

## AoC “DISAPPOINTING” ONE PER CENT FE PAY OFFER

Dear Colleagues

Welcome back and hope you had a good summer break and are settling back into work for the forthcoming academic year. This is the first regional newsletter of the year, and we hope you find it both informative and useful.

As ever, if you have any items you would like to include in the next newsletter please contact [lfoley@ucu.org.uk](mailto:lfoley@ucu.org.uk).

Best wishes,

Lesley Foley, Branch Development Officer

The National Joint Forum, made up of the unions representing college staff, submitted a claim for an across-the-board rise of around 6 per cent in April. As part of the pay offer, the AoC has agreed to campaign with the FE unions to “close the gap with schools and address the fundamental recruitment and retention challenges in the sector”. They offered to meet up again in January, to review any wider developments on public sector pay and the “funding position of the sector at that time”. Whilst this is welcome, and unprecedented, it does little to alleviate the hardship currently faced by our FE members.

As you will be aware, this is the final week to take part in the UCU FE pay consultation. If you haven't voted yet and cannot find your ballot, please request a replacement here: <https://yoursay.ucu.org.uk/s3/FEpayballot> so make your voice heard.

Members will have seen that the AoC pay offer for FE this year was just one per cent, or the sum of £250 “where this is more beneficial”. The employer offer of 1% is substantially below inflation and fails to address

the years of low pay endured by FE staff. It does little to alleviate the cycle of debt and poverty many find themselves in.

Whilst some colleges have made pay offers over this amount, AoC colleges are under *no obligation* to implement the pay offer, and many members have gone for some years without seeing any pay rise whatsoever from their colleges. This, along with casualization and workload, makes the situation faced by many of our FE members pretty grim.



Birmingham Metropolitan College protest against compulsory redundancies page 2

Regional Office has produced two documents which give a regional snapshot you can share with members and use in a branch campaign: Regional table of of Lecturers' pay (based on UCU website:

“Rate for the Job” which compares all branches: Rate for the job: <http://www.ucu.org.uk/?mediaid=8730>

Principals' pay, taken from the latest AoC accounts (updated July 2017) based on college accounts from 2015-12016: Principals' salaries: <http://www.ucu.org.uk/?mediaid=8729>

# BIRMINGHAM METROPOLITAN COLLEGE MEMBER POWER!



Birmingham Metropolitan College (BMet) Management put 123 lecturing jobs (27 FTE) at risk—just before the summer holidays. No Managers or Support Workers were affected by this redundancy trawl which came on the back of 300 jobs lost at the college two years previously.

“**Save the 27**” became the campaign slogan for members at BMet who staged a series of very noisy lunch time protests at all sites, using bespoke placards, badges, postcards, specially printed T-shirts and flyers; chanting “BMet Management be a hero—bring compulsories down to zero!”. This did not go down well with management but the upshot was this member pressure brought numbers at risk very quickly down to single figures. Teresa Corr, Regional Support Official, who supported the branch throughout, commented, “The summer BMet campaign is a testament to resistance—it **does** make a difference when union members say, “No!”, mean it, and shout it!” Sadly, a few members still remain at risk and the branch is still fighting hard as every job and lecturer matters.

## UCU NATIONAL RECRUITMENT WEEK

**W/C 6 NOVEMBER 2017**

The first of the UCU National Recruitment weeks is the week commencing 6 November 2017. As you can see from the BMet Campaign, there are various resources that we can make for any event or campaign at your branch.— just let us know what you need.

As well as the links on the front page re pay, there are UCU resources that can be used in a branch campaign around casualisation or workload, or gender parity .

Also, if you want a member of Regional Office Staff or Regional Committee to speak at a branch meeting, or would like help in producing a local branch newsletter get in touch.

If you want help with any events or resources please email Lesley Foley on [lfoley@ucu.org.uk](mailto:lfoley@ucu.org.uk).

## UCU FREE MEMBERSHIP OFFER FROM 1 OCTOBER 2017

As part of UCU's drive to support education workers at the start of their careers, from 1 October we're offering free membership to some 'early careers' staff. [For more information and FAQ on the offer please see here for details.](#)

# Forthcoming Diary Dates

## The People's Assembly 'Take Back Manchester Festival' – National Demonstration on Sunday 1 October.

The People's Assembly against Austerity will be holding a festival of protest during the Conservative Party Conference in Manchester 2017. The week of action will include protests, demonstrations, cultural events, rallies, comedy, music and public meetings across Manchester. The week of action will include a national demonstration on **Sunday 1 October**, the day that the Conservative Party Conference opens. UCU is supporting the [1 October demonstration to coincide with the Tory Party conference](#) and will be calling for health, homes, jobs and education and an end to austerity and the pay cap. Please look out for UCU banners which will be joining the march on Liverpool Road from 1.30pm.

If you are planning to come and have not booked your coach seat yet please do so urgently. UNITE the Union are running free coaches and need to know how many to book. You can book here <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/west-midlands-take-back-manchester-demo-registration-36560469348>

## Stand up to Racism Conference (SUTR)

Saturday 21 October 2018

Friends Meeting House

London , NW1 2 BJ

Confronting the rise in racism

Speakers include Diane Abbott

[standuptoracism.org.uk](http://standuptoracism.org.uk)

## SUTR public meeting

1900 hrs, Wednesday 11 October

7pm, Priory rooms, 40 Bull Street, Birmingham, B4 6AF

'Deaths in custody...Rising Islamophobia - What next for the fight against racism?'  
Speakers:

Kedisha Burrell, Janet Alder and Roger McKenzie (Asst. Gen Sec, Unison)

## Britain needs a pay rise: join the TUC day of action on 17 October 2017

On Tuesday 17 October, the TUC is organising a lobby of parliament and a rally in Parliament Square to call for fair pay for public servants. [For more details on how to get involved, visit the Facebook page here.](#)

Union members will be travelling to Westminster to meet with their MPs on the afternoon of 17 October. And afterwards, we'll be hosting a rally in Parliament Square, so MPs won't be able to ignore our message.

## Next Regional Committee Meeting Date

**14 October 2017**, 1000-13.30 hrs, Birmingham Alpha Tower Office. Calling notice will be sent in due course. Please make every effort to send a delegate from your branch!

## This year's Regional Committee are:

Regional Chair – Rhiannon Lockley

Regional Vice-Chair: David Ridley

Regional Secretary – Sharon Broer

Regional Treasurer – John Sullivan,

Disabled Members Rep – Paul Lunn,

LGBT Members Rep – Andrw Misiura

Black Members Rep– Dave Muritu

Membership Secretary – Safia Flissi

Retired Members Officer –Babs Gisborne-Land

Women's Officer – Nita Sanghera,

Chair of HE Sector – Kirsten Forkert

Secretary of HE Sector – Vacant

Chair of FE Sector – Alison Greaves

Secretary of FE Sector –Simon Bruce-Jones

Anti Casualisation Officer HE – Elio Di Muccio

Anti-casualisation Officer FE – Jackie D'Arcy

# Diary Dates Continued



**Beyond the backstreets: fighting for abortion rights 50 years on**

28th October 2017, the Rich Mix, Shoreditch (London)

Celebrating the 50th birthday of the 1967 Abortion Act.

Day and evening packed program of events, bringing activists, journalists, politicians & performers together to celebrate the legacy of the life-saving 1967 Abortion Act, that dragged abortion out of the dangerous backstreet.

Speakers include Aston University's UCU rep, Pam Lowe. <https://www.richmix.org.uk/events/spoken-word/beyond-backstreet-fighting-abortion-rights-50-years-day-event>



**INTERNATIONAL MEN'S DAY  
19 NOVEMBER 2017**

The Movember campaign have now become an established event each year.

Also in November each

year, International Mens Day highlights men's health issues, especially the surge in recent years of male suicides, primarily around the age of 30, by hanging. These days, almost everyone knows someone who has been affected or have themselves been directly affected by male suicide. In almost all the countries of the world the suicide rate is worse for men than women and averaged out, the rate of suicide for men is up to three times that of women. In Russia it is 6 men for every 1 woman. For more information see <http://www.internationalmensday.com/>

## Online briefing – Trade Union Act

The Trade Union Act is the most significant piece of legislation to impact trade union industrial action for decades. UCU have launched a short online briefing for reps which will outline the relevant areas of the act and help branches remain within the law.

[For more about the briefing and link to the application form please click here.](#)

## UCU Members' Annual Equality Groups Conference

Registration is now open for UCU members to attend the 2017 Annual Equality Groups Conference, being held at [Novotel Birmingham Centre](#), 70 Broad Street, Birmingham, BN1 2HT, from **Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2017.**

Thursday 23 November

Disabled Members Conference (09.30 – 13.00)

Thursday 23 November

Women Members' Conference (14.00 – 17.30)

Thursday 23 November

Conference Dinner (from 19.00)

Friday 24 November

Joint plenary and FE & HE workshop sessions (9.00 – 13.00)

Friday 24 November

Black Members' Conference (14.00 – 17.30)

Saturday 25 November

LGBT Members' Conference (9.30 – 13.00)

This conference is an opportunity to discuss and agree strategies to progress equality issues at work. The three days includes separate sessions for black, disabled, LGBT and women members. A joint plenary session brings us all together as well as separate workshops for FE and HE members. Plenty of opportunities to network too. For full details and registration click here: [UCU808.html](#) | [UCU801.rtf](#)