

# University and College Union

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**To** Branch and local association secretaries

**Topic** **unconfirmed minutes, Higher Education Sector Conference, Congress 2017**

**Action** **for information; for adoption**

**Summary** **This circular provides the unconfirmed minutes of the Higher Education sector conference held in Brighton, 28 May 2017 and includes decisions taken on motions.**

**Contact** Paul Bridge, Head of Higher Education  
(Christine Bernabe, Head Office Administrator/minutes)

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## **Meeting of the Higher Education Sector Conference, Brighton 28 May 2017, Brighton Centre, Brighton**

### **1 Opening Business**

- 1.1 Joanna de Groot, Chair and President Elect, welcomed delegates and called conference to order. The Chair asked conference to note that matters on pay will be taken in private session followed by open session and USS business will be taken after lunch, also in private session.
- 1.2 It was announced that ballot papers for the election of four national negotiators were available from reception and the deadline for return was 1pm on Monday. Delegates were asked to note that Lesley Kane had withdrawn from the election.
- 1.3 Conference **approved** UCU staff to act as tellers.
- 1.4 The Chair invited Gordon Watson to move the conference agenda on behalf of CBC.

### **2 Adoption of the report of the Congress Business Committee**

- 2.1 Gordon Watson welcomed delegates and informed conference of the other CBC members, Sarah Brown, Malcolm Povey, Steve Sangwine, who were also in attendance. Conference was advised that the CBC would be available throughout the day so that delegates could discuss CBC matters with them.
- 2.2 He then presented the conference agenda. Conference was asked to note that motion HE39 and late motions, L4 and L9 (in the Third Report of the CBC) would be taken after motion HE9 on the agenda. Delegates were informed there was much business to cover and that the CBC report is presented for adoption in order to best expedite the business of the day.
- 2.3 Tim Barrett, Chair of the *Academic Related Professional Staff committee* (ARPS) raised a point of order and asked to shorten speaking times from the start; 4 minutes

to move motions and 2 minutes to second motions. This was **approved** by conference.

2.4 Following this, the CBC report ***was moved and adopted by conference.***

**3** The minutes of the HESC, 2016 were **approved** by conference.

#### **4 Pay (taken in private session)**

4.1 Joanna de Groot, Chair of Conference introduced the private session on pay and members who were not UCU members or UCU staff were asked to leave the hall. Paul Bridge, National Head of Higher Education and Secretary to the Higher Education committee was invited to speak.

4.2 In his address to conference, Paul Bridge gave an overview of the past year and key events during this time. Paul spoke about this year's pay negotiations, the development of the claim and the core demands, the employer's offers, UCU's response and the work of the national negotiators, the difficulties with the New JNCHES process and the outcomes of national bargaining. Paul also highlighted the impact of recently lodged local claims covering gender pay (30 plus) and precarious employment (40 plus) and how this was putting pressure on employers at both branch and UK level. The Head of HE extended his thanks to branches and reps who had been involved in this area of work with his team and contributed to ensure that pay and pay equality are central to UCU's campaigning and negotiating strategies.

4.3 Turning to the recent ballot successes, Paul paid tribute to the recent ballot results at Brighton, Manchester Metropolitan and Leeds ballot results, where the branches implemented their GTVO campaign, worked with regional and national officials and delivered a 50% plus turnout and a yes vote for action. Paul affirmed that UCU will rise to the challenge of the anti-trade union laws and will continue to protect its members' interests.

4.4 Paul commented that HE pay at a UK level remains a key strategic matter for UCU. The outcome of recent New JNCHES negotiations had resulted in four disputes in five years and that the employers make strategic choices in regards to where and how resources are prioritised. The employers were choosing to suppress pay at a UK level. UCU was responding with local claims and would not be waiting for the UK machinery to carry on as before, it now had to catch up.

4.5 In regards to the UCEA final offer made on 27 April, the recent branch consultation indicated that about 65% members may be inclined to accept the pay offer this year, however this was not a full member consultative ballot.

4.6 Paul Bridge further stated that other work areas of the Bargaining and Negotiations team could not go unnoticed. These include work on fighting casualisation and, precarious contracts with relevant campaigns. This essential work will continue and be supported by the team. In addition new bargaining guidance will be developed for branches. UCU will not wait for the New JNCHES machinery to deliver for the most precarious members, UCU will demand change and negotiate and campaign, and take action if necessary.

4.7 There were no questions to the report following which conference applauded the address and **accepted** the report. Debate on motions followed.

## 5 Debate on Motions

**5.1** Motions HE1 to HE6 were taken as a block (*a list of speakers are noted after the block of motions*).

**HE1, HE Pay, Higher Education Committee** was moved by Dave Anderson, University of Glasgow and seconded by Jo McNeill, University of Liverpool. During the debate, Sean Wallis, UCL, proposed that the recommendations in UCUBANHE/16 be taken in parts. The Chair explained that the recommendations were presented as a block and would require a decision on these, as a block. This was debated however and Conference voted **in favour** to take the recommendations in parts (93F/65A).

Following this, Conference voted as follows:-

**Recommendation 2**, the consultative ballot will open on Monday 5 June and close on Wednesday 28 June. The result will be considered by HEC on 30 June. This recommendation was **lost** (77f/81a with 9 abstentions).

HE Sector conference noted the report and approved the recommendations of the national negotiators, **as amended** in UCUBANHE/16. **HE1 was carried as amended by the vote on recommendation 2:**

*The national negotiators recommend that:*

1. *In line with the policy established by conference, the UCEA final offer is put to members in a consultative ballot on the basis that it is the best achievable through negotiation. The ballot will include not only the option to accept or reject the employers' final offer, but also in the event members reject, whether they are prepared to take industrial action either in the form of strikes or action short of a strike;*
2. *On 30 June HEC will also consider a provisional plan for industrial action to include:*
  - *Preparations for an industrial action ballot*
  - *Preparations for the Get the Vote Out Campaign*
  - *Consideration of the possible forms of industrial action*
  - *Convening autumn briefings to involve branches in developing the action plan*
3. *Should members accept the final offer UCU will write to UCEA and confirm that an agreement has been reached in respect of the 2017/18 New JNCHES pay negotiations;*
4. *Should members reject the final offer, which needs a majority of members to vote for action on at least a 50% turnout, UCU will register a failure to agree and invoke the New JNCHES dispute resolution procedure; (carried 81f/77a with 9 abstentions)*
5. *UCU should coordinate the dispute resolution talks with other HE trade unions who are also in dispute, and consider any joint action.*

**HE2, National and local action, University of Brighton, Grand Parade** was moved by Mark Abel, University of Brighton.

**HE2A.1 Higher Education Committee** moved by Michael McKrell, HEC, University of Central Lancashire **was lost;**

Replace 'unsuccessful' with 'difficult' in point 1.

**HE2A.2 Northumbria University** moved by Mark Husmann, Northumbria University **was also lost;**

*Replace Conference resolves point i. with: 'i. to hold a consultative sector conference in the autumn of 2017 to consider the future of UCU HE strategy.'*

**HE2, was carried unamended:**

Conference notes:

1. the series of unsuccessful national campaigns;
2. the Trade Union Bill's alteration to ballot thresholds impeding industrial action;
3. threats of pay docking that are intended to deter ASOS;
4. the particular difficulty created for national action.

Conference believes:

- a. without national action, national terms and conditions will be eroded in post-92s;
- b. across the sector only the strongest branches will make gains while conditions for members in most will deteriorate;
- c. branches will continually seek to improve terms and conditions of members and the gender pay gap, and to reduce casualisation locally, but UCU also needs a national industrial strategy;
- d. a national strategy needs to contain a clear plan for escalation in response to management intimidation if it is to be credible;
- e. Regional Committees must be at the centre of co-ordinating solidarity and support for local disputes.

Conference resolves:

- i. a special sector conference in autumn will determine a national UCU industrial strategy.

**HE3 Industrial strategy, University of Bath** moved by Michael Carley, University of Bath **was lost** (67F/84A with 9 abstentions):

*Given the repeated failure of industrial action to win concessions on pay and pensions in higher education, and the increased difficulty of organizing industrial action under the Trade Union Act 2016, it is clear that we must make provision for alternative forms of industrial action. These should include the option of indefinite strike at a small numbers of institution, funded by members at non-striking institutions.*

*Conference then instructs HEC to develop a framework for industrial action which can be implemented on a branch-by-branch basis, to include:*

1. *a mechanism for selecting individual branches which will be called out;*
2. *a means for setting and collecting a levy to be used to fund action at those branches;*
3. *a method of deciding when and how to cease industrial action at those branches;*
4. *guidance to branches and regional committees on campaigning in support of striking branches.*

**HE4 E ballots, South East Regional HE Sector Committee** was moved by Patricia McManus, University of Brighton and HEC.

**HE4A.1 Higher Education Committee** was moved by Douglas Chalmers, President elect, and HEC, was **carried**:

In point 1., delete the full stop at the end of the first sentence and 'Not all of the levels of our Union' at the beginning of the second sentence and replace with: 'and the need for all levels of the Union to'

Add new point 4.: 'notes the importance of the new Get the Vote Out strategy' and then renumber existing 4. as 5.

In new 5. add at end of a.: 'especially during Get the Vote Out campaigning'

Delete b.

**HE4 was carried as amended by HE4A.1:**

Sector conference:

1. recognises the centrality and the difficulty of Union communication and the need for all levels of the Union to have clear, consistent and popular channels of communication;
2. recognises the temptation to use electronic communication – in particular online surveys and emails – to substitute for rather than to complement face-to-face meetings;
3. wishes to reiterate a commitment to face-to-face meetings as part of the core substantive democracy of our Union. From local to national level, discussions – not consultations – are key to developing a campaigning, recruitment and industrial strategy fit for the twenty-first century;
4. notes the importance of the new Get the Vote Out strategy
5. calls for:
  - a. more support for branches from those leading UCU nationally. Elected HEC members must be resourced to visit branches in their region annually or more often where necessary;

**HE5 National pay bargaining, University of Leeds** was moved by Tim Goodall, University of Leeds and **carried**:

This HE Sector Conference notes the following from the General Secretary:

'That means changing the way we negotiate taking the fight for fair pay and reduced workloads to institution level where the money is if the employers won't negotiate seriously nationally.'

This HE Sector Conference believes:

1. When we fight together in unity, the stronger sections of the union give confidence to bring the weaker ones into the action.
2. Breaking down into local bargaining would destroy any prospects of fair and equal pay.
3. Agreeing and carrying out an effective industrial action strategy to its conclusion has the greatest chance of defeating intransigent employers.

This HE Sector Conference re-affirms:

- a. UCU's commitment to national pay bargaining.

**HE6 (EP), Involving members in HE Pay strategies, Yorkshire and Humberside Regional HE Sector Committee** was moved by Jessica Jacobs, Anti-Casualisation committee and Queen Mary University of London. Elizabeth Lawrence, UCU's immediate past President (and Sheffield Hallam University) also spoke to the motion.

**HE6A.1 Anti-Casualisation Committee was carried:-**

Add new point 4: 'ensuring mechanisms are devised to fully include staff on casualised contracts in the development of industrial and industrial action strategies, with full recognition of the relationship between the fight against casualisation and the fight for fair pay for all.'

**HE6 (EP) was carried as amended by HE6A.1:**

Noting the lessons of previous pay claims, HESC calls for:

1. full involvement of branches and regions in the development of industrial action strategies;
2. reports to regional briefing meetings on the achievements of local negotiations on gender pay gaps and job security;
3. provision for feedback from members through branches, regional and national meetings.
4. ensuring mechanisms are devised to fully include staff on casualised contracts in the development of industrial and industrial action strategies, with full recognition of the relationship between the fight against casualisation and the fight for fair pay for all

*Speakers in the debate, on pay, **motions HE1 to HE6** included Barry Cooper, University of Exeter, Carlo Morelli, University of Dundee, Dominique Lauterburg, Manchester Metropolitan University, Sean Wallis, UCL, Vicky Blake, University of Leeds, Geoff Abbott, Newcastle University, Julie Wilkinson, Manchester Metropolitan University, Glyn Heath, University of Salford, Rachel Cohen, City, University of London, Sam Morecroft, University of Sheffield, Pura Ariza, Manchester Metropolitan University, Sue Abbott, University of Newcastle, Darryn Mitussis, Queen Mary University of London, Ann Gow, University of Glasgow, Jimmy Donaghey, University of Warwick, Christina Paine, London Regional Committee, Tony Brown, UCL, Lesley Kane, Open University, Marian Mayer, Bournemouth University.*

**HE7 (EP) Winning industrial action under the new anti-trade union legislation Glasgow Caledonian University** was moved by Jen Broadhurst, Glasgow Caledonian University.

**HE7A.1 Yorkshire and Humberside Regional HE Sector Committee** was moved by Timothy Goodall, University of Leeds and **carried:**

Add at end of motion:

'Such a positive union culture could include:

- a visible UCU presence in the workplace
- well-attended union meetings
- a good local website
- a shop steward system to get the vote out

- union reps in all departments
- an active branch committee
- effective local bargaining and campaigning.'

**HE7 (EP) was carried as amended by HE7A.1:**

Conference congratulates UCU branches and HEC on the work undertaken during our recent industrial action, but notes that despite best efforts we were unsuccessful in achieving more than the imposed 1.1% pay increase.

Conference notes nevertheless that issues of the gender pay gap and anti-casualisation remain on the table for continuing discussion with local managements and at a UK level.

Conference notes that under the new anti-trade union legislation there will be increasing difficulties in launching industrial action of the type we have undertaken in recent years without a much greater involvement by branch members both in the ballot and in activity locally and nationally.

Conference believes that key to members involvement is the creation of a union culture that is welcoming as well as combative, and that the HEC should discuss how best to create the type of culture that makes union involvement the norm for staff in HE.

Such a positive union culture could include:

- a visible UCU presence in the workplace
- well-attended union meetings
- a good local website
- a shop steward system to get the vote out
- union reps in all departments
- an active branch committee
- effective local bargaining and campaigning.'

**HE8 Support for maximum wage differential, University of Newcastle** was moved by Geoff Abbott, Newcastle University and seconded by Joan Harvey, Newcastle University. Michael Carley, University of Bath and Marion Hersh, Glasgow University and NEC/HEC also spoke in the debate.

**HE8A.1 University of Bath** was moved by Michael Carley, University of Bath and **carried:**

Delete second paragraph and replace with: 'Congress reaffirms its belief (2012, Congress motion 12) that the highest pay in an institution should be no more than ten times the lowest.'

In third paragraph, delete '20:1' and insert '10:1'.

**Motion HE8** was **carried as amended by HE8A.1**

Conference notes that skyrocketing executive pay at universities, coupled with average real-terms pay decreases, is pushing wage inequality within universities to unacceptable levels.

This exacerbates the gender pay gap, overvalues the contributions of senior management relative to academic and support staff, and undermines the collegial nature of academia.

Congress reaffirms its belief (2012, Congress motion 12) that the highest pay in an institution should be no more than ten times the lowest.

Conference instructs the HEC to include the demand for a 10:1 maximum pay differential within its future pay negotiations.

**HE9 Dispute at Manchester Metropolitan, University Manchester Metropolitan University** was moved by Julie Wilkinson, Manchester Metropolitan and seconded by Michael Loughlin, North West Regional Committee and first time speaker to conference. Other speakers in the debate included Dominique Lauterburg, Manchester Metropolitan University, Jo McNeill, University of Liverpool and HEC, Sean Wallis, UCL and HEC, Paul Brook, University of Leicester. **HE9 was carried:**

HESC notes the:

1. MMU decision to close Cheshire campus resulting in up to 370 redundancies;
2. payment of a private company to prepare related 'business case';
3. lack of independent evaluation of the impact on the community;
4. substitution of a market-oriented rationale for academic provision, in place of effective redeployment strategy;
5. further imminent cuts at city sites being directly linked to student survey scores;
6. justification by management based on provisions of the HE Bill.

HESC agrees to:

- a. highlight systemic discrimination in student access to Higher Education consequent on reduction in capacity, especially through cuts to institutions which have track record of widening participation;
- b. oppose private sector collaborations which undermine academic independence and jobs;
- c. oppose the use of redundancy as a means of re-organisation;
- d. promote the value of e-balloting as used in MMU campaign to resist compulsory redundancies.

**L4 Late motion, University of Manchester**, moved by Roger Walden, University of Manchester **was carried by unanimous consent:**

*Conference notes that:*

1. *The University of Manchester is threatening to make 140 academics and 31 support staff redundant, with over 900 staff initially at risk.*
2. *A meeting of 288 UMUCU members voted nem com in favour of holding a consultative ballot on industrial action if the University refuses to remove the threat of compulsory redundancy*
3. *In 2015/2016 the University had total reserves of £1.5bn including £430m in cash reserves and recorded a surplus of £59.7m. There is therefore no financial crisis to justify compulsory redundancies now or in the immediate future.*

4. *The threats to jobs at Manchester University and MMU have major implications for the HE sector.*

*Conference calls on both Manchester universities to commit to no compulsory redundancies and to work with the recognised trade unions in achieving this and on UCU to commit resources to their local branches to fight these attacks on jobs.*

**L5 Edge Hill University** was moved by Pat Hornby-Atkinson, Observer. Anthony Keating, Edgehill University made the request for the mover and this was accepted by Conference. **L5 was carried by unanimous consent:**

*On 12<sup>th</sup> May 2017, six UCU members of Edge Hill University's Faculty of Education were issued with notice of compulsory redundancy. The deadline for concluding the process is 26<sup>th</sup> May. Although management assured members of their intention to 'genuinely' engage in discussions concerning their business case, none of the managers concerned were available for consultations for the first four days of the following week. Prior to this announcement, management gave no indication that these redundancies were imminent, despite months of talks between UCU and University senior management concerning mis-management of the Faculty.*

*The timescale from notice to finish is a worryingly unparalleled 19 days. The branch, assisted by our regional officers is working to extend this and assure our members of fair treatment.*

*We call on Conference to:*

- 1** *Condemn the actions of Edge Hill University Management;*
- 2** *Support members with legal resource to challenge Fast Track Redundancy.*

**HE10 University of Leeds** moved by Brendon Nicholls, University of Leeds and seconded by Mark Taylor-Batty, University of Leeds **was carried:**

Conference notes that UCU has declared a dispute of national significance with the University of Leeds over its proposed new Statutes, and that UCU has balloted its branch membership for industrial action, following an indicative ballot showing a 74% majority in favour of industrial action.

Conference opposes:

1. the introduction of a new procedure for dismissal for Some Other Substantial Reason
2. the withdrawal of the right to an independent, medically qualified expert at Appeal stage in Ill-Health procedure
3. the withdrawal of the right to an independent, legally qualified expert at Appeal Stage for all other procedures in Statute

Conference resolves that if the University does not reach agreement with UCU, UCU will move to defend academic freedom by moving to the censure and academic boycott of the University of Leeds.

- 5.2** USS SWG report to conference was taken in private session. Conference was asked to note only members of USS should be in attendance for this session.

- 5.3** Paul Bridge spoke to the SWG report as contained in UCUBAN/HE17 and addressed conference. A number of areas were highlighted on the scheme throughout the year - work undertaken by the negotiators in challenging the USS methodologies for which template letters had been provided as a guide for use in writing to the employer and engaging branches on the USS valuation. Meetings between USS and ShareAction had taken place which the Chair and Paul had attended and views and common interests had been shared. Conference noted that a follow up meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 30 May for the purpose of making a decision on deferring the original timetable for consultation from June to September.
- 5.4** Jimmy Donaghey, Chair, SWG also addressed conference and indicated the need to continue to put pressure on the employer. The Chair stated there was no need for benefit cuts nor increased contributions since members had already taken the burden from previous cuts which took effect from 2011 – 2014. The need to communicate with branches and engage over the next few months over the valuation methodology remained crucial.
- 5.5** Jimmy Donaghey moved the USS SWG report which was **accepted** by sector conference. The debate of motions on USS followed.

**HE11 USS, Higher Education Committee** was moved by Jimmy Donaghey, Chair, SWG and University of Warwick. Amanda Williams, NEC and University of East Anglia seconded the motion and report.

Other speakers on the motion and report included Catherine Pope, University of Salford, Sam Morecroft, University of Sheffield, Carlo Morelli, SWG and HEC, Rachel Cohen, City, University of London and HEC, Steven Watson, University of Cambridge and Marion Hersh, University of Glasgow and HEC. *Marion Hersh proposed that section 2 recommendations in the report, be taken in parts. This was **lost**.*

For the purpose of conference and for clarification, the Chair explained the 'contingent' factor in section 2 of the recommendations and Jimmy Donaghey in his right of reply to motion HE11, also clarified Marion Hersh's concern on ShareAction contingency and added USS SWG will continue to represent member interest in this role.

***Motion HE11 was subsequently carried:***

HE Sector conference noted the report and approved the recommendations of the Superannuation Working Group contained in UCUBANHE/17:

#### *Section 1 Recommendations*

*Conference approved the following recommendations for any negotiations should the Board indicate a technical deficit:*

- 1. Negotiators must make their first priority the defence of the current defined benefit section as this is progressive in terms of redistribution and risk;*
- 2. Once the Board has indicated its technical provisions, UCU should hold a series of regionally based briefings for pensions officers and other branch officers;*
- 3. Once the position of the Board has become clear, a briefing note for all members in HE should be produced and circulated;*
- 4. Should employers make proposals which threaten benefits and particularly the defined benefit section, Conference delegates to HEC the capacity to call a decision-making conference of pre-92 Branches to determine a response, including putting*

*forward plans for industrial action in defence of our pensions, taking into account the Get the Vote Out paper;*

- 5. Should the process move at a pace where an urgent ballot of members is required, Conference delegates this decision to the HEC;*
- 6. SWG members and where necessary, other members of HEC, to attend branch General Meetings to brief members at the request of branches*
- 7. Negotiators and branches should continue to challenge the Gilts based approach in line with previous Conference policy;*
- 8. Achieving parity of benefits with the Teachers' Pensions Scheme should continue to be a priority and be a central point in campaigning with members.*

#### **Section 2 Recommendations:**

- 1. UCU to lobby for and support the adoption of an ethical investment policy by USS*
- 2. UCU to continue to seek to meet with ShareAction contingent on ShareAction respecting our role as the recognised member representative.*

#### **(End of private session)**

**HE12 The glass staircase, Disabled Members Standing Committee** was moved by Paul Lunn, Observer to conference, LGBT members standing committee. Conference accepted the call from Emma-Jane Phillips, Northumbria University and HEC to allow the mover.

**HE12A.1 Higher Education Committee** was moved by Marion Hersh, University of Glasgow and HEC, and **carried:**

In line 1 replace 'a person's disability' by 'being disabled'

In the second sentence, add 'disabled' before 'senior staff' and delete 'with a disability'.

In bullet point 1.:

replace 'UK senior University disabled leaders' by 'disabled staff at all levels in UK universities, including in senior leadership positions. This should include data on black, female and LGBT+ disabled staff at all levels, including senior leaders'.

**HE12** was seconded formally and **carried as amended:**

In a fully inclusive workplace being disabled should not provide a barrier to career progression, however it does appear that disabled members are underrepresented in senior University leadership positions. Equality demographics data is often only provided for the total work place population, which obscures the true numbers of disabled senior staff. Women's rights groups have often argued that there is a glass ceiling that impedes progress to management positions, but is there a 'glass staircase' preventing disabled people working to their full potential?

Conference calls upon Higher Education Committee to:

1. use Freedom of Information (FOI) requests to analyse the true proportion of disabled staff at all levels in UK universities, including in senior leadership positions. This should include data on black, female and LGBT+ disabled staff at all levels, including senior leaders. This information will provide a real indication of just how inclusive the UK HE workplace is;
2. raise the results of the research with the employers and campaign for inclusive promotion and progression policies in HE.

**HE13 (EP) Supporting local Gender pay and precarious employment campaigns**  
**Higher Education Committee** was moved and seconded formally.

**HE13A.1 Women Members Standing Committee** was moved by Christina Paine, Anti-Casualisation committee and **carried**:

Add point 3.:

- '3. Conference calls for increased facility time for local negotiators and more involvement of new representatives in local negotiations.'

**HE13 was carried as amended:**

Conference welcomes the HEC's actions over 2016/17 to tackle precarious work and the gender pay gap in higher education. This work has included raising the public profile of these issues, increasing campaigning leverage for our branches and providing detailed guidance and model letters to branches and regions to assist negotiators.

Conference notes that with the circulation of the national model claims, more branches than ever are engaged in campaigning and negotiating on precarious work and the gender pay gap.

1. Conference calls on the HEC to continue work to secure more agreements on casualisation and the gender pay gap and to ensure that examples of good practice are publicised and disseminated throughout the union.
2. Conference further calls for the HEC and branches to embed recruitment into all future precarious and gender pay activity.
3. Conference calls for increased facility time for local negotiators and more involvement of new representatives in local negotiations.

**HE14 Gender pay in Higher Education, Women Members Standing Committee**

moved by Victoria Showunimi, UCL and HEC, first time speaker at sector conference, was seconded by Janice Aitken, University of Dundee. Anne Alexander, University of Cambridge spoke to the motion. **HE14 was carried:**

Conference welcomes the HE campaign to end the gender pay gap. The gap acknowledges that not only does gender discrimination create pay inequality but also poor maternity rights, lack of flexible working and affordable childcare to support work/life balance. This means the traditional pipeline to progression at work is blocked. Return to work often means a return to a precarious contract.

Women's pay is an issue for all of us and collective action means a collective voice on saying no to pay discrimination.

Conference calls for:

1. HEC to deliver on this national campaign ensuring intersecting issues such as women on casual contracts, black and disabled women's pay are part of the conversation and action.
2. The rate for the job website to include women's career progression, impact of casualization on women's pay and highlight the impact of any successes at local level.
3. HE equal pay cases to be identified and prioritised.

**HE15 Policies and LGBT+ Equality in HE, LGBT Members Standing Committee** was moved by Joao Florencio, Observer (LGBT members) and writer of the motion. Mary Jennings, University of Cambridge and HEC asked that the motion be moved accordingly and this was **accepted** by conference. The motion was seconded formally. Timothy Goodall, University of Leeds also spoke to the motion which was **carried**:

Conference notes:

1. The inconsistent and variable policies relating to LGBT issues in the HE sector.
2. The fact that many of these policies are significantly out of date in their approach to issues such as HIV status and discrimination issues.
3. The need for policies affecting LGBT staff in HE to be in line with current legislation and health research.

Conference therefore instructs HEC:

- a. To ask all HE branches to provide information about current policies impacting on LGBT people in their institution.
- b. To use this information to work with UUK's Equality Challenge Unit to update and harmonise policies impacting on LGBT people and issues in HE institutions.
- c. To report progress on this work to Congress 2018.

**HE16 Covert variable hours contracts, Open University** was moved by Lesley Kane, Open University and seconded formally. Marion Hersh, University of Glasgow and HEC also spoke to the motion. **HE16** was **carried**:

Conference reaffirms the view that all contracts that do not guarantee minimum hours or a minimum quantity of paid work are zero hours contracts.

Conference also believes that minimum hours are not "guaranteed" if the contract allows the employer to reduce hours below the minimum without mutual agreement or a redundancy process, and that a minimum must be an ongoing minimum rather than a percentage of the previous year's hours.

Conference resolves that all purported FTE or fractional contracts containing clauses allowing the employer to reduce hours and pay should not be considered fixed FTE contracts, but should be judged against HE policy, guidance and criteria for variable hours contracts. They should also be considered zero hours contracts if there is no genuinely guaranteed minimum.

Conference asks the HEC to ensure that this is reflected in HE ratification checklists and guidance and make sure it is widely known.

**HE17 Composite: Teaching Only Contracts University of Brighton, Falmer, Anti-casualisation Committee** was moved by Christina Paine, Anti-Casualisation committee and London Regional Committee.

**HE17A.1 North West Regional HE Sector Committee was carried:**

After 'guarantees of scholarly activity and research' at end of paragraph four insert:

'We are concerned that individual post-92 institutions are introducing local and piecemeal changes to workload and RASA, and that these effectively constitute a breach of the Contract and its detailed prescriptions.'

After point c., insert:

'd. Survey post-92 institutions to gather evidence on the scale of the breach of the Post-92 Contract.

e. Initiate a national campaign in defence of the Contract, including education of members in its provisions.'

Speakers in the debate included Nadia Edmund, University of Brighton, Pura Ariza, Manchester Metropolitan, Amanda Williams, University of East Anglia, Joan Harvey, University of Newcastle, Ronald Haynes, University of Cambridge, Nalini Vittal, UCL; Simon Smith, Coventry University along with Carrie Benjamin, SOAS, University of London, first time speakers at conference, Liz Lawrence, NEC and Sheffield Hallam University.

**Remittance of motion HE17** proposed by Amanda Williams and Joan Harvey was **lost**.

**HE17** was **carried as amended by HE17A.1**:

HESC congratulates activists who have campaigned to expose the unfairness of casualised contracts. It welcomes UCU's efforts to end these contracts where they are not wanted by employees and replace them with contracts with guaranteed contact, teaching-related and research and scholarship hours.

Conference notes that some employers, while ostensibly moving away from zero hours contracts because they have been shamed by UCU, are trying to bring in teaching-only contracts as a way to reduce their wage bill or to render their employee pool more flexible.

Conference is deeply concerned about the introduction of inferior 'Teaching Only' contracts as a "solution" to various appalling casualised contracts across HE. We note the example of London Metropolitan University where teaching focussed contracts ignore:

1. workload constraints (550 FST maximum);
2. contractual provision for research and scholarly activity;
3. pay is not equal to the post-92 national contract fractional position;
4. annual incremental progression opportunities.

Though a step up for some HPLs these contracts can be significantly weaker than permanent contracts. Across all universities HPLs need a fair academic contract with guarantees of scholarly activity and research.

We are concerned that individual post-92 institutions are introducing local and piecemeal changes to workload and RASA, and that these effectively constitute a breach of the Contract and its detailed prescriptions.

HESC resolves to:

1. Defend the academic contract with the full repertoire of its resources, up to and including industrial action.
2. Mount a public campaign in defence of the link between teaching and research.

3. Work with the NUS to ensure that the student community knows the value of having staff who are fully resourced to do research and to engage in scholarly activity.

We call on UCU to:

- a. Map the introduction of teaching only contracts for HPLs across HE, including national data on the provisions they attack.
- b. Ensure any such contracts provide reasonable, equitable terms to substantive staff contracts including adequate time for scholarly activity and/or research.
- c. Launch a national Campaign for equitable academic contracts for all HPL staff.
- d. Survey post-92 institutions to gather evidence on the scale of the breach of the Post-92 Contract.
- e. Initiate a national campaign in defence of the Contract, including education of members in its provisions.

### **HE18 Compliance reporting for fixed-term research project employment**

**University of Oxford** was moved by Phillip Inglesant, University of Oxford and **carried:**

Conference notes the increasing numbers of academic staff recruited as fixed-term staff (postdoctoral researchers, research officers and the like), and the great variance in their knowledge of employment rights and conditions of service and severance.

Conference calls upon Research Councils UK (RCUK), the Wellcome Trust and other major research funding bodies to include a mandatory question on grant reporting documentation to be filled in by Principal Investigators (PIs) and administrators in final reporting, asking them to confirm that all fixed-term employees have been notified of their employment rights and severance options (including statutory and employer-specific redeployment and retention rights) and have been paid all due benefits including severance benefits.

Conference notes that UCU could offer to support such bodies on developing appropriate wording.

### **HE19 Checklists for the ratification of UCU agreements on Hourly Paid Staff,**

**London Metropolitan University, City Branch** was moved by Christina Paine, Anti-Casualisation committee and London Regional committee and seconded by Sean Wallis, HEC and UCL. **HE19** was **carried:**

Higher Education Conference notes with concern:

1. there are hourly-paid lecturers (HPLs) not yet assimilated to the pay and grading scales under the Framework Agreement;
2. for others, assimilation has been made while retaining precarious contracts.

Conference:

- a. welcomes the work of the National Review Panel - Hourly Paid (NRP-HP) on proposed local agreements in both cases;
- b. notes that the nationally agreed checklist for assimilation proposals has not always been readily accessible to branch committees or members of NRP-HP;

- c. HESC calls on HEC to ensure branch committee members, branch negotiators, regional offices, and all NRP-HP members have access to:
  - i. the nationally agreed checklist to assess the acceptability of proposed agreements that deal with the assimilation of hourly paid staff;
  - ii. an adapted checklist, produced in consultation with ACC and NRP-HP, to assess the acceptability of proposed 'non-assimilation' agreements for new contracts for HPLs who have been assimilated on precarious contracts.

**HE20 Framework Agreement, forgotten promises and NRP-HP, Anti-Casualisation Committee** moved by Lesley Kane, Open University was seconded formally and **carried**:

Conference notes that:

- 1. many pre-92 universities agreed local Framework implementations including commitments to assimilate hourly paid staff;
- 2. such commitments remain (partly or wholly) unfulfilled in some institutions, and may have been forgotten;
- 3. HP ratification originated in belated Framework "assimilation" of HPLs in pre-92s, in which some local negotiators had not understood the significance of casualising clauses;
- 4. some employers still seek to insert casualising clauses in contracts appearing to offer reasonable job security.

Conference asks HEC to:

- a. ensure national and local archives (if available) are used to retrieve unfulfilled commitments to assimilate HP staff, and to draw them to the attention of local branch officers/ reps, especially those responsible for Anti-Casualisation or for representing HP staff;
- b. issue guidance on casualising clauses to branches and ratification bodies;
- c. continue with current arrangements for representation of casualised members on the NRP-HP, involving the nationally elected HEC casualised representative and a member put forward by ACC.

**HE21 TU Involvement in Grading and Outcomes for ARP Staff, Academic Related, Professional Staff Committee** was moved by Tim Barrett, Chair, Academic-related Professional staff committee and University of Bath. Sharon Sweeney, Vice-Chair Academic-related Professional staff committee and University of Dundee, spoke in support of the motion. Ronald Hayes, University of Cambridge also spoke to the motion. HE21, seconded formally was **carried**:

Conference notes that, where the Framework Agreement is being broken by institutions excluding Trade Union representatives from involvement in job evaluation and grading processes, the outcome for academic-related, professional staff is often considerably worse than for academic staff.

Conference calls on the HEC to survey branches to establish:

1. whether there is meaningful Trade Union involvement in the institution's job evaluation and grading process;
2. whether that process produces outcomes that are detrimental to academic-related, professional staff, when compared with those for academic staff.

**HE22 Two-Stage Capability Policies University College London** was moved by Tony Brown, UCL and seconded by Saladin Meckled-Garcia, UCL. Joan Harvey, University of Newcastle and Nils Markusson, Lancaster University, first time speaker at conference also spoke in the debate.

**HE22A.1, Higher Education Committee** moved by Marion Hersh was **carried**:

After point 3. add:

'Conference reaffirms its support for the abolition of the default retirement age.'

In the paragraph beginning, 'Conference believes', insert after 'Conference': 'reaffirms its opposition to the use of 'Capability' policies to get rid of staff and'

**HE22** was **carried as amended by HE22A.1**:

Conference notes:

1. a new imposed Capability Policy at University College London that reduces three formal stages to two;
2. that UCL has expressed a desire to introduce a 'Performance Development Review' scheme linked to Capability;
3. the abolition of the Default Retirement Age means that compulsory dismissal tends to mean large redundancy payments, and therefore motivates capability-based dismissals.

Conference reaffirms its support for the abolition of the default retirement age.

Conference reaffirms its opposition to the use of 'Capability' policies to get rid of staff and believes that 'Capability' policies in HE tend to be ineffective for improving performance for a range of reasons: they encourage artificial target-setting and 'game playing', discourage speculative research activity and collaboration, and undermine collegiality and trust.

Conference resolves:

- i. to actively and publicly oppose any "new norm" of two-stage Capability Procedures;
- ii. to support campaigns against intensified capability schemes at UCL and elsewhere;
- iii. to join with NUS, sister trade unions and other organisations to highlight the threat posed by such schemes to the academic mission of the sector.

**5.6** The Chair informed sector conference on advice received from CBC following a request to further shorten speaking times for movers and seconders of motions. CBC proposed that motions listed as existing policy, be moved formally in order to get through business on the agenda; these included HE33, HE35, HE36, HE38, HE40.

**5.7** This proposal was **accepted** by conference however Marion Hersh further proposed that HE38 should not be included in the set of motions. A vote was taken and this proposal was **lost**. The debate of motions continued.

### ***New paragraph, Recognition and organisation***

#### **HE23 Continuing the campaign against privatisation of Higher Education Higher Education Committee, Yorkshire and Humberside Regional HE Sector Committee**

was moved by Steve Lui, University of Huddersfield and seconded by Sean Wallis, HEC and UCL. Amanda Williams, HEC and University of East Anglia spoke to the motion which was subsequently **carried**:

HESC notes that, whatever the outcome of the HE Bill, UCU will need to continue to campaign against privatisation in the HE sector and against the entry of private for-profit providers into the sector.

To this end HESC instructs the HEC to:

1. Maintain lobbying and campaigning for a robust regulatory framework which protects academic freedom and academic standards, student welfare, fair employment practices for university staff, and the international standing of UK Higher Education.
2. Explore the feasibility and usefulness of establishing, in conjunction with NUS and relevant educational and professional associations, independent monitoring arrangements which keep a watching brief and report periodically on developments in the private for-profit sector, including entry and exit of providers from the sector, student and staff complaints and grievances, and matters of academic standards and governance.

#### **HE24 Composite: Workload and Stress, Higher Education Committee, University of Glasgow** was moved by Julia Charlton, HEC Vice-Chair and University of Northumbria University. Dorothy Aidulis, University of Glasgow seconded the motion and HE24 was **carried**:

Conference recognises the work and commitment of members who have campaigned to ensure University workplaces and practices are not detrimental to physical or mental health. Health and safety is rightly a key priority for our union.

Numerous factors across the sector, including workload, performance management, managerialism, and precarious employment have contributed to growing numbers of colleagues being medically unfit for work due to work-related stress. However, many employers have been slow to tackle work related mental health issues or to identify steps to support safer working.

Conference notes the 2016 workload survey report and the need to tackle workload intensification and excessive working hours.

Conference:

1. welcomes the updated branch bargaining guidance in UCUBAN/HE7 as the basis for practical support to branches campaigning and negotiating on workloads;
2. believes that UCU should develop effective workplace organisation backed by central support to reduce workload intensification and its detrimental impact on members;
3. recognises that the statutory rights and functions of trade union safety representatives are crucial in local and national workload collective bargaining.

Conference resolves to:

- a. launch a UK wide campaign to secure agreements with the employers to carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments, to identify and control risks associated with unreasonable working hours and workload intensification;
- b. provide central support for local campaigns and negotiations for improved workload agreements;
- c. seek increases in the number of trade union safety representatives throughout the sector.

Conference also urges HESA to introduce an annual sector wide survey of all University staff, to include the HSE Management Standards Indicator questionnaire, and that HEIs be required to collect data on work-related stress absences as part of their HESA return. By collectivising the issue UCU can highlight poor practices, support members, and tackle the underlying causes of work-related stress.

**HE25 Mental health, Goldsmiths, University of London** was moved by Marian Carty, Goldsmiths University of London who also spoke in support of HE25A.1. Rebecca Gumbrell-McCormick, Birkbeck, University of London also spoke in favour of the motion.

**HE25A.1 Anti-Casualisation Committee** was moved by Vicky Blake, Chair of the Anti-Casualisation committee and University of Leeds. This amendment was **carried**:

Add to end of first paragraph:

'This pressure exacerbates already existing recognised mental health conditions. It is difficult for those staff to disclose or to ask for reasonable adjustments for fear of losing work. The pressure is compounded by increasingly stressful and punitive performance management.'

Add in bullet 1., between 'mental health services' and 'available': 'and reasonable adjustments'

Add new bullet 2.: 'That the audit reviews the particular mental health and contractual problems faced by precarious workers and draws up guidelines for services and reasonable adjustments for both casualised staff and students.'

(Renumber old bullet 2. to bullet 3.)

**HE25** was subsequently **carried as amended by HE25A.1**:

Conference notes:

The rising pressure on staff and students' mental health due to increased debt, casualisation and workloads (that include, for staff, pastoral care of students in distress). This pressure exacerbates already existing recognised mental health conditions. It is difficult for those staff to disclose or to ask for reasonable adjustments for fear of losing work. The pressure is compounded by increasingly stressful and punitive performance management

Conference believes:

Mental health is a growing and urgent concern for both staff and students and that UCU must address the roots of the problem and campaign for high quality mental health care provision on campuses

Conference instructs:

1. The HEC to lobby UCEA to instruct employers to conduct an audit of mental health services reasonable adjustments available for staff and students in higher education institutions and to draw up terms and conditions that explicitly recognise mental health as a workplace issue.
2. That the audit reviews the particular mental health and contractual problems faced by precarious workers and draws up guidelines for services and reasonable adjustments for both casualised staff and students
3. To campaign for a commitment that institutions should review mental health services and devote an agreed proportion of revenue to in-house mental health services that are tailored to higher education.

**HE26 The Stern Review of REF: Tackling the Negative Consequences, University of Warwick** was moved by Arianna Tassinari, University of Warwick.

**HE26A.1 Southern Regional HE Sector Committee** was moved by Catherine Pope on behalf of the Southern Regional HE sector committee. Amendment HE26A.1 was **carried**:

Add before 'Conference resolves to:' the sentence: 'Congress particularly commends paragraph 67 of the Stern review and asks that the prescribed minimum number of outputs from an individual be zero.'

Renee Prendergast, NEC and Queen's University Belfast spoke in the debate and raised concerns on the 'special circumstances' element. Marion Hersh, NEC and University of Glasgow and, Darryn Mitussis, Queen Mary University of London spoke in the debate and proposed that bullet point 2 on portability is remitted. Josh Robinson, Cardiff University also spoke in the debate.

Conference **approved** that the motion be taken in parts:

**HE 26** was carried **as amended by HE26A.1 with points i, iii, and iv; point ii, was remitted**:

Conference notes:

1. The Stern Review recommends making REF outputs non-portable;
2. It recommends removing the "Special Circumstances" element that, previously, levelled the playing-field for early-career academics and those who had taken extended leave.

Conference believes:

- a. Publishing academics should retain ownership of research output;
- b. Ending portability will harm career access, academic mobility and job security, especially for casualised and early-career academics, and those nearing retirement;
- c. A better alternative would be to retain portability but expand the "Environment" metric so institutions gained more credit for having supported outputs of academics who had left by the census date;
- d. Removing "Special Circumstances" will increase inequality by disadvantaging early-career academics, parents, carers and those with health-related absences.

Congress particularly commends paragraph 67 of the Stern review and asks that the prescribed minimum number of outputs from an individual be zero.

Conference resolves to:

- i. Protect the intellectual ownership rights of academics;
- ii. *Defend portability of REF outputs; (remitted)***
- iii. Resist the negative consequences of removing "Special Circumstances";
- iv. Communicate the above to Universities UK.

**HE27 Gender Equality and Teaching Observation and assessment Schemes Women Members Standing Committee**, was moved by Ariane Bougain, Women's Committee and Northumbria University. The motion was seconded formally.

Speakers in the debate included Jill Wilkinson, Manchester Metropolitan, Valerie Coultas, Kingston University, Donna Chambers, University of Sunderland.

Valerie Coultas proposed that point 1 of the motion should be taken separately and also proposed remittance of point 1. A vote count was taken and **conference voted in favour for point 1 to be taken separately. Remittance was subsequently carried for point 1; point 2, was carried:**

Conference notes that the Lords backed an amendment to the higher education bill that says universities' performance in the teaching excellence framework should not be linked to the tuition fees they are allowed to charge. This is welcome news as the proposed obligatory TEF metrics use student evaluation to measure teaching quality. Students tend, as research shows, to be highly biased towards male lecturers, hence discriminatory attitudes against female lecturers pertain. Nonetheless in wider observation and assessment schemes female lecturers are still more likely to get low scores, especially from male students and therefore may be subject to less favourable outcomes which may include less promotion, pay or redundancy.

**1. *HESC resolves to campaign for full gender proofing of all observation schemes including the TEF (remittance carried)***

2. To ensure that issues of gender equality are fully addressed in the debate round all aspects of the Higher Education Bill.

**HE28 Academic Freedom, Northumbria University was withdrawn:**

*Conference instructs the HEC to bring to Conference in 2018 a statement in defence of Academic Freedom as an addition to UCU Rules Section 2 'Aims and Objects'.*

*In this era of free reign hate speech engendered by Brexit and Trump, and the rise of consumerist education, this Conference supports the principles of academic freedom and the position:*

- 1. that HE academics, both inside and outside the classroom, must have unrestricted liberty to question and test received wisdom;*
- 2. that intrusive electronic monitoring e.g. Panopto lecture recording should always be optional not compulsory; and*
- 3. that academic institutions have no right to curb the exercise of this freedom by members of their staff, or to use it as grounds for disciplinary action or dismissal.*

**HE28A.1 Academic Related, Professional Staff Committee**

*Add to point 1 after 'academics' – 'and academic related professional staff'.*

## **HE28A.2 Higher Education Committee**

*In the second paragraph, add 'Prevent' after 'Trump,'*

*Delete 'and' at end of point 2., and add new bullet point 3. :*

*'3. that the introduction of external speaker policies placing conditions upon academic freedoms of staff and students have no place in universities; and'*

*Renumber existing point 3. to 4.*

## **HE28A.3 Open University**

*Add new points 4. and 5. as follows after point 3:*

*'4. that the principles of academic freedom apply to all staff who teach and/or carry out research in Higher Education Institutions, even if their institutions do not acknowledge that they are academics, and this includes those employed on casualised contracts;*

*5. that academic freedom should also cover academic related staff when the nature of their work makes it applicable.'*

**HE29 Funding and widening access to higher education, UCU Scotland Executive Committee** moved by Douglas Chalmers, ***Glasgow Caledonian and Vice President*** and seconded formally, **was carried:**

Conference welcomes the appointment of a commissioner for fair access to higher education in Scotland. However, conference notes recent budget cuts to Scottish higher education and recent job losses in a quarter of Scotland's higher education institutions. Conference notes that key to improving access are the staff that teach and support students and progress will only be made if staff are in place and able to support students.

Conference supports the recommendations of the Commission on Widening Access but believes that widening access to higher education should be more ambitious. Higher education is a benefit to the whole of society.

Conference calls on UCU to continue campaigning for the Scottish Government to appropriately fund all areas of education from pre-school, school, college, adult, community and workers' education and higher education so that the whole of society benefits from education at all levels, irrespective of ability or birth.

**HE30, Teaching Excellence Framework, UCU Scotland Executive Committee** was moved by Ann Gow, UCU Scotland and University of Glasgow and seconded formally. The motion **was carried:**

Conference is deeply concerned about the introduction of the TEF. Conference recognises the need to support high-quality teaching, but it is hard to see how the TEF will either measure or improve teaching quality. We are concerned about the use of flawed, proxy metrics as indicators of 'teaching quality', and the increased bureaucracy and game playing as a result of the TEF's implementation. Its introduction will significantly undermine the linkages between teaching, scholarship and research embedded within higher education.

Conference welcomes the two thirds of HEIs in Scotland that have not signed up to TEF, and calls on the five HEIs that have to withdraw from the process, recognising that the sophisticated quality assurance systems currently in place across Scottish HEIs better suit

the Scottish context than TEF. This is particularly relevant in terms of the Scottish-four year degree, which differentiates Scotland from the rest of the UK.

**HE31 (EP) National Student Survey (NSS) as a Metric for Teaching Excellence Black Members Standing Committee** was moved by Donna Chambers, University of Sunderland and seconded by Steve Lui, University of Huddersfield.

**HE31A.1, LGBT Members Standing Committee**, was moved by Pura Ariza of the LGBT committee and **carried**:

Add after second paragraph:

'Conference also notes that recent research has identified links between student bias and the results of exercises like the NSS, in that academics belonging to one or more protected groups tend to score lower in student feedback.'

Add further point to 'In particular, Conference:'

'3. Calls on UCU leadership to keep branches informed of ongoing research on Equality relating student bias to NSS results.'

**HE31 was carried as amended by HE31A.1:**

Conference welcomes the leadership being shown by UCU and NUS in the campaign against the use of National Student Survey as a metric in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).

Conference notes that local engagement and support of branches is crucial in the success of the campaign.

Conference also notes that recent research has identified links between student bias and the results of exercises like the NSS, in that academics belonging to one or more protected groups tend to score lower in student feedback.

Conference hereby resolves to launch a sustained campaign over the coming years for the removal of the NSS as a metric for TEF. In particular, Conference:

1. Calls on the UCU leadership to continue to work closely and develop a joint long-term campaign programme with the NUS.
2. Requests that branches engage with their local Student Unions so that both the staff and student body are informed about the current flaws in NSS results, implications of the use of NSS in TEF, the rationale for the NSS boycott campaign and why success is critical.
3. Calls on UCU leadership to keep branches informed of ongoing research on Equality relating student bias to NSS results.

**HE32 Disabled members and the TEF, Disabled Members Standing Committee** was moved by Christina Paine, London Regional Committee which was seconded formally. Rebecca McCormick, University of London, Birkbeck, also spoke to the motion which was **carried**:

Conference notes the progress of the HE bill through Parliament and the "Teaching Excellence Framework" metrics, replacing HEFCE, DfA, OFFA which will affect disabled workers disproportionately through micromanagement and increased student evaluations

and feedback (which may be discriminatory). These metrics could lead to higher level of stress and an impact on mental health conditions and issues. The metrics may be used in disciplinary action or used as criteria for redundancy. Disabled members on casualised contracts will be even more insecure.

Conference resolves to:

1. Campaign against the TEF and brief branches on the implications for disabled members including those on casualised contracts.
2. Organise a public meeting or demonstration in Parliament coinciding with the passing of the Act.
3. Ensure disabled members' rights and issues are included in discussions with Government and employers on the implementation of the TEF including reasonable adjustments and supportive policies on disclosing a disability.

**HE33 (EP) Campaign to protect Modern Foreign Languages in Higher Education**  
**Northumbria University** was moved formally by the Chair and **carried:**

Conference notes that the situation of MFL in HE is perilous, with a 57% drop in the number of undergraduates over 10 years, a dramatic fall in the number of institutions offering MFL degrees from 120 to 52, as well as in the range of languages offered. Post-1992 institutions have been particularly affected, bearing the brunt of these trends. MFL therefore risks becoming an increasingly elite subject. And yet the skills inherent in an MFL degree are more relevant now than ever, for graduate employability, business growth and the UK's future, as it increases its links across the world post-Brexit.

Conference instructs the HEC to support a broad-based campaign to save MFL in Higher Education:

1. To raise awareness of the dire state of the subject through all available channels.
2. To commit HE institutions to safeguard and develop MFL.

**HE34 LGBT+ Inclusive HE Curriculum, LGBT Members Standing Committee** was moved by Pura Ariza, LGBT and Manchester Metropolitan University. The motion was seconded formally and **carried:**

Conference notes the importance of the curriculum in challenging stereotypes and broadening understanding of the world. Conference is concerned that, under pressures of marketisation, the HE curriculum, is increasingly concerned with 'employability', particularly in post-92 institutions. Conference believes that the curriculum is a powerful tool in raising awareness around equality issues.

Conference notes the good work of LGBT+ organisations and campaigns in advancing inclusive curriculum, noting School's Out work which has been used in teacher education. Equality needs to be more than tolerance and Universities getting plaudits for tick box exercises that many equality awards are.

Conference calls on UCU to:

1. Launch a survey about LGBT+ equality in the HE curriculum, including teacher education.

2. Research work around LGBT inclusion in the curriculum to find examples of inclusive curriculum.
3. Work with learners, including the national NUS to develop, advance and promote LGBT+ inclusive curricula for use in HE.

**HE35 (EP), Opposing quality exercises which are linked to increasing student fee Birmingham City University** was moved formally by the Chair and **carried**:

HE Sector Conference stands against the privatisation of higher education. We are calling for the abolition of the REF and any other teaching and/or research "quality" exercises (TEF, NSS) that are or could be used in the future with the increase of the student fees.

**HE36 (EP) Graduate destinations as a Measure of Teaching Quality, University of Leeds** was moved formally by the Chair and **carried**:

HESC notes:

The introduction of the Teaching Excellence Framework will lead to student destinations being used as a measure of teaching quality. The strongest factors associated with success in the graduate labour market are degree class and amount and quality of work experience. Destinations statistics take no account of social, regional or biographical factors which might affect student outcomes.

HESC believes:

Universities are here to educate students and to help in ensuring that we live in a civilised society, not to produce factory fodder for industry. Whether someone obtains a job and whether that job is considered appropriate are not directly related to the quality of teaching.

HESC calls upon the HEC:

To continue to campaign against the use of graduate destinations as a measure of teaching quality.

**HE37 Journal of Higher Education Union Studies West Midlands Regional HE Sector Committee** was moved by Paul Lunn, Observer following a request made by Blaise Nkwenti-Azeh, University of Manchester which was accepted by conference. Steve Watson, University of Cambridge and Rachel Cohen, NEC spoke to the motion.

Dave Anderson, University of Glasgow and HEC Vice-Chair proposed remittance however **remittance was lost**. Following a vote, the motion was subsequently **carried**:

UCU has a diverse membership who have a vast experience of activism in many sectors of higher education. There are many examples of excellent practices within our union, however outside of Congress there are limited opportunities for disseminating good practice amongst members.

HE Sector Conference calls upon UCU to initiate an open-access, Creative Commons licenced journal of higher education trade union studies (as distinct from the Journal of Further and Higher Education) to provide a research focussed platform for sharing our union activities and associated research findings. This would provide the opportunity for UCU activists to gain recognition for their activities, and generate publication.

**HE38 (EP), Londonmet censure and academic boycott, London Metropolitan University, City branch** was moved formally by the Chair and **carried:**

Following the HEC meeting, 12th December 2016, concerning the Londonmet censure and academic boycott, pressure from the HEC to Londonmet's miscreant management sent soon after has not elicited an appropriate response. Management are not feeling the pressure of censure and academic boycott.

The abandoning of the AWAM at Londonmet threatens the national contract and the academic role. Our leading reps have been sacked. Moreover members at Londonmet are struggling with unmanageable workloads and dangerous levels of stress exacerbated by the imposition of performance management and appalling casualization of work. Our members – supported by a unanimous vote from the HEC - voted clearly for censure and academic boycott yet 7 months later, despite these attacks, it has still not been enacted.

We call upon

1. UCU to enact the censure and academic boycott immediately.
2. UCU to pressure Londonmet management to genuinely resolve our dispute through a major press campaign unless they start genuine negotiations on all issues in the dispute.

**HE39 (EP), MMU Compulsory Redundancies, University of Manchester** moved by Roger Walden, University of Manchester and seconded formally (*this motion was taken after HE9 as proposed by CBC*). HE39 **was carried by unanimous consent:**

Conference notes that:

1. MMU is threatening to make around 160 academics and many support staff redundant as it closes its Crewe campus over the next two years.
2. In a consultative e-ballot with a turnout of over 50%, 88% of UCU members at MMU voted in favour of holding a formal ballot on industrial action if any UCU member is threatened with compulsory redundancy.
3. MMU has, according to its 2015/16 Financial Statement, "sustained robust financial performance over recent years", with total reserves of £378.9m, equivalent to 127% of its 2015/16 income of £298m, and an operating surplus of £28m equivalent to 9.5% of total income.
4. There is therefore no crisis to justify compulsory redundancies now or in the immediate future.

Conference calls on Manchester Metropolitan University to commit to no compulsory redundancies and to achieve this by working with the recognised trade unions.

**HE40 (EP), Defending Academic Freedom and Governance, University College London** was moved formally and **carried:**

Conference notes:

1. UK universities have witnessed a growth of managerialism, reduction in Academic Board/Senate membership and influence, and exclusion of staff from governing bodies;
2. these changes directly impact on the academic community as well as UCU's campaigning ability;

3. the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act, enacted in 2016, required Scottish university governing bodies to become more accountable to staff and students;
4. however the Higher Education and Research Bill/Act is expected to:
  - a. deregulate the university sector,
  - b. intensify competition with commercial 'new providers',
  - c. weaken protection for academic freedom, and
  - d. undermine academic governance.

Conference therefore resolves to build a national and local campaign for:

- i. implementing the Scottish Governance reforms in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and
- ii. defending statutes, charters and contracts protecting academic freedom as a defining characteristic of a university, and extending them to all higher education institutions.

**HE41 Use of consultants in HE** University of Reading was moved by Sally Pellow, University of Reading and a first time speaker at conference.

**HE41A.1 Academic Related, Professional Staff Committee** was moved by Tim Barrett, Chair of the Academic Related Professional Staff committee and **carried**:

In second sentence after 'firms', insert: 'utilise statistically suspect benchmarking methodologies and'.

At the end of point 1. insert before the semi-colon:

–'for example: a) Research which HEIs are using consultants e.g. auditors, benchmarking and IT; b) Identify how much such institutions are spending on these consultancy services.'

Other speakers in the debate included Glyn Heath, University of Salford, Lucy Michael, University of Ulster, Amanda Williams, Julie Wilkinson. Daryn Mitussis, Queen Mary University proposed remittance of the motion in its entirety, however this was lost.

Ronald Haynes subsequently proposed remittance of point a and Conference voted **in favour** of remittance of point a. Marion Hersh made a point of order for the motion to be taken in parts and this was **approved**.

Following the debate, **HE41** was **carried with point a. remitted and as amended by HE41A.1**:

Conference notes a trend in university senior management to spend significant public funding on private sector consultancy firms, utilise statistically suspect benchmarking methodologies and as evidenced by the £36m spend at Reading. These firms recommend the implementation of ready-made business solutions, inappropriate for the HE sector, which generate redundancies, de-skill the workforce and increase workload. Institutional expertise is ignored, devaluing the sector and demotivating staff. The HE sector should use its in-house expertise in order to achieve from its staff and arrive at recruitment, teaching, financial and other processes that buy-in are fit-for-purpose.

Conference calls on HEC to:

1. Investigate the increasing use of consultants in HE for example: a) Research which HEIs are using consultants e.g. auditors, benchmarking and IT; b) Identify how much such institutions are spending on these consultancy services;
2. Collect examples of recommendations that have already failed and been reversed;
3. Investigate the additional stress caused to employees and the lowering of morale.

Conference further calls on HEC to:

***a. Call on the National Audit Office and Government to conduct value-for-money audits on consultancy spending across the HE sector (remitted)***

**HE42 A UK strategy for student-staff alliance, Queen's University Belfast** was moved by Leonie Hannan, QUB. The motion was seconded formally and **carried**:

In February 2017, Queen's University students came out in record numbers for a students' referendum which endorsed an exciting new partnership between the university's UCU and SU. Entitled 'Take Back Queen's', this collaboration centres on a 'Programme of Reforms', by which students and staff pledge to work together for a better university. The programme focuses on issues of democracy, working conditions, casualisation, equality and marketisation. It emerges from a year in which UCU-SU collaboration at Queen's has generated effective campaigns and tangible results—playing a major role in challenging cuts and highlighting exploitative and unequal practices.

A substantive and genuine staff-student partnership presents a formidable challenge to the systemic problems that we face across HE. HESC encourages branches to adopt the 'Take Back' platform, negotiating agreed campaigns that establish clear goals and core objectives that can galvanise students and staff.

**HE43 (EP) Supporting staff affected by Brexit, Birmingham City University** was moved formally by Catherine Lamond, University of Wolverhampton

***HE43A.1 LGBT Members Standing Committee*** was moved by Ioanna Ioannou, UCL and **carried**:

Insert new point 4:

- '4. staff who are in relationships that have different legal recognition in the UK compared to outside the UK, such as same sex relationships, may be facing additional concerns in relation to their right to family life.'

Insert new point e:

- 'e. raise awareness about differences in the legal recognition of relationships across borders, campaign for the broadening legal recognition for consenting relationships between adults, and promote existing work done by UCU in this area;'

Change existing e. to f.

Michael Carley moved for remittance of point 2 and this was **carried**. Stefan Kesting, Leeds, also spoke in the debate.

**HE43** was subsequently **carried with point 2 remitted and as amended by HE43A.1**:

Conference notes:

1. the imminent enactment of Article 50, impacting on EU staff who are now considering leaving;
- 2. *academic and professional service staff who applied for UK citizenship getting rejected (remitted)***
3. staff are increasingly concerned about their right to stay in the UK.
4. staff who are in relationships that have different legal recognition in the UK compared to outside the UK, such as same sex relationships, may be facing additional concerns in relation to their right to family life.

Conference believes UK HE remains a diverse and multicultural staff community, a mirror of the world we educate.

Conference resolves to:

- a. develop support for HE staff who apply for residency or are rejected in being able to remain in the UK;
- b. develop a phone advice/support service for affected staff;
- c. work with other Unions and the NUS to ensure that students can study in the UK without having to pay full fees;
- d. work with Senior Management in HE to ensure the wellbeing and equal treatment of EU and international staff and equal treatment in promotion/employment/recruitment etc;
- e. raise awareness about differences in the legal recognition of relationships across borders, campaign for the broadening legal recognition for consenting relationships between adults, and promote existing work done by UCU in this area;'
- f. Support anyone affected by Brexit.

**HE44 Trump, Higher Education Committee** was moved by Elizabeth Lawrence, Immediate past President (Sheffield Hallam University). *Liz Lawrence also took the opportunity to extend her best wishes to Joanna de Groot, Chair of conference for her upcoming presidential year.* Mary Jennings also spoke to the motion. The motion **was carried:**

The election of Donald Trump has led to a massive series of protests across the world, not seen since the anti-war movement of 2003.

The planned Trump visit is leading to debate and discussion on university campuses.

HESC congratulate SOAS UCU members' joint students in marching out of university to join mass protests in London on 20 February.

HE Sector Conference calls on

1. UCU branches to work with NUS and other campus unions to mobilise against the Trump visit.

## **6 End of sector conference**

- 6.1 In closing sector conference, the Chair thanked all delegates for their cooperation and UCU staff for their hard work and brought the day to a close.