

WHY YOU SHOULD BE A UCU MEMBER

Speakers' notes for new staff inductions

These speakers' notes can be used alongside UCU's Powerpoint presentation 'Why you should be a UCU member'

Slide 1 Title slide—Why you should become a UCU member

- Explain that in this presentation you are going to explain about UCU and why new staff should join.

Slide 2 UCU—Who we are

- UCU represents academic and professional staff in further and higher education.
- Our members are lecturers and professors, tutors and researchers, instructors and trainers, senior professional staff and managers.
- In old universities, we also recruit administrative, library and computing staff.
- UCU members work in colleges, universities, adult education institutes, prisons and training organisations.

Slide 3 UCU—You're better off with us

- Here's why you're better off being a UCU member. UCU exists to improve the working lives of its members in post-secondary education. When you join UCU you benefit from UCU's strength and support. We provide:
- **Representation:** Education is an amazing and immensely rewarding profession, but these are insecure and worrying times. At some point in your career, you are likely to have a problem in your workplace. If you have a problem at work, as a UCU member, you can get representation and support from trained UCU representatives and full-time officials as well as expert legal advice. Last year, UCU's legal services won more than £7 million in settlements for members treated unfairly at work.
- **Negotiation:** We are recognised by employers in colleges and universities and we negotiate what you are paid, how your pension scheme works and the terms and conditions of your job at local and national levels.
- **Lobbying:** UCU is a nationally respected voice lobbying to improve the status of further and higher education staff.

Slide 4 UCU—Helping you to build your career

- As a union of professionals, UCU supports its members in their professional lives and careers.
- As well as negotiating for better access to professional development, we also provide our own resources to help steer our members through their careers, especially those at the beginning of their professional lives.
- We run a growing range of professional development courses including classroom management, voice care and how to get published.
- Every UCU member gets a copy of our Early Careers Guide for new staff, free.
- Members also get access to our professional publications, including our magazine, *UC*, and our specialist bulletins and networks for young members, fixed term staff, prison educators and researchers.

Slide 5 Campaigning on your behalf—nationally

Nationally, we are active in campaigning to:

- defend pay, pensions and conditions (you could give the example of the latest campaigns over pensions and pay)
- defend access to public education (you could give the example of the union's high profile campaign against privatisation)
- make the case for more funding for education (you could give the example of our recent report making the case for the value of post-secondary education, *Further, higher?*; www.ucu.org.uk/media/pdf/m/o/further_higher_report_final.pdf)
- lobby for greater status and professional support for educators (you could give the example of the union's successful campaigning over the IfL).

Slide 6 Campaigning on your behalf—locally

Insert your own examples of local campaigning here.

Slide 7 Be part of something bigger

With 120,000 members, we are the biggest union for tertiary education staff in the world. When you join us, you add your voice to ours and make us stronger, better able to win improvements for our members.

We are part of the 6 million strong UK trade union movement, speaking up for working people. The *Guardian* newspaper described us as 'the UK's leading academic lobby'.

Slide 8 UCU: join your community

To sum up then, if you decide to join UCU, you will be joining:

- the largest community of academic professionals in the UK
- a union with a proven track record of representing the specialist interests of staff in further and higher education
- a vibrant democratic community, improving the working lives of education staff
- a powerful voice for our profession, speaking on your behalf to government and employers.

Slide 9 Joining us

- Thank you for listening. Now, here's how you join us.
- You can join online at the link here: <https://join.ucu.org.uk/>
- Monthly fees start from just 2.58 a month and you receive tax relief on your subscriptions.

TIPS ON DELIVERING INDUCTION PRESENTATIONS

- 1. Though you should encourage staff to join online, do make sure you take recruitment forms with you, plus any other materials you think would be good, such as recruitment flyers so that those who don't make up their minds can take something away to think about.**
- 2. It's a good idea to take a basic attendance sheet so that you know who the new staff are, where they work and you have their contact details. This will help you follow them up later.**
- 3. When you start the presentation, introduce yourself and remember to humanise yourself by telling them a little about who you are and where you work. It's important that potential members see that you are like them.**
- 4. Welcome them to their new job and don't launch into a diatribe against their new employer! No one wants to start a job thinking that they are working for a terrible employer. Such an approach is unlikely to chime with their experience or enthuse them about the union.**
- 5. For the same reason, try to emphasise the positive benefits and the peace of mind that come with UCU membership and put less stress on the problems of working life, though it can be a good idea to provide examples of some workplace problems to make your presentation more concrete.**
- 6. Where appropriate, emphasise local and national successes. People want to join an effective organisation. UCU has lots to be proud of in our campaigning around pay, pensions, privatisation, equality and our defence of jobs.**