



September 2018

UCU is *the* union at Cambridge University for academics, researchers at grade 5 and above, and academic-related staff at grade 6 and above. Membership is open to postdocs, and is free to postgraduate students. Nationally, UCU represents all members of the USS pension scheme and negotiates with the employers on pay and condition. Locally our branch works hard to support and campaign on behalf of our members.

## Industrial Action Ballot on Pay

Pay in our sector has steadily been eroded over the past 10 years through below inflation pay offers. The **latest offer of 2%** is no exception, and is **below any measure of inflation** you choose to

use. This comes as workloads continue to increase (Cambridge staff are averaging the equivalent of more than 2 days unpaid work per week) and large numbers of staff are trapped on precarious contracts. Over this period we've also seen senior management pay skyrocket and capital expenditure increase by 35%.

In the recent consultative ballot, **82% of UCU members voted to reject the pay offer**. Along with 146 other universities (including Anglia Ruskin), Cambridge UCU members will now be balloted on whether to take industrial action. The ballot runs from **Thurs 30 Aug to 19 Oct**. Other unions are also expected to be balloted.

Taking strike action is never an easy decision, but if we don't stand up for our pay and conditions no-one else will.

Your ballot papers should be arriving in the post imminently. Let the branch know if you don't receive yours. Due to anti-union laws introduced in 2017, we need a 50% turnout to enable industrial action to take place; your vote counts! There was a great response to the consultative ballot, and we need to be sure to replicate this for the real thing. To help the branch organise, please email [CUCUvoted@gmail.com](mailto:CUCUvoted@gmail.com) to let us know when you have voted (you don't have to say how).

## USS Pensions

Following tremendous strike action earlier in the year, which brought Universities UK back to the negotiating table and prevented a move to a fully Direct Contribution pension scheme, we are now awaiting word from the Joint Expert Panel (JEP). The JEP, due to report in



September, was tasked with assessing the disputed 2017 pension valuation. It has taken evidence from a wide range of sources, including questions submitted by our branch committee.

Over the summer HE Sector Conference (HESC) delegates have been voting to form a 13 person National Dispute Committee (NDC) from their numbers, which will scrutinise the JEP report. Our member Susanne Hakenbeck will be the representative of Eastern Region. The full membership of the NDC will be declared 7 Sept.

While the work of the JEP is ongoing, USS have notified members of an increase in pension contributions for employers and employees from 1 April 2019. This cost-sharing plan works to the contested valuation, but UCU is clear that it can only be an interim arrangement ahead of further negotiations. USS will run a 60-day consultation from September - look out for more information in branch updates. For more details on our JEP submission and the cost sharing scheme see: <https://cambridgeuaction.wordpress.com>

## Dates for your diary

**Industrial Action Ballot on Pay** 30 Aug to 19 Oct

**Union Learning Rep Training** Thurs 20 Sept, 10-4pm, Nihon Room Pembroke College

**Equality & Diversity Working Group** Sept date tbd

**UCU Democracy Commission** National elections open 17 September

**Anti-Casualisation Working Group** Fri 28 Sept, 1-2:30 pm, Seminar Room E, 17 Mill Lane

**Mental Health and Casualisation talk, Vik Loveday** Fri 5 October, time and location tbc

**National Recall Congress** 18 October

**Day of Action for Disabled Workers** Nov 21



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@CambridgeUCU

## JOIN UCU ONLINE TODAY

<http://join.ucu.org.uk>

**New membership rates 2018/19:** Despite a national rise in subscriptions, the local branch is pleased to announce that overall rates for CUCU members will drop or be maintained for everyone earning under £60K: <http://www.ucu.cam.ac.uk/join.html#6>

**Anti-fascist counter demonstration** Hundreds of people, including CUCU members, attended a rally to oppose a march of Tommy Robinson supporters in Cambridge on 21 July. This contrasted with only 30 or so Free Tommy protestors. The event boasted music and speeches from several trade unions, including our own. A successful stand against division and hatred in our community.



**Disability** CUCU will be working with Cambridge University Students' Union (CUSU) this year. If you identify as disabled or as having a disability, and want to get involved with a joint national day of action for disabled workers on Nov 21, get in touch. Let us know if you have grievances or policy suggestions to be addressed by the University, or if you want to raise issues within the wider landscape of disability and HE employment. Contact CUSU's Disabled Students' Officer Emrys Travis, [disabled@cusu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:disabled@cusu.cam.ac.uk) and CUCU E&D Officer Joe Sutliff Sanders, [jcs217@cam.ac.uk](mailto:jcs217@cam.ac.uk).

**Branch News** Following Michael Rutter stepping down as president, vice-president Sam James will be acting president until our November Annual General Meeting.

### Exec Committee

Acting President (Vice President): Sam James  
Secretary: Waseem Yaqoob  
Treasurer: vacant  
Membership: Heather Stallard  
Anti-Casualisation: Sandra Cortijo  
Equality reps: Manali Desai, Joe Sutliff Sanders, Paulina Sliwa  
Postgrad Reps: Helen Charman, Rox Middleton, Ayşe Polat  
Pensions: Richard Farndale  
Green: Joe Gluza  
Ordinary members: Jana Bacevic, Will Hudson, Jennifer Marchant  
LA Administrator: Rachel Hayes

Contact: [admin@ucu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:admin@ucu.cam.ac.uk),  
01223 764944, [www.ucu.cam.ac.uk](http://www.ucu.cam.ac.uk)

## Local Working Group Updates

**Equality and Diversity** Group members met with HR over the summer to discuss the Gender Pay Gap (GPG) at Cambridge. In preparation for a campaign for more affordable childcare at the University, the E&D group has also been studying workplace nursery provision, holiday play schemes, flexible working, childcare support offered by Colleges, as well as how Colleges parental leave policies differ.

A report on current work on the GPG will be presented at the September working group meeting. We will also be discussing next steps in our campaigns. Email [equality@ucu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:equality@ucu.cam.ac.uk) to get updates from the group or get involved.

**Anti-casualisation and precarity** CUCU is gathering information about the use of TES contracts at Cambridge. These zero hours worker contracts give little protection to staff. A report is under development and a campaign to improve conditions will be established at the start of the academic year.

We are also currently looking at experiences and working conditions of postdocs at Cambridge. Email [casualisation@ucu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:casualisation@ucu.cam.ac.uk) to get involved.

### Update your contact details and salary @

[www.ucu.org.uk](http://www.ucu.org.uk) 'My UCU'. This is important during a ballot, and if you ever need legal advice from UCU, you may not get the level of representation needed if paying the wrong rate.

Help us understand members' needs in Cambridge – fill out our Cambridge UCU membership survey (branch email 06/08/18)

## Building the Union

**Contacts and Reps** This summer more than 20 members volunteered to become reps and contacts for UCU in their workplaces. These roles are vital for encouraging new members and supporting colleagues at work. We are looking for academic and academic-related reps in departments and college, as well as graduate reps, and as many contacts as possible. Email [membership-secretary@ucu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:membership-secretary@ucu.cam.ac.uk).

**Union Learning Reps Training, 20 Sept** We are looking for people interested in helping other members with their development at work. Learning Reps can offer individual advice and guidance on professional development or be involved in making sure training is considered in local collective bargaining agreements. Find out more: [www.ucu.org.uk/ulr](http://www.ucu.org.uk/ulr) and/or email [admin@ucu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:admin@ucu.cam.ac.uk).

**New caseworkers** On 10 July, CUCU ran its biggest ever caseworker training day. If you'd like to find out more about helping your fellow members by becoming a caseworker email [admin@ucu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:admin@ucu.cam.ac.uk).