

# **STATUTE 24 PROTECTS ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND JOBS BY REQUIRING THOROUGH AND INDEPENDENT SCRUTINY OF THE REDUNDANCY, DISCIPLINARY AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES FOR ACADEMIC STAFF.**

## **WHAT IS STATUTE 24?**

16 pages of secondary legislation setting out the principles and procedures necessary to safeguard academic freedom. It applies to staff on academic, teaching-only and research-only contracts because they are the ones testing received wisdom and putting forward new ideas or controversial/unpopular opinions.

## **WHAT IS AT STAKE?**

The University wants to repeal almost all of Statute 24, making it much easier and quicker to make academic staff redundant, and to dismiss them on disciplinary grounds. If academic staff have to leave, the other staff who work with them are likely to lose their jobs, too.

## **KEY IMPLICATIONS**

- The proposed reforms represent a significant downgrading of the employment safeguards necessary for academics to carry out their responsibilities as employees and as scholars, teachers and researchers in the wider academy.
- Moving these policies and procedures from Statute and Ordinances to University policies makes it easier for management to change them unilaterally in future.
- The reforms will remove Council and Senate oversight of redundancy, disciplinary and dismissal proceedings, making HoDs and Faculty Chairs primarily responsible for these decisions.
- The proposed reforms will also make it easier to dismiss academic staff on disciplinary grounds, for things such as “repeated insubordination” or “conduct that could damage the university’s reputation”

## **WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?**

The university wants all staff to be covered by the same policies and to bring the Statute into line with employment law.

## **SHOULDN'T ALL STAFF BE COVERED BY THE SAME POLICIES?**

No. Academics, as scholars, teachers and researchers, have a distinct role within universities and the wider community. A fundamental part of their job is questioning received wisdom and putting forward new ideas and controversial/unpopular opinions. They need the additional safeguards contained within the employment statute so they can carry out their duties without fear or favour. This is not about privileging academics but recognising and safeguarding their particular remit.

## **SHOULDN'T STATUTES BE CHANGED IF THEY CONTRADICT EMPLOYMENT LAW?**

Absolutely. But Statute 24 doesn't contradict employment law and, where there are discrepancies, these can easily be amended without repealing all the safeguard.

## **AREN'T THE STATUTE 24 PROCESSES CONVOLUTED AND INTIMIDATING?**

No. Even staff who aren't members of UCU think Statute 24 helps the University act fairly without recourse to external employment tribunals.

## **WHAT CAN I DO?**

Get Statute 24 timetabled for your next departmental meeting; Complete the University consultation - [emprelations@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:emprelations@warwick.ac.uk); Talk to your colleagues; If you are not a member of UCU, join and help your Union to save Statute 24; Visit [WARWICKUCU.ORG.UK/CAMPAIGNS/STATUTE-24](http://WARWICKUCU.ORG.UK/CAMPAIGNS/STATUTE-24) for more information.



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