

February 2016

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CUTS?

In November, representatives of all three trade unions at City met with Stephen Avery, the University's Chief Financial Officer (soon to depart to Royal Holloway). When asked about rumours of cuts to Professional Services, he said there were no plans to make budget cuts but that in the tough financial conditions this should never be ruled out. We have since learned, of course, that plans to require all Professional Services to propose budget cuts of 3, 6 and 9% percent for the financial year 2016/17 were being made at that time. The UCU gave the University the opportunity to confirm the rumours before Christmas, but with nothing forthcoming we shared what we knew with members at the start of January. Professional Service Directors have since announced their plans and it is clear that cuts of any size will push some departments to breaking point, especially in the context of City's plans to invest in new buildings and the upcoming Teaching Excellence Framework. We have since been informed that Directors were only asked to propose how they *would* make cuts if required to – **is this the way to build the confidence of staff?**

### University Salary Review 2015

The UCU branch has been actively seeking information on the Salary Review for 2015 which Human Resources have now announced is concluded. All members of staff were entitled to put themselves forward for a pay award, but the process for doing so was undocumented and staff were also informed that Deans or Professional Service Directors would nominate relevant staff anyway. All nominees for pay awards should now have been notified of their decision, but as of February the branch remains unaware of any staff who have been informed of a negative decision. In spite of UCU's requests, there still appears to be no appeals process.

### Bursaries or bust!

UCU members were proud to stand alongside Nursing, Midwifery and Speech & Language students on 10 February when they walked out and demonstrated in Northampton Square in protest against plans to abolish NHS bursaries. With the Junior Doctors' strike taking place on the same day it was also an opportunity to show solidarity with them.



### The union office is moving

The trade unions expect to move into our new office in early April. The new office is next to the Northampton Suite on Level 4 of University Building. When the move is confirmed, drop-ins, consultations and meetings will take place here.

Drop-in advice sessions for members now take place every Monday from 12.30-1.30pm. Members are welcome to make an appointment to talk to a branch committee member at any other time by emailing [info@cityyucu.org.uk](mailto:info@cityyucu.org.uk) or contacting us via the branch website at [www.cityyucu.org.uk/contact](http://www.cityyucu.org.uk/contact).

### Joint Negotiation and Consultation Board

The three trade unions meet with Senior Management and Human Resources termly at the Joint Negotiation and Consultation Board (JCNB). Until an independent chair is found, the meetings are chaired alternately by the Unions and the University. The UCU chaired the last meeting in January.

The meeting reviewed the list of issues identified by the University in August 2015 for discussion with the unions. These were:

- academic promotion
- academic contracts
- consultation on restructures
- performance measures (e.g. ARQM)
- bullying and harassment
- opportunities for collaborative work between the University and the unions (e.g. training)
- City's membership of the University of London.

This academic year, the UCU's branch officers have been actively working on all of these issues in meetings and

Drop-in sessions for members:

**Mondays 12.30–1.30pm, Union Office, C140**

**Wednesdays 11am-1pm, Cass**

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discussions with management. The unions' proposal for the establishment of a new Employee Relations group has been agreed. This group will progress the work in negotiating and consulting on the issues which matter to members of staff at City.

Academic role profiles and the proposed new education-only contracts are some of the most pressing issues for academic staff at present. The UCU is meeting with the University in March to continue discussions on education-

## UCU elections

Elections for the Vice-President of UCU and National Executive Committee (NEC) members are open and close on Friday 26 February.

Senior Elected Senator Dr Rachel Cohen from the Sociology department is standing in the NEC elections for London and the East (Higher Education), alongside UCU members from institutions in the region.

## City UCU Branch Committee

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Senior Lecturer, City Law School

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Disability Co-ordinator in Learning Success

**Vice President** Chris Flood (Health Sciences)  
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only contracts, which we have been told the University intends for new recruits and for staff on education-only role profiles who request the new contract.

At the January JCNB, the UCU also asked for information on the University's accession to the University of London and any plans for centralisation or restructures. There were no expected consequences for professional services departments at this stage.

## Calais blankets appeal

Thank you to the many members of staff who generously gave blankets and donated money to the appeal for blankets to give to refugees in "The Jungle" camp in Northern France. We raised £600 and sent almost 300 blankets to the Herefordshire Veterans Support Group, who made contact with us via a UCU member. They are delivering them to Calais on their next trip in March.

**Equalities Officer** Martin Chivers (SASS)  
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Research Fellow in School of Health Sciences

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