

Defending the university – Build the union through fighting back

I AM ASKING YOU TO VOTE FOR ME because I have spent my career speaking up for research staff in Higher Education.

What is at stake

The basic idea of a University is under attack from a Government and a political class who fear a critical, independently-minded, University-educated populace. We need to respond by mobilising our own members: both in their own immediate interests, over pay and conditions, and in a wider defence of the University ideal.

We have a responsibility in UCU to defend the independence of research. I encourage members to join campaigns such as the Council to Defend British Universities. But defending research integrity also means defending the staff who carry out that research.

We can win. At UCL we fought off an attempt to rewrite our college Statutes. We turned an attack on academic staff rights into a debate about extending academic protection to researchers and others. However, the threat to our sector is long-term.

The great gamble

The great tuition fees gamble has begun. On the face of it, the winners are Universities who banked over £1.1bn out of fee hikes and pay cuts.

The losers are students (and their families, including our members), priced



out of education or compelled to take huge student loans. But this market is volatile. It will fragment our sector unless reversed. VCs are lobbying to increase fees and compel students to repay earlier. These changes risk undermining our sector further.

We have to win an argument that Universities are critically important for an educated society. Defending education means reversing Government cuts and dismantling fees. It also means standing up ourselves, including fighting for our own pay.

The pay fight – crunch time for the union

Winning the pay fight is a critical issue for the union. We knew the employers were prepared to be ruthless and brazen in

their pursuit of their market position.

They have banked on our lack of campaigning over pay. Now they are showing their teeth, threatening to dock days' pay even for short strikes.

We urgently need a robust response from our union by escalating the action. We need to reinstate the action plan members voted on.

If employers are playing hard-ball, we need to meet the challenge.

But this is also an election, and it would be remiss not to point out that this debacle has exposed the strategy of the right wing faction who dominate voting on our current HEC. And you should draw your conclusions accordingly.

I urge you to vote in this election for candidates of the Left who have resisted retreats and stand up for the democracy of a member-led union.

I am a founding member of UCU Left, a hard-working branch president and a defender of research staff. I want to see UCU as a union that represents you, fights for you and organises to build a stronger trade union.

In this regional election, I urge you to vote Adrian Budd 1, Ioanna Ioannou 2, Sean Wallis 3

Please also vote Loraine Monk for Vice President

Lorraine's election blog is at: <http://lorainemonk4vp.wordpress.com>

regional

Please vote for these NEC candidates who are supported by UCU Left

We urge you to vote for the candidates in the order they appear below.

Vice President FE
Lorraine Monk

North East FE
**Umit Yildiz,
Lee Short**

North East HE
**Paul Blackledge,
Mike Lammiman,
Jeff Fowler**

London and the East HE
**Sean Wallis,
Adrian Budd,
Ioanna Ioannou**

Women members HE
**Sue Abbott,
Saira Weiner,
Nadia Edmond**

Women members FE
**Margot Hill,
Rhiannon Lockley**

UK-elected HE:
**Lesley McGorrigan,
Jelena Timotijevic,
Carlo Morelli,
Karen Evans,
Andreas Bieler, Eleni Michalopoulou,
Paul Blackledge**

UK-elected FE:
**Darren Tolliday,
Alan Barker,
Paul Pritchard,
Allister Mactaggart,
Margot Hill**

STV voting system

To maximise votes for progressive candidates we ask you to do the following:

- Please use your votes to **first endorse all UCU Left candidates** and only after that use lower preferences for other progressive candidates in each relevant list
- Give your highest preferences in the UK-Elected list to UCU Left candidate(s) **from your region**

Find out more at www.uculeft.org