

Warwick UCU Statute 24 Motion

Extraordinary General Meeting

Tuesday 13 June 2017, at 12:30 pm (OC0.03)

Preamble:

Warwick UCU has been in discussion with Management over its proposed changes to [Statute 24](#) (Warwick's employment Statute) and the accompanying Ordinances since December 2016, as detailed on the [Warwick UCU website](#).

These changes were discussed at Warwick UCU's Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) in February and were unanimously rejected by members. Similarly, the [University Assembly on 12 May](#) overwhelmingly rejected the proposals, with 97% voting against Management's plans. At both these meetings, staff raised concerns about the threat to real academic freedom posed by the changes; the lack of meaningful checks and balances; and the over-concentration of power in the hands of Heads of Departments.

Management has revised their proposals following both formal and informal discussions with UCU. A number of these changes are positive, including the statutory commitment to negotiate any subsequent changes with the trade unions; the re-introduction of University Council into the academic redundancy process, and the process of invoking an 'academic freedom' defence if a staff member is subject to disciplinary, grievance or redundancy procedures.

However, Management has persistently refused to address certain key points of concern, including strengthening the definition of academic freedom in line with international norms, and retaining the review of an external expert in cases of redundancy or disciplinary. The policies, as drafted, still contain many points on which we are unable to agree.

On 6 June, Branch Officers were told the revised proposals would be submitted to Senate next week and to University Council in July, without further input from the trade unions. In light of this, and following advice from Regional Office, Warwick UCU issued Management with a *Failure to Agree* notification in order that our objections could be formally recorded. We now need to hear from members on whether the branch should start preparations for industrial action over the issue, something the [University of Leeds UCU](#) branch just voted for.

The Extraordinary General Meeting on Tuesday 13 June 2017 will therefore debate and vote on the motion contained overleaf:

Warwick UCU Statute 24 Motion

PASSED at the Extraordinary General Meeting

Tuesday 13 June 2017, at 12:30 pm (OC0.03)

Warwick UCU notes that:

- i) The University has produced new versions of draft policies since the February EGM, with the most recent update being posted on [Insite](#) on 6 June 2017;
- ii) Members have not had a chance to comment on the university's latest proposals;
- iii) Although the new proposals retain more in Statute than previous versions, including the stipulation that future policy changes will be subject to both negotiation with the trade unions and approval from University Council, they still do not provide the appropriate level of checks and balances;
- iv) External scrutiny for the proposed redundancy and disciplinary processes remains absent;
- v) The proposed policies relating to redundancy, disciplinary, grievance and sickness have not changed significantly since the initial drafting, and retain numerous flaws.

Warwick UCU believes that:

- i) The draft Statute is not acceptable in its current form;
- ii) The draft Ordinance does not define satisfactorily the meaning of what is contained in Statute;
- iii) The draft policies remain unacceptable;
- iv) The Statute must not be sent to the Privy Council until the Ordinances and Policies have also been agreed.

Warwick UCU resolves to:

- i) Advise Senate and University Council of the need to address the outstanding points of objection in order to reach agreement with UCU;
- ii) Pursue the disputes resolution procedure initiated by the *Failure to Agree* notification;
- iii) Take the necessary steps to prepare for industrial action, should management proceed to ask University Council to submit these changes to the Privy Council.

Proposer: Duncan Adam (Warwick UCU Vice President)

Seconder: Justine Mercer (Warwick UCU President)

Amendments (highlighted in yellow) proposed and seconded from the floor.