HE Pay Campaign 2016 / 17
Member Bulletin 3

VOTE ‘YES’ to Industrial Action
Make your vote count!

UNISON members urged to strike for better pay

With Universities putting billions away in the bank last year, it is clear that money is available for a pay increase and the employers could make an improved pay offer on their miserly 1.1% pay offer.

In 2014/15 the average salary of a UK Vice Chancellor was £272,000 and their average pay rise was a whopping 6.1%! The number of staff paid above £100,000 per year is also increasing.

We expect the employers to use the uncertainty caused by the EU referendum decision as another excuse to avoid a decent pay award. However, the long term impact of the EU vote is not known and currently the UK remains in the EU. The world class reputation of UK universities should remain unaffected by the Brexit decision.

Pay austerity is a ‘choice’ being made by universities – not a necessity. There is clearly money available for some – we believe it should be available for all.

Since 2009, as a result of pay rises below the cost of living, your income has been squeezed, with staff losing between £1585 - £8428 in real terms. Lower salaries will also affect future pension earnings.
UNISON believes that no employees in higher education should be paid less than the Foundation Living Wage (£8.25p / £9.40 in London) and that it is time for incomes for everyone working on campus to match the rising costs of living.

Low pay rises have not protected jobs or prevented redundancies. Job losses have still happened as a result of poor governance and planning.

A clear majority of members rejected the pay offer in UNISON’s pay consultation. Therefore UNISON’s national Higher Education Service Group Executive (HESGE) decided to ballot members and call on them to take escalating industrial action in the autumn.

UNISON’s HESGE believe the only way for an improved pay offer from the employers is for members to take strike action, and show the University employers that enough is enough and that staff need an investment in their pay too.

The strike ballot will take place in September 2016 and UNISON branches and regions will be arranging meetings so that members can ask about any issues on the offer.

Make sure that you are informed about the offer and what it means to you by attending a meeting, keeping up to date with newsletters and contacting your branch for the latest developments.

**Updating your details**

It is important that prior to the ballot we have your correct contact details.

So if you are changing address, phone number, name or email address - have we got the right details for you?

View and update your personal details online at My UNISON: http://www.unison.org.uk/my-unison/

or phone UNISONdirect on 0845 355 0845.
The Facts

A pay rise is affordable
Since 2010 the amount spent on staff by universities has dropped 3%, but total reserves have rocketed by 72% to over £21bn.

There is enough money in the sector to pay all staff properly!

Vice-chancellor and senior management pay
More than 5,000 university employees are now paid over £100,000 a year.
The average salary for a vice-chancellor is £274,405 and the average pay rise for vice-chancellors in 2015 was 6.1%.

Employers are choosing to reward the highest earners rather than the majority of their staff.

Living Wage
This pay offer does provide more for the lowest paid in percentage terms. But employees on the lowest rates of pay in universities that have a standard working week of more than 35 hours per week would still not achieve the Foundation Living Wage of £8.25p per hour (£9.40p in London).

Mind the gender pay gap
The continuing gender pay gap in universities is shameful.

There has been a drop in engagement with the trade unions on local job evaluation panels. This means we cannot be sure that the grading structures in place are sufficiently robust to ensure that staff roles are correctly evaluated after restructures take place. We want proper involvement, transparency and accountability for pay and grading.

The truth about casualisation
An investigation by UNISON’s revealed that nearly £200m was spent on agency workers in the last year. This is an increase of 62% since 2011. Forty five universities each spent £1m or more in the financial year to August 2015. This is out-of-control spending on agencies that could be better used to put staff on better contracts and pay them properly.

Casual contracts cause anxiety and fear, with staff not knowing if they will have any wages from week to week. Casualisation affects in-work benefits and can cause real hardship. More than 8,000 support staff have a zero hours contract.