

UCU NEC elections: vote Safia Flissi For Midlands FE

NO MORE RETREATS, UCU MUST TAKE ON EMPLOYERS AND TORIES

Election
runs from
1 February
- 1 March

I am an ESOL lecturer at South and City College Birmingham. I have worked in education since 1995 both abroad and in Birmingham.

I have always been a strong union member, but the deterioration in education and work conditions pushed me into becoming more active within the union.

I have been elected branch secretary for the last three years. Among other union fights I participated in as a branch secretary, my rep colleagues and I have had a hard battle in preventing South and City College Birmingham becoming the first super-college in the country by merging with other colleges in the area as planned by the Tory Government's Area Review.

This has saved jobs, prevented a number of redundancies and set a positive example for other colleges to follow. I intend to continue fighting any proposed attacks on education.

Recruitment shortfall

As things stand there has been a teacher recruitment shortfall as regards education targets over the last four years. Consequently, support staff are being used to do the work of trained and qualified teachers. This was never the purpose of support staff.

In a survey taken earlier this year of 1,763 support staff workers 700 admitted to teaching classes.

More than three quarters of this group said they worked overtime of 3 to 7 hours per week of which only



11% said they always received overtime payment.

It is speculated that colleges may be using casual staff to save on having to employ casual lecturers, which would be costlier. This isn't fair on casual/temporary/ hourly-paid staff.

As a union we need to rectify this situation before it gets worse. Casual teachers are paid less and teaching salaries have also fallen. Increasing salaries is just one of the challenges that we need to address. Another is to get fixed-term contract staff into permanent employment.

Fight on pay

Teaching salaries have been cut by 18% in real terms over the last five years. Inflation is set to rise in the coming months, hitting our pay packets even harder.

Failing to fight on pay is not an option for a trade union so in these

circumstances we must work together for a realistic salary. The cost of living has increased while salaries in the industry have remained stagnant overall. This is totally unacceptable!

Another major issue is to ensure fair pay for women by conducting equal pay audits or reviewing any existing audits; identifying gender pay gaps; and constructing an action plan for trade unions locally to eliminate such gaps.

The pressure on teaching staff has reached such a level that further cuts could bring education into a more extreme crisis situation.

Only by those of us in the union fighting against these and other austere measures can job, salaries and quality of education be protected so we can reach a work-life balance.

As a strong believer in the democratic process and as a UCU Left supporter I know that with your support we can campaign for better working conditions for all and in our collective fight against austerity.

STV voting system

Please note that all members can vote in the elections for Equality, Casually Employed members' and Trustees seats

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**

UCU Left is supporting the following candidates in the NEC elections

Trustees

Steve Cushion
Laura Miles

General Secretary

Jo McNeill

Vice President HE

Carlo Morelli

Honorary

Treasurer

Paul Anderson

Midlands HE

Elio Di Muccio

Midlands FE

Rhiannon Lockley
Safia Flissi

UK-elected

members FE

Mandy Brown
Richard McEwan

UK-elected

members HE

Carlo Morelli
Marion Hersh
Phoebe Moore
Ioanna Ioannou

South HE

Lesley Kane
Mark Abel
Marian Mayer

Representatives

of LGBT members
Pura Ariza

For a lay leadership that will:

- Fight to defend post-16 education
- Defend members' pensions, pay and conditions
- Respect democratic mandates
- Seek to build a campaigning, member-led union

More election materials can be found at the UCU Left website: uculeft.org

Find out more at uculeft.org