

Last month, UMC Ltd. (which runs Food on Campus & Food in Residences) announced that they will be making 43 staff redundant: 60 out of its 283 staff have been informed that their jobs are at risk and that if 43 do not take voluntary severance the number will be made up through compulsory redundancies. Furthermore, UMC has announced that much inferior contracts of employment, which will cut salaries by up to a third, will be imposed on those who remain.

Ironically, this follows the Staffnet announcement in January that, after several years hard campaigning by staff and students, all UMC Ltd. staff would be paid at least the Living Wage from February 1st. In contrast, there has been no Staffnet announcement about these redundancies and attacks on UMC employees' terms and conditions. The University seems to want to keep quiet about them.

UMC is a private, wholly-owned subsidiary company of the University that exists solely to provide catering services on campus and in the university's Halls of Residence. Its staff are enrolled in the University of Manchester Superannuation Scheme (UMSS) and its directors are the University's Registrar & Secretary and Directors of Finance and Estates. According to the company accounts, it turned a loss of £114,554 in 2013/4 into a profit of £164,362 in 2014/5. Indeed, we have been told this is why its directors decided the company could afford to give in to the joint Student/Trade Union campaign for the Living Wage.

Whilst this does not directly affect Unite or UCU members, as Unison has sole recognition for representing UMC staff, this DOES affect hard working colleagues we work with at the University. Coming as this does on the back of the **redundancies and threats of redundancy to 38 redeployees and 68 IT staff last year and 28 FLS/MBH staff this year**, all the campus trade union officers are extremely concerned with the direction the University is heading. In particular, this treatment of some of the mostly lowly paid and insecure staff at the University is in sharp contrast to the treatment of those who are the most highly paid: the University's Financial Statements reveal that the number of staff earning over £100,000 increased from just 81 in 2013 to 204 in 2015 – a staggering two and a half fold increase in just two years! Despite its supposed concern for Social Responsibility (which includes a commitment to tackling global inequalities), the senior management of the University seems strangely myopic when it comes to pay inequalities within the University itself.