

# Women's voices and gender equality at the heart of UCU

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

I'm standing for re-election as I want to continue working to improve conditions for women within post-16 education. Women's rights are under attack and our material conditions are declining due to poor pay and soaring food, housing and childcare costs. UCU must tackle these issues in the workplace, and campaign against government attacks. At Conference I moved a motion calling on UCU to carry out research and provide resources to support branches to improve parental leave policies. There is a huge disparity in policies leaving individuals unable to take the leave they wish or having to rack up debts to do so. This must be challenged.

Women are also more likely to be on casualised contracts; thus, vulnerable to management cutting hours with minimal notice and being poorly paid. At WKC we successfully fought for a fractionalisation policy for hourly paid staff, and continue to fight to improve conditions through our negotiations and case work. However, we need to go further and end the use of casualised contracts. They are used to bully individuals into taking on more work with the constant insecurity that they will lose their jobs.

Women members in UCU need to have our voices heard. UCU equality structures correctly link workplace issues with equality in the wider society. For women this means supporting our reproductive

## **Vote Regine Pilling for Women members**



**Teaches A-Level Politics and Sociology at Westminster Kingsway College.**

**Anti-Casualisation rep and Branch Chair.**

**NEC FE Women's Rep  
Branch Secretary**

**London Region Chair  
UCU Left member**

rights, tackling sexism and violence against women and supporting our equal participation in public life. If re-elected I'll work hard to tackle the barriers to women attending Equality conferences, including difficulties in getting time off work, to ensure women in HE, FE, ACE and Prison are all heard.

UCU should be a democratic, member-led organisation that provides confidence and solidarity so

we can fight to secure better working conditions. In November and January, my branch took strike action over pay and workload. It was a well-supported action, with large picket lines consisting of mainly women. Our members are calling out for national action over pay and workload to improve employment conditions for all. We work well beyond our contractual hours and are losing any sense of a reasonable work-life balance. Workloads and pay are equality issues - and we need to be clear in our campaigns that this is the case.

Colleges and universities have been ravaged by marketisation - being turned into profit-making businesses with employers seeking to increase staff utilisation, class sizes and the use of performance management tools. In FE, owing to "efficiency cuts" there is increased attendance chasing and demands to meet attendance quotas with little regard to the personal difficulties students are facing. The impact on our mental and physical health is clear. UCU needs to campaign against these issues, so UCU members can deliver the education students need. If re-elected I will continue to campaign against this, just as I do in my branch and region.

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