

Welcome to our Winter Newsletter

It's been a busy semester. The ending of UCU's action-short-of-a-strike following consultative ballots of UCU, Unison and Unite members, and the imposition of a 1.1% pay increase by employers, was disappointing and is hard to portray as anything but a setback. However, we are making progress on casualisation and gender pay inequality and can take heart from local successes. Sally Hunt, the UCU General Secretary, visited us in October and spoke about the uncertainty facing the HE sector following Brexit and leading towards the introduction of TEF, and warmly congratulated the branch on our successful local industrial action last year when, though we could not stop the University from shedding 50-60 IT staff (which contributed directly to the severe IT problems that occurred at the beginning of the academic year – see below), we fought against and prevented compulsory redundancies. Be in no doubt about it, had we not persisted in our industrial action, the outcome would have been much worse. In addition, we are improving university policy on and implementation of online marking, (mis)use of summary scores in peer review of teaching, Research Expectations, as well as assisting colleagues in numerous personal cases.

Policy Negotiations

Following last year's ITS dispute we negotiated a set of policies and procedures dealing with the avoidance of redundancies, restructuring, redeployment and pay protection. These are now complete and have been approved by the UCU national ratification committee, and are now progressing through the University system. The final versions of these policies are significantly different from what was originally proposed and include clearer presentation and discussion of the University's plans, with measures to reduce redundancy as well as better arrangements for redeployment and a clear voluntary severance scheme. The overall effect has been to increase the amount of work required to carry out a restructure, so managers should in future be much less likely to embark on (or be allowed to embark on) small-scale or frequent restructures and instead concentrate on managing the staff they have in the existing organisational structures.

The ITS dispute and negotiation of these policies interrupted a longer term review of Statutes and Ordinances. These are important as the provisions in them cannot be changed so readily and set out clear principles and rights, especially with regard to Disciplinary and Grievance processes and Dismissal (for redundancy or any other reason). UMUCU, in conjunction with our colleagues from the other campus trade unions and supported by our regional officials, will be vigorously defending the employment rights embodied in the Statutes and Ordinances, and resisting University attempts to water down any of the current safeguards.



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Join us today and help UCU to help you. Join the only organisation that understands and speaks up for academic and related staff.

<http://www.ucu.org.uk/join>



UNITED FOR EDUCATION



AUTUMN GENERAL MEETING GUEST SPEAKER SALLY HUNT UCU GENERAL SECRETARY



GET INVOLVED!

IT Services Update

As we reported in our recent email update, the three campus trade unions have met with the new director of ITS, Malcolm Whitehouse. The meeting, although frank, was positive and promising. There was a clear recognition that IT Services has lost its way over the last couple of years, which has impacted upon the IT Services infrastructure and critical services as well as the wellbeing of many hardworking staff. The trade unions highlighted the high level of work-related stress among staff and the lack of appreciation of the ITS management team in recognising the efforts of staff. More importantly, Malcolm Whitehouse has acknowledged the impact of losing many highly skilled and crucial ITS staff, though he stopped short of criticising last year's misguided and ill-judged "voluntary" redundancy scheme.

He has asked for time to resolve the many complicated and interlinked problems with ITS; the top priority being recruitment of much needed staff at all levels and providing the necessary training for them to do their jobs. Several focus groups will be established to get the grass-roots involved in decision making, the first of which will review time recording.

We understand the level of stress and anxiety these continuous changes may cause many of you. We will be there anytime to help and support you. Meanwhile, we ask you to help keep us informed of any new issues or concerns by emailing: ucu@manchester.ac.uk.

Turkey: Academics for Peace

In January 2016 a group of over two thousand Turkish scholars known as 'Academics for Peace' signed a petition calling for an end to Turkey's oppression of Kurdish people. Since then, and in particular since the failed coup in July, the signatories claim to have suffered various kinds of persecution, from suspension and dismissal to imprisonment. It has been alleged that some are linked to the supposed coup plotters.

We merely wish to draw members' attention to the petition and the Turkish authorities' reaction to it. More information is available on various websites, including <http://internationalsolidarity4academic.tumblr.com/>

Get Involved – It's YOUR UNION

Would you be interested in becoming a Local Contact for your work area? All it involves is referring your colleagues to the UMUCU office if they have a problem; speaking to your colleagues about how important it is to join UCU, passing on information and keeping the branch informed of any local issues.

If you would like more information, please contact Fiona Campbell on Tel: 0161 275 3080 or e-mail ucu@manchester.ac.uk

After work drinks: the last Thursday of the month at **Sandbar, Grosvenor Street**; 26th January, 23rd February and 30th March, from 5pm

The Advice Cafe: join us for a chat and a coffee once a month; 9th February, 9th March, 12-2pm, venues to be confirmed

UMUCU Executive Committee Members

Officers: President – *Adel Nasser*; Vice President – *Roger Walden*; Secretary – *Adam Ozanne*; Treasurer – *Kamie Kitmitto*; Equalities Officer – *James Newson*; Membership and Organising Secretary – *David Swanson*; Assistant Secretary Health & Safety – *Tanya Aspinall*; Assistant Secretary Personal Cases – *Gregory Lane-Serff*; Assistant Secretary Retired Members – *Paul Bennett*

Ordinary Executive Members: *Philippa Browning, Louise Carney, Penny Hicks, Blaise Nkwenti-Azeh, Patricia Conaghan, Aneez Esmail, Jessica Patterson, Chris Parker, Lawrence Benson, Janice Ellis, Alistair Dickens*