

Donna Brown

Election runs
from 26
January-
1 March

For a member-driven trade union across post-16 education

*UCU NEC elections:
Vote Donna Brown
for UK-Elected HE*

I am a senior lecturer, in Managerial Economics, at Royal Holloway University of London. I was Branch Secretary in AUT and in UCU since it was formed. I rejoined the Committee following casework support to deal with aspects of working with disabilities. My casework contributions have centred around saving jobs threatened by restructuring. Subsequently I've been Vice Chair, H&S officer, pensions rep, and on equalities and anti-casualisation teams. Local progress on precarity is slow but conversion of hourly paid and fixed term roles to secure posts continues. I am currently Branch Chair, alongside which I sit on my Academic Board and College Council. These roles afford different opportunities to challenge the managerialist agenda damaging HE.

A union based on solidarity

I bring an outward focus, having represented RHUL at Congress, Sector Conferences and BDMs. This allowed us to learn from other activists, a process accelerated by engagement with the Solidarity Movement and my joining UCU Left.



Adapting GTVO and Twin to Win models strengthened our branch and, through this, I realised our Branch had ideas and tactics to offer.

My strength in organising was honed as a postie and rep for UCW (now CWU). I've led efforts to increase the size and strategic focus of the branch committee, so it's sustainable. I designed workload surveys for all workers during the height of Covid pandemic and subsequently. This resulted in a new local workload negotiating group.

Sustainability

Marketization in HE damages the education we offer, our research, and limits institutions' contributions to their communities. Employers bemoan how frozen home student fees or the fight to attract overseas students impact sustainability. But, it is unsustainable for employers to cause ill health from unbearable workloads or to push colleagues

out of the sector. As we decolonise teaching and research, we must ensure institutions do not embed inequality and extraction in global educational partnerships.

What would I do?

#ucurising saw greater central efforts around GTVO. But, we need a consistent strategic approach' coherent campaigns and earlier member communication to build confidence and density. Deconstructing the flawed "strategic plans" which employers are circulating in HE is essential to build members' confidence and will demonstrate to employers that UCU must be reckoned with on all issues.

Certain employers are already claiming they cannot afford a realistic pay rise. National bargaining must be protected or we abandon reps to local fights to avoid downward spirals. #ucurising highlighted the need for greater support for branches with less experienced or resourced committees, to develop sustainable organising skills.

The media and management perception of UCU as a lecturers' only union must be countered. I will fight to ensure greater involvement of Professional Service (ARPS) members in UCU's work.

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