

When we act together we are incredibly powerful

UCU NEC elections: Vote Lesley McGorrigan for UK-elected HE

I am:

- A current NEC member seeking re-election.
- Employed at Leeds University (academic-related) and have been a UCU-AUT officer and activist for 26 years.
- Regional Secretary for Yorkshire-Humberside and have represented my branch, region and NEC at UCU's annual Congress on several occasions.
- UCU Left member.

I approach these roles on the premise that the **members are the union's strength** and that equality underpins our strength.

Whenever my branch has needed to fight redundancies, down-grading, for Covid safety I have been a central voice in our leadership, reminding members that:

- a) We are the University
- b) When we act together we are incredibly powerful, and
- c) We can win.

When UCU members took strike action to save USS and pursue the '4-fights', they rallied to the union's cause. Anger at all aspects of our marketised education motivated members and boosted solidarity.



The Covid crisis is highlighting the rot within our system.

University 'leaders' have tailed Government's failings, dragged hundreds of thousands of students across the country on false promises in order to grab their fees and rent remittances.

Students are our allies, not our customers. Manchester students were a beacon when they organised an occupation, winning a 30% rent discount. The sector has £44 billion in reserves; this stash can plug the income shortfall this victory presents.

Heriot Watt UCU was the first to prove we could win a strike ballot during Covid and stop redundancies. Others followed suit; Brighton UCU have showed we can strike during lockdown.

We need more than just minor concessions, we need:

- Black lives to matter every day, Black history to be at the forefront

every month, Black people in the driving seat.

Election runs from 29 January - 2 March

- Our neighbours and fellow citizens to have decent homes, jobs, pay and dignity to restore their physical and mental health. (The Trussell Trust reports that use of food banks has doubled during the pandemic and, for 2020-21, it predicts 'a significant rise in levels of destitution in the UK by the end of the year'.)
- An end to government policies which cause migrating humans to drown in the Mediterranean.
- Major climate action now to save the planet if we are to fulfil any hopes and aspirations.

Most of us know we are living in a grossly unfair system; the question for me is what will we do about it?

Trades Unions have always been a catalyst for progress and UCU has been a powerful part of that movement. The role of elected representatives is to provide leadership to instigate positive change.

My track record locally, regionally and on NEC is to lead from the front to inspire confidence in members that we can make the change we desperately need.

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