

# BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY

## FIGHT TO SAVE THE EDS 26



Birmingham City University Branch staged a lunchtime protest against recent restructuring proposals of the Centre for Excellence in Learning & Teaching (CELT). Following a well-attended rally which was supported by other university staff students and regional executive officers, protesters marched with the branch banner from Bartholomew Street to Curzon house making lots of noise as they went, chanting and waving placards.

CELT delivers high quality academic and teaching practices across the University through teacher training, supporting learning technologies, professional accreditation and Continuing Professional Development needs to 25,000 students and 3000 staff, irrespective of where they are based.

However this service is now in jeopardy following implementation of a swingeing 34% budget cut resulting from a radical restructuring after an accounting exercise called Priority Based Budgeting (PPB), run by external consultants. It is foreseen that this initiative will be rolled out to other faculties in the coming year.

Now rebranded as Education Development Service (EDS), the department staff have been told they will have to apply for lower paid, *non-academic* jobs in the new structure, with no guarantee against redundancies!

Ironically EDS will still lead on the post-graduate PGCert course and the Masters in Education Degree Programme, thus being in the vanguard driving University ambitions to achieve the Teaching Excellence Framework. What a slap in the face for loyal hard working staff! Most of the academic staff are having to fight for lower paid Professional Services roles through job applications and formal interviews, suffering stress and anxiety as a result. This uncertainty and anxiety is not assuaged by concessional offers of 'academic transfers' to another Faculty – which aren't guaranteed. Yet existing management have been slotted into posts! Where is the equality or fairness in this process?

**Further protests are planned—support the fight for the EDS 26 before your faculty is targeted in this way!**

**NO TO TEACHER EDUCATION ON THE CHEAP!**

# NEWS ROUND UP

## WALSALL COLLEGE

### **“NO GRADES, NO WINDOWS, NO STRESS BUT AN OPPORTUNITY TO TALK ABOUT PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE”**

These were the words of Walsall College branch secretary Carole Rogers. The college will no longer have an ‘observation process that is linked to performance management and ultimately, capability procedures. Instead a new process has been put forward that will be truly developmental.

Although learning walks will continue. They will not be used as a ‘stick’ but rather as an opportunity to share good practice.

Carole said, *“After years of battling this one, I can’t help feeling that I am dreaming. But honestly it’s a new dawn!”*

**Well done to Carole and the branch at Walsall College!**

## **ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!**

Stratford –upon–Avon College Branch Secretary Alex Dengate has successfully pleaded for common sense to prevail at the college.

Members at the college had had enough stress in the run up to the impending merger with Solihull College. However management were pressing ahead with observations and mock Ofsted exercises.

After having an Ofsted at the beginning of the academic year and the stress of merger talks with several colleges in recent times, management answered Alex’s plea, that “enough was enough” by agreeing to no observations whatsoever in the autumn term to enable staff to recover. A reprieve that was met with relief by all staff.

**Well done Alex!**

## **JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST CASUALISATION!**

WM Region have formed an Anti-casualisation Working Group and would like to invite activists and members to attend a West Midlands Anti-Casualisation Roadshow in early Spring 2018.

Casualised workers are increasing in numbers both in FE and HE– in some institutions over 50% of the academic workforce are on such contracts and this pattern is spreading. We need to reverse this trend. Currently, the major threats to stable employment in our sectors are in the guise of wholly owned subsidiary companies. These are used as a means to employ lecturers on lesser terms and conditions which are outside of UCU recognised bargaining agreements.

UCU is currently fighting for and **achieving** recognition in many of these companies, and aims to improve the terms and conditions of members.

**Get involved either as part of the working group or signing up for the Anti-Casualisation Roadshow in Spring (date TBC)**

Contact Lesley Foley, [lfoley@ucu.org.uk](mailto:lfoley@ucu.org.uk)

## **DUDLEY COLLEGE WIN SUMMER HOLIDAY BATTLE**

Dudley branch have overturned a three week annual leave rule imposed by College Management, after going into dispute. Members are now able to book four weeks summer holiday and get it authorised by their own line manager, rather than book three weeks and have to request a fourth week authorisation from an Assistant Principal.

**Well done to Sally Hebbard, Michael Killen and Nigel Poole, branch officers and Teresa Corr, Regional Support Official for a great result!**

# FAT CAT PAY A NATIONAL DISGRACE



Lunchtime protest at Birmingham University 8 December 2017

After the scandal surrounding Bath University VC, media spotlight has turned to other highly paid VCs, including University of Birmingham's David Eastwood. University academics sent an open letter to the University Council and staged a well-attended lunch time protest on 8 December. Like the Vice Chancellor at Bath University, Sir David sits on his own remuneration committee with only 5 other members.

Scandalously, whilst paying one of the highest VC salaries, the university is one of the top-ranking universities for employing staff on fixed term or insecure contracts.

The scandalous practice of using wholly owned subsidiaries to employ lecturers on lesser terms and conditions that is used by Coventry University has been highlighted in a letter to *The Guardian* from Sally Hunt

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/dec/11/university-vice-chancellors-salaries-in-the-spotlight>

FE Week (8 December) turned the spotlight on FE CEO/ Principals Salaries, listing Birmingham Metropolitan and Stafford Colleges among the highest paid for 2015/16. Read the full article here:

[https://feweek.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/FE228-Digi.pdf?mc\\_cid=3b7578c21c&mc\\_eid=e1fdf5821c](https://feweek.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/FE228-Digi.pdf?mc_cid=3b7578c21c&mc_eid=e1fdf5821c)

Yet lecturers have been offered a mere 1% pay

offer, which Colleges are under *no obligation* to implement. The gulf between those at the top and those at the bottom is widening. Many lecturers cannot get a mortgage because they are on casualised contracts. Indeed, many young poorly-paid lecturers are coming out of their pension scheme in an effort to juggle their household income and family outgoings. This is nothing short of a **National Disgrace**.

**Enough is enough! It is time to fight back**

Better pay and better jobs: FE England pay campaign underway

FE members in England are asked to help spread the word about our campaign:

[use this video to promote the campaign on Facebook](#)

[share a tweet to get the key messages out](#)  
[find campaign updates and posters and leaflets here](#).

The college employers' pay offer of 1% is a real terms pay cut of 3% and hardworking FE staff in England have had enough.

# DIARY DATES

## LOVE MUSIC HATE RACISM

26 JANUARY 2018

After the success of last year's event another evening of music and dance will be held at South and City College Digbeth site. More details to follow in the New Year

## USS ballot closes

**19 January 2018**

If you work for a pre-92 HE Institution make sure that you vote in the ballot

The employers have made proposals which will destroy USS as we know it. UCU is asking members to vote in favour of sustained strike action next year. We need a turnout of at least 50 per cent in order to take action so please tell your friends and colleagues about the ballot.

## ONE DAY WITHOUT US

### NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION

**17 February 2018**

As last year, migrants and their supporters from across the UK will again take part in a National Day of Action to celebrate the contributions of migrants to British society on Saturday, February 17th, 2018.

There will be dances, protests, marches, parades and rallies, debates and concerts. Make a meal for your neighbours. Have a street party. Form human chains. Take selfies. Do whatever you feel is most appropriate.

"For twenty-four hours we invite you to imagine a day without immigrants and tell a different story about migrants and migration."

For more details see

<http://1daywithoutus.org/2017/08/26/1-day-without-us-2018/>

**WE TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO WISH  
YOU ALL A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND  
HAPPY NEW YEAR AND HOPE YOU  
HAVE A WELL DESERVED BREAK.  
REGIONAL OFFICE WILL CLOSE ON  
21 DECEMBER AND REOPEN ON  
3 JANUARY 2017**