly to affect negotiations. The key points are as follows:

March

- 15 March - Exploratory talks - UCU will press UCEA, the national employer's representatives, to make a meaningful offer to the pay claim, which was submitted on 9 February.
- 22 March – first New JNCHES meeting - HEC's view is that leverage needs to be applied to the live negotiations and pressure applied for substantial opening offer to be made. If no such offer is made a dispute will be lodged.

April

- Week commencing 11 April, HEC approved that if it is necessary, members will be balloted and asked to support both strike action and action short of a strike in the form of working to contract and a marking and assessment boycott.
- 28 April – second New JNCHES meeting.
- 29 April – HEC meets.

May

- Week commencing 2 May the ballot will close.
- 19 May – final NEW JNCHES meeting.
- Action to start w/c 23 May if no meaningful offer made.

HEC also noted the positive feedback from members and branches on the pay campaign materials, including the Rate for the Job calculator, the recent report on VC and principals' pay, the growing gender pay campaign and the union's action to tackle precarious and casual employment.

- Rate for the Job: <https://www.ucu.org.uk/rateforthejob>
- Casualisation: <https://www.ucu.org.uk/stampout>
- Gender pay gap: <https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/8130/Union-names-and-shames-colleges-and-universities-that-hold-down-womens-pay>

HEC also approved further discussions involving all the HE trade unions to see if it is possible to reach an agreement on a claim that all can sign up to.

URGENT: Branch actions

Please note and take immediate action on the following points:

1. **Exam timetables:** All branches are asked to provide the national office with your institutions exams timetable and exam board dates, when any open days are to take place and when the graduations are planned. Please email details to Paul Bridge pbridge@ucu.org.uk
2. **National speakers:** If you are planning a branch meeting or already have a date and would like a national speaker please email pbridge@ucu.org.uk. Please note demand is often high but the national office will do its best to match a speaker to your meeting.
3. **Update your details:** The national membership team are continuing to actively update the union's membership records. This necessary process will ensure the data we hold is as accurate as possible and will also enable members who are eligible to vote in the pay ballot. To assist this process, please access your membership record online <https://members.ucu.org.uk/> and check your workplace and contact details are correct. To register for first use, you will need your membership number and email address we hold for you. Requests for lost membership numbers can be made to the membership team at membership@ucu.org.uk or 020 7756 2567.