

# For a mass campaigning union to turn the tide on attacks in HE

Election runs from 29 January - 2 March

## UCU NEC elections: Vote Saira Weiner for North West HE

I am a Senior Lecturer in Education and Early Childhood Studies at Liverpool John Moores University where I am UCU branch secretary. I am the Disability Officer for UCU North West Region and currently elected to the NEC, representing North West Higher Education branches.

I sit on NEC Committees for Recruitment and Organising (ROCC), Equality, and was recently elected to Women's Standing Committee.

I am a lead negotiator for my branch, a caseworker and Faculty Rep. Since I became active on the branch committee (2014), it has doubled in size, and our membership has increased by a quarter.

I believe that the more members participating in branch (and all union) activity and democracy, the better.

This isn't always easy to achieve but working collectively our branch is making progress! We are currently in dispute over Health and Safety, and workload under Covid19.

If re-elected as NW NEC rep, my priorities will be:

- To report back to Regional Committee on local and national issues
- To build networks between branches across the sector, within the NW and nationally;
- To continue to support Black Lives Matter, to ensure that the curriculum

is decolonised in my institution, that Black students and staff matter at my branch, and across our sector. BLM is more than just a #hashtag;



- To support trans rights. Trans women are women, trans men are men, and I support freedom for people of all genders and none;
- To support student climate strikes, and make our campuses carbon neutral;
- To ensure equalities issues are at the centre of our responses to the multiple ongoing crises facing us;
- To campaign to end the endemic casualisation of staff across post-16 education. Our colleagues and students deserve better. Casualisation drains our profession of the diversity it needs to thrive.

I am involved in the UCU Solidarity Movement, which my branch formally supports. I am proud to support students in their protests against injustice and their poor treatment during the covid crisis. I will work with student activists and support them in questioning everything, academically and in life.

I believe UCU should be an active campaigning union, that supports members in challenging the things they find important, whether a local campaign for facilities time, the racism, sexism and ableism endemic in Higher

Education, and always **putting people before buildings.**

We must take up the twin issues of casualisation and job security with more strength in the coming year: universities rely on casualised workers while many institutions make swingeing job cuts.

The significant reduction in real wages continues to be a national issue, with the current 0% pay offer (which in reality is a pay cut) requires significant campaigning and national industrial action to rectify.

As a Union we need to make more effort in involving our members, National Education Union style.

The NEU held mass meetings of 100,000 members in the build up to their refusal to return to in school teaching in January. The meetings created confidence, participation, and a sense of solidarity.

I am proud to say branch meetings at LJMU have been the biggest ever in the last year. These type of participatory meetings could and should be organised by UCU Nationally during and after the pandemic to involve everyone, and build support and solidarity in what at times can feel very isolating circumstances, both at individual and institutional levels.

They can only make the UCU bigger, bolder and stronger for the battles we no doubt face in the months and years to come.

Vote Saira Weiner 1  
Sunil Banga 2

For more information about the UCU Left platform & candidates [click here.](#)