

UCU Congress is meeting at a time of growing crisis and instability - not just for post-16 education, but across the UK and globally.

Years of chronic underfunding and rampant marketisation have driven up workloads, forced course closures and led to devastating job losses. The crisis is deepening, with recent news that 24 universities could go bust within the next 12 months. Congress must sound the alarm and commit to defending the whole post-16 education sector. We need national strategies to protect jobs, pay and pensions, we must protect education.

Wars in the Middle East rage on, causing devastation, suffering and global instability. The UK government, alongside others, pour more funds into warfare while wages and welfare are squeezed. The impact of austerity and increasing anti-immigrant rhetoric has fuelled the growth of the racist Reform UK and emboldened the far right, spreading fear and seeking to roll back our rights.

Over the coming days, Congress must meet these challenges head-on by building a fighting, inclusive union that can resist these attacks, defend education and and campaign for a better future.

BUSINESS OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE (Motions 1 – 6)

Education is central to why we are here – we are united in our belief that a broad and rich education is a necessity and a social and personal good.

However, the idea of what education should be and how our sector operates is threatened by multiple challenges: from hostile environments and the rise of the far right to climate justice and ensuring access to education for all. The government is increasing defence spending, whilst failing to properly fund education – this must be opposed. **(Support Motion 1 and 1a.1).**

A key theme will be countering the threat posed by Reform UK and the far right. Motions 2 – 4 clearly outline the threats facing ESOL, SEND and Adult Education from Reform UK, which has come into sharper focus following Reform UK's local election gains and increased council control. **(Support Motion 2, 3 & 4).**

Despite a Labour government, trade union education is under threat which will weaken trade unions' ability to organise, mobilise and act effectively. **(Support Motion 5).**

Support motions 1 – 6.

BUSINESS OF THE EQUALITY COMMITTEE (Motions 7 - 24)

The “hostile environment” policy introduced by May has continued and intensified by successive governments. Anti-migrant rhetoric has increased across the media and from political parties — not only from Conservatives and Reform UK, but also Labour, which has launched significant attacks on Indefinite Leave to Remain. This fuels division, devalues migrants' essential contributions, and puts migrant members at risk **(Support Motion 7, 8, 10).**

UCU must stand in solidarity with migrant members and their right to take industrial action. However, as currently drafted, resolve 2 of Motion 9 could lead to migrant members being advised not to strike due to overly cautious legal guidance. This risks reinforcing a sense of second-class status among migrant members. Congress should **remit Motion 9** for further work to ensure migrant members are fully protected and included.

Trade unions must be at the forefront in challenging fascism and racism. **Motion 12** strengthens and deepening UCU's campaign against the far right, building on the success of the half a million strong Together Alliance demonstration.

Attacks on trans and non-binary people are reprehensible, causing increasing harm to some of the most vulnerable in our society. Trans rights are human rights, and UCU should support legal and political challenges to their erosion. **(Support motion 14 & 15).**

Labour's attacks on disabled people betray principles of social justice and equality. UCU must actively campaign to disabled members and secure proper support in the workplace. **(Support motion 17).**

Motion 20 is essential and underpins the wider agenda. Threats to the Equality Act are growing, we must act decisively to defend the rights we have won.

Support motions and amendments 7 – 8, 10 – 24, support remittance of motion 9.

BUSINESS OF THE STRATEGY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE (Motions 25 - 53)

The budget (Motion 27) must be scrutinised. UCU must be properly resourced to support branches and members resisting attacks in their workplaces. While subscription rates are not yet as progressive as they should be, **support motion 28** otherwise sub rates will not be made more progressive this year.

Subscription rates must ensure union membership is accessible to all. **Support motion 30** which moves towards a more progressive banding. The funds raised are essential for running the union and supporting members in campaigns and industrial action. **Oppose motion 31** - a blanket 15% reduction is not the answer to ensuring fair and progressive subscription rates.

Members taking industrial action should be granted access to the Fighting Fund, especially given the scale of current attacks – we should oppose narratives that play one sector off against another. **Support Motion 32 and Amendment 32a.1.**

Pensions are under sustained attack, with employers seeking to remove employees from TPS and placed onto an inferior private scheme. UCU must take a firmer stance in defence of pensions - **support motion 34 and 35.**

Support motion 37 to challenge the increasingly draconian and restrictive laws on protest, particularly in relation to Palestine solidarity. These are being mirrored by senior management in our institutions. This undermines democracy and our rights, and must be opposed.

One million 16–24-year-olds are not in work, education or training. This fuels mental health difficulties, social isolation and economic hardship. It underlines the urgent need to expand post-16 education and invest in young people. We cannot allow this generation to be abandoned. We need a charter for youth employment and education for all. **(Support motion 40).**

Trade unionism is rooted in internationalism; we must continue to build solidarity and amplify Palestinian voices. **Support motion 42 and amendment 42a.1** calling for an annual Campus Voices for Palestine tour.

As America's war in Iran, enabled by European powers, continues - we must show our solidarity to the people of Iran. **(Support motion 43 and 43a.1)**

Trump's administration has intensified attacks on rights, migrants and equality **(support motion 44)**. The US has also increased military spending and escalated international tensions, contributing to a more militarised world. Governments and educational institutions increasingly view the arms and defence industry as a growth market — this must be opposed. **(Support motion 45 & 46).**

The International Peace Conference is a central part of the campaign to build a movement for peace and one that prioritises wages, not weapons. UCU must lobby government to prioritise spending on education and welfare, and work with other unions and civil society **(support motion 47)**. Several European countries are moving towards conscription due to the rise in militarism; we must oppose this **(support motion 49)**.

UCU must provide clear support and protection for staff and students threatened by far-right Zionist organisations like Betar. **Support Motion 52, oppose amendment 52a.1. (Still support Motion 52 even if amended.)**

Support motions and amendments 25 – 30, 32 - 52 and 53. Oppose motions 31 and 52a.1

RULE CHANGES (Motions 54 – 67)

Many of the rule changes clarify existing processes or strengthen representation for equality strands, retired members, green reps and ARPS roles.

Oppose Motion 33 as UCU manages highly sensitive industrial information. Making it publicly accessible risks giving employers an advantage and undermining our position. (A similar motion was put last year to Congress and lost).

Motion 60 and 61 attempt to progress the important work of addressing complaints of GBV after discussions at last year's Congress. Colleagues should engage, listen and determine their position through the debate.

Support motion 64, to ensure democracy there must be clear accountability of the General Secretary.

Support Motions 54 – 59, 62, 64 – 67. Oppose Motion 63

BUSINESS OF RECRUITMENT, ORGANISING & CAMPAIGNS COMMITTEE (Motions 68 - 78)

The Labour government has not only failed to address the crises in FE and HE but has also presided over a worsening crisis, particularly in HE. These are political choices. UCU and the wider trade union movement must pressure government for proper funding for education and welfare. We must reject the idea that public services should be cut due to instability caused by America's war in Iran and increased military spending. **(Support Motion 68, 68a.1 and 68a.2)**

Casualisation continues to blight post-16 education and is worsening. Casual staff are often the first to lose work, masking hidden redundancies, while permanent posts are replaced with insecure contracts. A national campaign is urgently needed to end this **(support motion 69)**.

Globally, climate inaction persists, exacerbated by climate change deniers like Trump and Farage. We must build on the TUC Year of Trade Union Climate Action and embed climate justice and activism in our institutions. **(Support motion 73 and 74).**

Support all motions and amendments 68 – 78.