

# Equality and Job Security are central

**Election runs from 25 January -1 March**

**A**s a lecturer at the Open University, I have seen the way widening participation and access to educational opportunities can change people's lives, including the lives of women returning to education after raising a family. I have also seen the damaging effect of marketisation on the post-16 education system. I have been involved in local disputes against redundancies and local negotiations for transfer of casualised staff to secure employment. At the OU we succeeded in moving over 4000 casually employed staff onto permanent fractional contracts.

My involvement in anti-casualisation issues has deepened my understanding of sex inequality, since there are often assumptions that women workers work for a second wage or even 'pin money', rather than needing a living wage. I have been active in the Four Fights Campaign and support action to end the gender pay gap in higher education. Often precarious employment links in with other inequalities to disadvantage women and other oppressed groups.

Being on a temporary contract makes it harder for workers to stand up for our employment rights, whether it is opposing excessive workloads, bullying or sexual harassment. That is why achieving secure employment must be part of

**Vote Lesley Kane for Women members**



**Open University Associate Lecturer teaching Computing and Mathematics**  
**I have been active in UCU at branch, regional and national levels.**  
**UCU NEC 2009-15, 2017-21**  
**Anti-Casualisation Committee 2015-2019**  
**Open University Branch Secretary 2008-2017, 2019-present**  
**Open University Branch President 2018**  
**Local Negotiator for over 15 years**  
**Health and Safety Representative Caseworker**  
**Member of UCU Left**

UCU's gender equality agenda. Trade unions must support equality for women workers both in the workplace and the wider

society. We cannot be equal at work if women do not have reproductive rights, are at risk of domestic violence or have massively unequal responsibilities for domestic work and childcare. Equality issues must be at the bargaining table. For instance, tackling unfair work overload is necessary both for all workers in terms of health and sanity and to ensure that paid work is compatible with having a life, raising and family and being an active citizen.

I support UCU's commitment to keeping equality issues at the heart of the union. UCU has an Annual Women's Conference and a Women Members' Standing Committee. This type of provision is vital for taking forward women's equality and ensuring that the issues are not forgotten.

If elected as a Women's Representative, I would work actively to:

- Ensure that women's equality issues are integrated into UCU's bargaining priorities;
- Encourage understanding and awareness of the various aspects of gender inequality internationally
- Support the development of women members as union activists.

**For more information about the UCU Left platform and candidates**  
<https://uculeft.org/ucu-elections-2024>