

University of Leeds University & College Union

VOTE!



Don't be silenced

Ballot closes midday Friday 22nd February

We're balloting again in the dispute over Dispute over casualisation, equal pay, workload and fair pay. It's vital for our union democracy that you use your vote. Last October Leeds members voted clearly to strike – 70% in favour – on a turnout of 49%. It was the highest national turnout on a pay ballot in UCU's history. The new anti-trade union law (requiring a 50% turnout) stopped us from striking. We think members should decide, not the government, so we're re-balloting so that your decision counts.

This ballot is an opportunity to show the employers that we are still strong, which will have ramifications for pensions and current and future local issues, disputes and negotiations.

We urge all members to vote **Yes** to strike and **Yes** to action short of a strike including a marking boycott. We need to know what the whole membership thinks about taking action, so please vote whatever your view.

We're asking the employers to work with us nationally to:

- Tackle the scandal of casualisation (e.g. 65% of Leeds research staff and 36% of teaching only staff are on fixed-term contracts)
- Recognise and address excessive workloads
- Take real action on the gender pay gap (22.5% at Leeds)

- Provide a fair real-terms pay rise (2% doesn't even cover inflation).

To help us get the turnout needed for our votes to count, please tell UCU when you've voted, at <https://yoursay.ucu.org.uk/s3/HEballot> (it's the same link to get a replacement ballot paper).

Useful FAQs at leedsucu.org.uk/pay

USS Pensions



UUK are currently holding yet another survey of their members, over the recent 2018 valuation that the USS put together in part to seek to address the issues raised by the Joint Expert Panel (JEP) last year.

Members will face the first of a number of default contribution increases in April - we hope that an agreement over responses to the valuation can avert any further increases this or next year. The USS executive are reluctant to follow all of the JEP recommendations, and there is further talk of benefit reform which UCU would robustly resist. Keep an eye on leedsucu.org.uk/pensions

Anti-Casualisation Claim

Our anti-casualisation working group has been looking at what changes members on casualised contracts want to see. We kicked this off with our "Anticas: Ignition!" event which fed into producing our Leeds Anti-Casualisation Claim and which we have now submitted to university management. The claim underlines the need for a joint review of working practices, demands UCU's right to negotiate for all who provide teaching and research including PGRs on teaching contracts and research fellows, and aims to ensure fractionalisation of hourly paid staff and remove unequal treatment while also providing sufficient resources (people and money) to achieve the agreed objectives. Time-limited negotiations will take place, and meanwhile the issues have been taken up in specific schools.

See leedsucu.org.uk/ucu-anti-casualisation-claim-submitted-to-university-of-leeds

UCU is running a UK-wide survey 'counting the costs of casualisation'. If you're on an insecure contract, please fill it in and encourage colleagues to - <https://t.co/nYVycEVNDk>

IT Dispute

Thanks to everyone who has continued to let us know about issues surrounding the IT reorganisation. We remain concerned about the morale of staff in IT and some of the effects of the reorganisation on our members across the university, particularly the removal of local IT support. Thanks, also, for your contributions to our 'alternative' Senate IT paper, which sparked a robust discussion at Senate. We have arranged meetings with various senior staff to discuss this further and will continue to push for improvements. Our paper to Senate is at leedsucu.org.uk/ucu-paper-for-senate-on-it

Gender pay claim



Work continues with management to implement effective policies for closing the 22.5% gender pay gap at the University of Leeds. Management responded to our Gender Pay Claim with a commitment to work with the 3 unions

through dedicated meetings over the next year. Our claim asked for further data on the extent of the gap and how it affects different groups of staff. In December, a BBC Freedom of Information Act request revealed the Russell Group ethnicity pay gap and how the "gender pay gap is more pronounced for ethnic minority women". The BBC interviewed colleagues at Leeds and Warwick about their experience: www.bbc.co.uk/news/amp/education-46473269 The data from the FOI is damning, and reinforces the urgency of our action to combat the gender pay gap locally at Leeds.

To download the full claim, and for more info, see leedsucu.org.uk/genderpaygap

Vote in upcoming UCU elections

Elections are now running for Vice President and other national positions. The Vice President post is important as this person will go on to be President in 2021-2022. The 3 candidates are Vicky Blake (Leeds!), Jo McNeill (Liverpool) and Adam Ozanne (Manchester). Full details at www.ucu.org.uk/elections

You will receive a ballot paper in the post from the Electoral Reform Society, and voting is by Single Transferable Vote, so you can give a first and second preference. The ballot mailing will include election addresses, but nothing beats hearing the candidates speak and asking them questions! So we have arranged a hustings on Tuesday 12 February 12 noon - 1 pm, in Michael Sadler LG19. Note that the Leeds UCU General Meeting on 10th December passed a motion endorsing and supporting Vicky's candidacy, see leedsucu.org.uk/members-agree-new-policies-at-general-meeting/#motion5

International Staff Survey

We're delighted to announce the launch of our anonymous International Staff Survey. It will enable us to have a better understanding of the experience of international staff at Leeds. We hope to gather evidence to inform our local negotiations with the University management and to strengthen the UCU nationally to be more responsive to the concerns of International staff. It takes approximately 10 minutes to answer the survey which you can complete here:

<https://yoursay.ucu.org.uk/s3/leeds>

Student Counselling

We've had intensive negotiations, both collectively and individually, to move casualised, sessional student counsellors on to permanent, fractional contracts. We've worked constructively with management to get the best outcome possible for our members.

Next UCU Meetings

The next Leeds UCU members meeting is:

- **General Meeting**

Wednesday 13th March, noon - 1pm

All members welcome, venue & agenda in email.