UCU Congress 2026 — Motions

Day 1: Wednesday 27 May — Congress

Education committee

1: Education Policy: Valuing post-16 education

Submitted by: National executive committee

Congress believes that valuing education and educators must be at the heart of the union's industrial and political strategy. Building on Congress 2025 motion 1, Congress calls on NEC to deepen its evidence-based policy work on:

1. charting the educational consequences of redundancies, casualisation, mergers, and privatisation in and of post-16 education.
2. developing a sustainable funding model to widen participation and ensure proper, stable resourcing across post-16 education.
3. monitoring the role of Ed Tech in colleges and universities.
4. challenging the detrimental effects of the hostile environment and UK TNE.
5. defending academic freedom, collegial governance and professional autonomy in response to political and managerial interference.
6. countering far right influence in our classrooms and institutions.
7. embedding climate justice in curricula and institutional practices.
8. building global education solidarity and exchange.

In response to these challenges, Congress calls on NEC to continue to organise an annual education policy conference, webinars and CPD on education-related issues.

Notes:

Amendments

1A.1: University College London

Submitted by: Add final point: "Congress resolves to link UCU's 'wages not weapons' campaign with our educational demands"

Notes:

2: Composite: Education for all, No to racist education agenda

Submitted by: New City College - Hackney Community College, South and City College Birmingham

Congress notes:

1. The decision by Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority under Reform UK mayor Andrea Jenkyns to end publicly funded ESOL provision from 2027, despite overwhelming opposition in consultation.
2. That ESOL supports integration, employment and progression into FE and HE, and that defunding risks privatisation and closure of pathways for marginalised learners.
3. Adult Skills Fund protects Maths and English provision but not ESOL.
4. That Reform UK's anti-migrant, anti-education policies mirror far-right trends seen in the US and must be challenged before they spread further.
5. In May 2025 Reform UK gained control of councils in Derbyshire, Kent, Lancashire, Lincolnshire, North Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Staffordshire, West Northamptonshire, Doncaster and Durham, and mayoral position in Hull & East Yorkshire.

Congress believes:

a. Defunding ESOL is a politically motivated and vindictive attack, designed to divide communities and legitimise anti-migrant narratives, and that what begins with ESOL will not end there. b. Reform-led councils pose a threat to education for all in both HE and FE

Congress resolves: To call on UCU to:

i. Initiate a cross-union statement demanding protected status for ESOL. ii. Campaign for ESOL to be protected by funding bodies iii. Contact branches with Reform-led councils to warn of the dangers iv. Produce a campaign and materials pack on combating the far right in workplaces and elections. v. organise training for reps in HE and FE, working with NEU and TUC, on how to combat the far-right threats in elections and in our workplaces

Notes:

Amendments

2A.1: Working Men's College

Submitted by: Under Congress believes, add new points

b. The Labour Government has stoked racist sentiment with anti-migrant rhetoric and policies c. Anti-racism needs to be linked to the call for 'Homes, jobs and services for all' and re-label old point b. to new point d.

Under Congress resolves, add new point

vi. Compile a list of UCU member volunteers in each region to steward anti- racist demonstrations and counter demonstrations where the local trade union movement thinks it is necessary, and to encourage other unions to do the same.

Notes:

3: Reform's attacks on SEND and disabled people

Submitted by: Disabled members standing committee

Congress notes:

1. On 22nd April, Five Acre Wood School in Kent announced threat to jobs related to SEND student needs due to budgetary constraints.
2. In April, Rivers Age Concern services which assist disabled elders were unable to continue and wHoo Care service helping disabled people lost its funding

Congress believes:

a. Reform flagship County Council Kent has declared war on asylum seekers, claiming the "people of Kent" are paying for them. Behind this racist rhetoric, they are attacking marginalised groups and cutting funding to working class people, disproportionately affecting disabled people.

Congress instructs NEC to:

i. Continue providing solidarity and support to SEND services, including with NEU and FE branches ii. Work with branches in Reform-run councils to build effective campaigns against division and support disabled and Black people's and migrants' struggles. iii. Continue working with Together to create mass unity against the rise of the far right.

Notes:

4: Save Adult Education

Submitted by: Harrogate College

Conference notes:

1. The cuts to the Adult Skills Fund.
2. The impact on ESOL, vocational courses, English, Digital Skills and Maths.
3. The defunding of courses and the narrowing of the curriculum.
4. The launch of the save adult education campaign last summer.

Conference believes that:

a. The benefits of adult education, improved social cohesion and individual development, are a social good. b. The cuts have disproportionately impacted on women and those from minoritised ethnic groups. c. FESC condemns the racist and divisive decisions of Reform UK in closing ESOL provision.

Conference resolves to:

i. Relaunch the Save Adult Education campaign ii. Update and promote the petition

iii. Produce template resources members can send to MPs, principals, and mayors. iv. Develop new material making the case for adult education. v. Develop guidance on fighting the far right and protecting ESOL. vi. Organise briefings for adult education members

Notes:

5: Funding of trade union education

Submitted by: City of Bristol College

Congress recognises that:

1. Training for trade union representatives is vital for building and maintaining the movement.

2. There has been a massive decline in the number of colleges providing this service since the 50% reduction in fees and devolution which has left many reps outside an area able to be funded.

Congress calls on the General Secretary and the NEC to:

a. Lobby and persuade the TUC, as a matter of urgency to develop and implement a national strategy to work with all the devolved authorities to secure full funding for trade union courses. b. Lobby the UK Government to restore the Union Learning Fund and to restore the funding which will secure the jobs of UCU members working in trade union education. c. Co-ordinate regular UCU meetings of Trade Union Education Centres to share good practice and solutions to the current crisis. (New paragraph) Other education issues

Notes:

6: VPN Restrictions

Submitted by: UCU Scotland

Congress notes:

1. In January 2026, the House of Lords voted for an amendment to the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill which would restrict access to Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) to over-18s.
2. VPN usage in the UK has skyrocketed since the Online Safety Act, demonstrating the public's increasing concern for privacy.
3. Many members rely on VPNs to access academic resources from home, particularly disabled members.

Congress believes:

a. Age verification checks using facial recognition and ID scanning raise serious concerns regarding necessity and proportionality under Article 5 (1)(c) of the GDPR. b. Restrictions on VPNs disproportionately impact disabled members, who rely on them to access data remotely and securely.

Congress resolves to:

i. Raise awareness of the increased impact of VPN restrictions on disabled members.

ii. Lobby Government to ensure VPNs remain an accessible means to protect our members' privacy and autonomy.

Notes:

Equality committee

7: Resisting Earned Settlement proposals

Submitted by: University College London

Congress notes Government proposals to make the granting of permanent residence dependent on financial contributions, rather than length of residence, delaying permanent settled status for up to 20 years.

Congress believes:

1. This will create a two-tiered society with non-citizens becoming increasingly vulnerable to exploitation, particularly trafficked women and domestic workers.
2. Children of non-citizens risk losing any route to permanent settled status.
3. Migrants are irreplaceable members of universities and contributors to international knowledge exchange.

Congress resolves:

a. To campaign against this attack on the rights of migrants, including lobbying MPs. b. To demand employer financial support for migrant colleagues facing the additional costs of seeking settled status. c. To defend existing rights of members, including Indefinite Leave to Remain, and oppose other restrictions on rights to settlement. d. To sign and support the joint statement from FiLiA and Project Resist on Earned Settlement.

Notes:

Amendments

7A.1: Women members standing committee, LGBT+ members standing committee

Delete bullet point d ("to sign and support the joint statement from FiLiA and Project Resist on Earned Settlement")

Notes:

8: End the attacks on migrant residence and settlement rights

Submitted by: Yorkshire and Humberside regional committee

Congress condemns

1. moves by the UK Government making it more difficult for migrants to obtain Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR)

2. the deportation of Dipesh Ramtel, a student at York St John University, for a minor breach of working time limits

3. the continuation of ‘hostile environment’ policies as the Labour Government imitates Reform UK’s racist rhetoric Congress calls on universities and colleges to support students and staff who are migrants.

Congress calls on the UK government to

a. recognise the positive contribution migrants make b. end the racist policing of working time limits on international students c. make it easier for international students to study in the UK d. shorten and simplify routes to ILR, not lengthen and make them more difficult e. establish voting rights for migrants in local and Westminster elections Congress calls on UCU NEC to campaign for the above objectives and to raise them with parliamentary contacts and the TUC.

Notes:

9: Industrial action and legal guidance for migrant members

Submitted by: Migrant members standing committee

Congress notes:

1. since 2019, UCU has published legal guidance on migrant workers taking industrial action, which is updated as the law changes
2. some updates happened just before, or during, industrial action.

Congress believes:

a. no member should be asked to take industrial action that could jeopardise their immigration status b. last minute changes to guidance risk confusion regarding migrant members' ability to participate in industrial action and increases the risk of receiving incorrect advice.

Congress resolves:

i. UCU guidance for migrant members must be refreshed on a quarterly basis to address changes in law, and updates emailed to members ii. proposals for forms or patterns of industrial action, which would be new to UCU, should by default include an equality impact assessment inclusive of migration status. An updated version of the Migrant IA guidance should be provided to the relevant NEC subcommittee to inform calling action.

Notes:

10: Migrant representation in institutional and union campaigning

Submitted by: Migrant members standing committee

Congress notes:

1. Migrant staff make significant academic, professional, cultural and economic contributions to UK higher and further education.
2. Public and political debate increasingly includes hostile or misleading narratives about migrants that encourage prejudice and discrimination.
3. Institutional promotional and campaigning materials often fail to reflect the presence, experiences and contributions of migrant staff.
4. Positive and visible representation can help challenge misinformation and stereotypes while affirming solidarity across the sector and beyond.

Congress resolves:

a. To call on FE and HE institutions to involve migrant staff in promotional and campaigning materials, placing migrant voices, accents and experiences centre stage to challenge anti-migrant narratives and highlight migrant contributions. b. To develop a national UCU campaign showcasing migrant members and trade union issues, clearly demonstrating that migrants are an asset to the sector and countering hostile narratives. c. To lobby Universities UK (UUK) to ensure migrant staff are actively and visibly represented in sector-wide promotional and policy materials.

Notes:

11: Campaigning against the far-right

Submitted by: Black members standing committee

Congress notes:

1. Racism creates psychological harm (stress, anxiety, trauma) resulting in physical manifestation with long term impacts
2. Rising Far-right activity increases risk of harassment, intimidation, and violence.
3. Employers and institutions have a legal duty of care under health and safety legislation.
4. A hostile environment impacts employee wellbeing, productivity, and physical safety.
5. Ignoring racist behaviour exposes organisations to liability and safeguarding failures.

Congress resolves to campaign for the Health and Safety Executive to:

a. Recognise racist and extremist conduct as a reportable workplace hazard; b. Issue formal guidance requiring risk assessments addressing racial hostility and extremist activity; c. Clarify employers' legal duty of care regarding racist harm under health and safety legislation;

d. Develop enforcement mechanisms where employers fail to mitigate such risks.

Notes:

12: Anti-racism and Together Alliance

Submitted by: Liverpool John Moores University

Congress notes:

1. The growth of far-right and authoritarian groups in the UK and internationally.
2. September 2024 "Unite the Kingdom" demonstration led by fascist Tommy Robinson was 100,000.
3. Recent attacks and attempted arson on hotels housing asylum seekers and mosques.
4. Increased hostility towards migrants, LGBTQ+ communities, anti- racist initiatives and academic freedom.

5. Post-16 education is frequently targeted in culture-war attacks on EDI and curriculum content.
6. Anti-racist mobilisations have successfully pushed the fascists back.

Congress believes:

a. Far-right politics pose a direct threat to inclusive, democratic and publicly funded post-16 education. b. UCU must act proactively to defend members, students and the curriculum.

Congress resolves to instruct UCU to:

i. Produce cross-sector guidance for branches and a programme of reps training on responding to far-right activity on and off campus.

ii. Develop national campaigning materials defending EDI and academic freedom.

iii. Coordinate with other trade unions and student unions on anti-racist and anti-fascist initiatives. 12A.1West Midlands regional committee Add under notes: 7. New coming rights for equality reps including statutory time to complete duties and rights to training Add under resolves: iv. Run regional equality organising days to increase branch levels of trained equality reps and strategise to develop branch equality organising plans to mobilise our workplace presence

Notes:

13: The far right and disabled people

Submitted by: Disabled members standing committee

Congress notes:

1. The rise of the far right in the election of Reform, the increasingly confident street presence of far-right activists including Tommy Robinson and the dragging in their wake of mainstream political parties poses a threat to disabled people.
2. The government increasingly echoes far right rhetoric implementing policies against disabled people, migrants, trans and non- binary people destroying elements of our welfare state

Congress believes we need to accelerate the fight to:

a. Support members facing attacks from Reform who are cutting funding for projects and services supporting disabled people and people in other equality strands b. Stop the far right and combat the shift of UK politics to the right.

Congress instructs NEC to:

i. Continue affiliation for organisations defending disabled people and all other equality strands, against the rise of the far right ii. Work with branches to develop and build a detailed campaign

Notes:

Amendments

13A.1: London regional committee

Add at end of Congress instructs NEC to:

iii. Defend and extend existing provision, campaigning for access to work, PIP and other benefits to be improved and made more accessible to disabled people with physical and/or mental disabilities.

Notes:

14: In defence of trans workers

Submitted by: Women members standing committee

Congress notes:

1. The recent High Court challenge by Good Law Project (GLP) to EHRC's interim update on gendered facilities.
2. The ruling's indication that services can provide trans inclusive gendered facilities, in contrast to the update, but that workplaces may exclude trans people from these spaces.
3. Students and staff may therefore have unequal rights.

Congress believes that:

a. The update is unworkable and harmful. b. The Gender Recognition Act (GRA) 2004 applied to Workplace Regulations (WRs) 1992 in response to findings of Goodwin v UK (2002). c.

Courts are diminishing the GRA, effectively leaving trans people with no practical or legal way of changing sex, contrary to Goodwin ruling.

Congress resolves to:

i. Write to SoSs for Education, Business & Trade, WEC and Joint Committee on HR demanding clarity. ii. Lobby government to clarify that WRs were covered by GRA, and that exceptions to GRA must not be the norm. iii. Share GLP's fundraiser via UCU channels.

Notes:

15: Future proofing the UK for equality and human rights

Submitted by: LGBT+ members standing committee

Congress notes that:

1. In ILGA index ranking of European countries by laws on LGBT+ equality

i. UK fell to 22nd / 49 C

ii. Current UK Government presided over a fall of 6 places, joining Georgia and Hungary with joint largest drops

2. Polling suggests a Reform led government is possible. Therefore, it's vital that human rights and equality are protected now.

Congress calls for:

a. Campaign for UK Government to legislate for I. a fully inclusive and healthcare-inclusive conversion therapy ban. II. restoration and safeguarding rights held by trans, non-binary and intersex people prior to FWS v Scottish Ministers (2025). III. full restoration of protest rights.

b. UK Government to reaffirm full commitment to ECHR and Refugee Convention.

c. UK Government to fully implement UN Paris Principles in National Human Rights bodies, including the EHRC.

d. Campaign for a judiciary reflecting UK's diverse demographics, including the nine protected characteristics.

Notes:

16: Composite: Access to Work - a failing scheme

Submitted by: Southern regional committee, University of Portsmouth

Access to Work is a DWP scheme to help workers obtain and stay in work if they have physical or mental health conditions or disabilities. Liaising with employers, funding can provide specialist equipment, support workers, the costs of travelling to work and physical adaptations. Without these resources, effective job performance is usually impossible. Congress notes the vital role that it has played in enabling disabled and neurodivergent UCU members to work effectively within further and higher education.

Congress notes that stakeholders, MPs and most recently the National Audit Office have identified serious and growing inefficiencies in the scheme's:

operation. Members who depend on it have experienced a marked decline in the efficiency of Access to Work, including:

1. Long delays in responding to applications for support and in the provision of resources;
2. Poor communications, including failures to answer correspondence, very long delays in answering phone calls and receiving inappropriate responses, inconsistent and contradictory responses to requests;
3. Lack of clarity in institutions about how to action recommendations made by the scheme.
4. The closure of the dedicated telephone number for complaints.

Congress instructs the NEC to campaign for:

a. this essential service to become fit for purpose; b. universities and colleges to provide full staff training in using this vital scheme effectively.

Notes:

17: Improving reasonable adjustments and Access to Work for disabled

members Disabled members standing committee

Congress notes:

1. A major driver of casualisation, unemployment and poverty amongst disabled working people is a failure of employers and government to provide the necessary adjustments and funding for Access to Work
2. The government's pandering to anti-equality demands of the far right, demonstrates the need for equality of disabled workers
3. Delays in Access to Work, and a failure of employers to implement Disability Leave policies, often mean disabled workers are left without agreed adjustments.

Congress believes:

a. Post-16 educational institutions must do more to deliver the reasonable adjustments they are required by law to provide.

Congress instructs NEC to:

i. Relaunch the Day of Action for Disability Equality in Education campaign, highlighting challenges to reasonable adjustment and providing resources ii. Campaign for employers to meet their duty to provide reasonable adjustments and pay where necessary. iii. Campaign alongside DPOs (disabled people's organisations) on the wider issue of Access to Work reforms.

Notes:

18: Digital Inclusion

Submitted by: UCU Cymru

Congress notes

1. There are fears that older people and disabled people may be at a disadvantage regarding being able to access services due to it being online.
2. Often these services such as mobile banking require a degree of expertise and require a degree of dexterity. As a consequence, many older people lose their degree of independence and have to rely on carers, family or friends to access these services. This creates a climate of unequal access.

Congress resolves We also call upon UK government to conduct a series of equality impact assessments so that we reduce the negative impact of any bank and post office closures to a bare minimum.

Notes:

Amendments

18A.1: Disabled members standing committee

Submitted by: Add to notes new 3:

3. Many services do not provide an email address, the most accessible form of communication for many disabled people, and only provide telephone and chat, further leading to exclusion and unequal access.

Add to resolves: To campaign for services to provide an email response option with a quick response and for equality legislation to include the requirement for an email address with a quick response, as well as a written secure messaging system in the case of banks.

Notes:

18A.2: LGBT+ members standing committee

Submitted by: In notes 2 after the word older add and some disabled Add to notes

3 Marginalised groups, including LGBT+ people, may face barriers to digital access because of privacy, safety, economic inequality, and intersection with other protected characteristics (New paragraph) Other workplace equality issues

Notes:

19: Intersectionality in UCU projects

Submitted by: National executive committee

Congress believes

1. Promoting equality and equity is central to UCU's purpose.

2. Marginalisation, oppression and disadvantage are experienced in complex ways shaped by people's specific circumstances, particularly the overlap of characteristics and identities.

3. Effective analysis of inequality and strategies to address it must recognise these differences and the possibility that groups with different characteristics may have distinct or conflicting needs.

4. Approaches that ignore the diversity of people's situations risk further marginalising those most disadvantaged and fuelling division between groups.

Congress resolves

a. To task the equality standing committees to work collaboratively to develop union policy and campaigning on key intersectional issues.

These include:

i. closing pay gaps; ii. challenging the far right on campuses and in communities; iii. addressing the disproportionate impact of redundancies and restructuring on marginalised groups; and, iv. advancing policy and legislative change to promote equality in post-16 education. b. To encourage equality conferences to prioritise discussion of cross-strand equality issues and support campaigning.

Notes:

Amendments

19A.1: South West retired members

Submitted by: After "i. closing pay gaps", insert new ii and renumber:

"ii closing gender pensions gaps (for which intersectional issue the retired members' committee should also be involved)"

Notes:

20: The Equality Act (2010) and its defence

Submitted by: Retired members committee

Congress notes that:

1. Prior to the 2024 election, Reform UK stated that it would repeal the Equality Act (2010)

2. Reform controlled councils and US-controlled corporations have been removing equality and diversity posts
3. The far-right often rubbishes equality initiatives as ‘woke’
4. The Equality Act (2010) incorporates previous equality laws and protections, including protection against age discrimination, which can affect both young and old.
5. Without the Equality Act (2010) there would be no legal remedies for discrimination on grounds of age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

Congress resolves to:

a. Promote awareness among UCU members of the content of the Equality Act (2010)

b. Include educational material about the importance of the Equality Act and the case for its defence and extension in UCU’s educational, equality and campaigning work. c. Encourage the TUC to publicise the importance of the Equality Act (2010)

Notes:

Amendments

20A.1: Disabled members standing committee

Submitted by: Add to resolves, new d:

d. work alongside our sister trade unions affiliated to the TUC to campaign for the Equality Act part 2 to provide stronger protections for all disabled people including the incorporation of the UNCRDP into UK Law.

Notes:

21: Gender-based violence (GBV) governance in the education sectors

Submitted by: Women members standing committee

Congress notes:

1. GBV is higher within education than in the general population.
2. Multiple, recent policy and practice reforms in FE and HE on GBV.

Congress believes:

a. UCU must engage, as key stakeholders, at the forefront of reforms. b. Compliance is inseparable from guidance.

Congress resolves to:

i. Demand employers evidence adherence to new requirements, including: A. Worker Protection Act (Amendment of Equality Act) 2023 B. Office for Students (OfS) “E6” Condition 2025 C. Sexual Harassment “qualifying disclosure” in Employment Rights Act

2025

D. GBV clause in Tertiary Education & Training (Scotland) Bill 2025

ii. Encourage employers to endorse and enact: I. the EmilyTest GBV Charter (and/or Network) for Universities and Colleges II. GBV investigations’ guidance frameworks (e.g. Office for Independent Adjudicator/EmilyTest guidance).

iii. Press sector leadership to tailor guidance to devolved contexts (e.g.

Welsh/NI-specific) and diverse institutions, including online programmes, and institutions sitting between FE/HE.

iv. Ensure UCU is invited to guidance consultations.

v. Produce up-to-date UCU research.

Notes:

22: EU Pay Transparency Directive

Submitted by: LGBT+ members standing committee

Congress notes that:

1. EU Pay Transparency Directive mandates by June 2026, that employers in EU states enhance pay transparency by measures including gender pay gaps, addressing gaps of 5% or more, banning pay history inquiries and requiring salary ranges in job ads.
2. UK employers with EU operations must comply.

3. TUC reported research (2022) suggesting a 16% LGBTQ+ pay gap. TUC's poll revealed only 13% of respondent workplaces monitor LGBTQ+ pay gap
4. TUC reported (2025) that 'consideration on what can be learnt from the pay transparency directive and how we can ensure the UK does not fall behind EU standards must be given.'

Congress calls for:

a. Campaign for harmonization of the EU Pay Transparency Directive into British law ensuring that UK workers aren't left behind in the fight for equal pay for equal work. b. Continuation of campaign for extension of mandatory reporting across equality areas.

Notes:

23: Reparative justice and the rise of anti-Black racism

Submitted by: Black members standing committee

Congress notes

1. UN experts issued a warning that people of African descent continue to encounter racial discrimination and erosion of their fundamental rights in the UK. Discrimination is structural, institutional and systemic.
2. A UCL report found psychological distress significantly increased among people of Black Caribbean heritage after the 2014 Immigration Act, and after the Windrush scandal.

Congress believes

a. UCU has a duty to explicitly acknowledge and confront anti-Black racism across our union and post 16 education sectors. b.

Congress further believes UCU policy on Reparative Justice, Black women, intersectionality and equity must be grounded in an understanding of the legacy of the enslavement of Afrikan people, colonialism, continuing structures of racial hierarchy, misogynoir and Afrophobia.:

Congress resolves to:

i. commission research into anti-Black racism to inform a national campaign on Reparative Justice ii. embed anti-Black racism in training/CPD iii. gather evidence on the lived experiences of Afrikan and Caribbean heritage members

Notes:

24: Equalities and the casualisation of work

Submitted by: Anti casualisation committee

Congress notes

1. that insecure and casualised work is more likely to affect certain worker groups including migrants, black, disabled, LGBTQ+, women and young people.
2. the TUC Report which shows that black women are twice as likely as white men to be on Zero Hours Contracts.

Congress calls on the General Secretary and the NEC to work with the ACC to:

a. Undertake research to map how many casualised workers in HE, FE, ACE and Prison Education work are on casualised contracts b. Consider how we can more accurately identify people working in HE, FE, ACE and Prison Education according to their protected characteristics c. Identify and develop a strategy to organise to win for casualised workers in HE, FE, ACE and Prison Education. d. Ensure that structural discrimination of all kinds is identified and eliminated in Higher Education; Further Education; Adult & Community Education, and Prison Education

Section 3: Business of the strategy and finance committee (chapter 1 of the NEC report to Congress) Paragraph 3, Finance and property - this section (motions 25-32) will be taken in private session.

Notes:

Strategy and finance committee

25: Appointment of auditors

Submitted by: National executive committee

Congress approves the appointment of Knox Cropper as the union’s auditors for the year ending 31 August 2026.

Notes:

26: Audited financial statements

Submitted by: National executive committee Congress receives the union’s audited financial statements for the 12-month

period ending 31 August 2025 as set out in UCU/2211.

Notes:

27: Budget to 31 August 2027

Submitted by: National executive committee Congress endorses the budget for September 2026 – August 2027 as set out in

UCU/2212.

Notes:

28: Subscription rates from 1 September 2026

Submitted by: National executive committee Congress accepts the Treasurer's proposal for an increase in subscription rates

and endorses the subscription rates from 1 September 2026 set out in UCU/2212

Notes:

29: Review of UCU subscription bands and rates

Submitted by: Cardiff Metropolitan University

Congress notes the recent national pay uplift has resulted in many members having been pushed into higher subscription bands despite experiencing no real terms increase in income.

Congress believes that within the context of rising inflation, and the continuing cost of living crisis affecting staff across the sector, the current UCU subscription banding lacks alignment in terms of inflation linked price rises and risks alienating members who may be already struggling financially.

Congress resolves that a review and revision of subscription bands is required to ensure they remain equitable, progressive, and responsive to inflation and salary restructuring.:

Notes:

30: Moving UCU to a progressive subscription model

Submitted by: Durham University

Congress notes:

1. Despite slight improvements: 2025-26 subscription rates remain significantly regressive for salaries above £30,000, on average.
2. That members can claim tax relief on 67% of national and local subscriptions paid up to four years prior.

Congress believes:

a. Regressive subscriptions are unfair; higher-paid members should not pay a lower percentage of salary in union subscriptions than lower paid members.

Congress resolves:

i. UCU members at the bottom of a higher salary subscription band should not pay a lower percentage of salary in subscriptions than members at the bottom of the previous, i.e. lower salary, subscription band;

ii. The same rule should apply to members at the top of consecutive subscription bands, with an upper cut-off of £250,000 for the highest band, to be adjusted annually with inflation.

iii. To mandate the national executive committee to implement subscription rates which reflect the previous two resolves.

Notes:

31: Securing UCU membership base through fairer fees

Submitted by: UCU Cymru

Congress notes:

1. The severe and sustained financial hardship faced by our members due to high inflation and the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, necessitating solidarity and relief from the union.
2. That our current subscription rates are demonstrably higher than those of increasingly active competitor unions and professional bodies, creating a significant barrier to effective recruitment and increasing the risk of membership attrition.

Congress resolves:

a. To mandate the national executive committee (NEC) to undertake an urgent and comprehensive review of the current subscription structure immediately following this Congress.

b. The NEC must present actionable proposals to reduce the standard annual membership fee by a minimum of 15% to both alleviate member financial pressure and ensure our union is competitively priced in the labour market.

Notes:

32: Composite: National fighting fund

Submitted by: Open University, Northern regional committee

Congress notes:

1. the ongoing, devastating wave of job losses and course closures in post-16 education. Fights against determined employers have been won through serious industrial action
2. the catastrophic consequences of failing to resist job losses for the union
3. that branches must be in a position to mount serious industrial action in order to push back against compulsory redundancies,
4. serious industrial action is spreading; challenging employers, saving jobs, and bringing a spotlight upon government failures to address the funding of post-16 education
5. limits on the number of strike days and conditions on fighting fund access materially impact the ability of branches to resist.

Congress resolves:

a. that UK Officers be instructed to lift such limits and conditions b. that strike pay be determined on previous basis (from day three at rates of £50/70) c. that UK Officers determine and confirm fighting fund access for branches one fortnight before industrial action commences d. that percentage of UCU annual income going to the fighting fund be doubled. 32A.1Open University

Replace point c with new point c as follows: “c that UK Officers confirm fighting fund access and inform branches about it one fortnight before industrial action commences”

Notes:

33: Composite: Funding further and higher education, social care,

all public services Loughborough University, Southern retired members

Congress notes that:

1. further and higher education are facing severe financial crisis, job losses and declining real-terms pay

2. inequalities of wealth in the UK have increased each year during the 21st century, with public sector funding being eroded while wealth and corporate profits have increased

3. the destructive impact of Tory austerity policies upon public services has continued into 2026

4. education, health and social care services are grossly underfunded and consequently struggle to meet public need.

Congress believes that these trends will continue and worsen unless the UK system of taxation is made more progressive and a wealth tax is introduced. Such changes would significantly improve the quality of life for the UK population, and would be supported by a large majority of citizens including many of those who are very wealthy.

Congress further believes:

a. Growing wealth inequality undermines social and economic stability. b. Sustainable funding for education requires fair and progressive taxation. c. Reliance on tuition fees cannot resolve the structural funding crisis.

Congress resolves:

i. To lobby government and educate members on the need for significant tax reform, including a wealth tax and increases in capital gains and corporation tax, to: A. reduce inequalities of wealth; B. replenish public finances and provide adequate funding for public services; C. enable proper public funding of further and higher education; D. support restoration of pay; E. clearly demonstrate political commitment to fundamental principles of fairness and social justice for all.

ii. To press employer bodies, including UUK, to lobby government for such reforms rather than seeking higher fees.

Notes:

34: Composite: Resist attacks on TPS, and support for Southampton Solent

Submitted by: Nottingham Trent University, Southampton Solent University

Congress notes:

1. DB Pension schemes, including TPS, represent deferred salary

2. Members in FE, including prison educators and those employed by private providers, and HE within post-1992 institutions are having continued membership of TPS threatened or removed, including through fire-and-rehire

3. The recent letter, by UCEA and UUK to the education select committee asking for the ability for HE institutions to opt out of TPS provision

4. The letter sent to all 357 academic staff at Southampton Solent University (SSU) on the 31st March 2026, notifying them of the University's intention to transfer their employment

to a sham subsidiary company Solent University Services Limited on the 1st of July 2026.

5. The expressed intention of SSU to strip academic staff of their legal entitlements to the Government-backed Teachers Pension Scheme and replace it with a vastly inferior pension from AVIVA.

Congress believes:

a. TPS membership is a cross-sectoral issue b. Continued attacks on scheme membership will weaken the scheme and have wider fiscal ramifications c. The outcome of the SSU dispute will have profound repercussions for all institutions across both sectors in the UK, and their ability to protect their pension rights d. The government needs to intervene to ensure the continued availability of TPS for staff across the post-16 sector.

Congress resolves:

i. to lobby government to bring forward the fire-and-rehire protections of the ERA ii. to work with other education unions to bring a motion about attacks on TPS to TUC congress iii. that Southampton Solent branch be given the full support of UCU.

Notes:

35: Pensions matter – Pension matters

Submitted by: Retired members committee

Congress affirms the basic trade union principles that pensions are deferred salary and that we support universal benefits. We believe that future generations should have pensions and rights in retirement, at least as good as those of the present generation. UCU will engage in a programme of education and campaigning to increase awareness among working members of pension entitlement and how to claim pensions. UCU commits to actively defend pensions of existing retired members. With regard to the forthcoming Pension Schemes Act, we call for clear obligations to be placed on employers to create and maintain full records of all employees' pension contributions.

Congress calls on UCU to:

1. stay vigilant in protecting state, occupational and personal pensions;
2. recognise that members are in various different pension schemes, indeed some individuals may be in several schemes; and to

3. hold an annual Pensions Seminar, open to all members. 35A.1Yorkshire and Humberside retired members

Add at end of motion : Congress supports the NEC campaigning for:

a. An end to this Government's freeze on tax thresholds. b. An overall rate increase in state pensions to lift all pensioners out of poverty. c. A continuation to the Triple Lock system, and opposition to any Government proposals to water it down.

Notes:

Amendments

35A.2: London Metropolitan University calls on:

4. That the disproportionate pension deprivation experienced by women and casualised workers is recognised, and that the union allocates time and resources to organise, campaign and bargain for pension justice for these members.

Notes:

36: Pensions Commission South West retired members

Congress welcomes the re-establishment of the Pensions Commission, and notes that it is expected to address ‘pensions inequalities’. Congress considers that one such inequality is the difference between the new State Pension (nSP) for those who retired after April 2016, and the old basic State Pension (bSP) for those who retired before that date- £241.30 and £184.90 respectively.

Congress calls for a submission to the Commission to press for it to devise measures to eliminate the pension inequality between the nSP and the bSP.:

Notes:

37: Defend the right to protest

Submitted by: University of Dundee

Congress notes:

1. The historic victory and dismissal of all charges against the Filton 24.
2. Criminalisation of pro-Palestine chants and remand of anti-genocide activists beyond legal limit of 182 days.
3. Protracted hunger strikes by remanded prisoners; censorship and abusive prison conditions.
4. Mass arrests and use of pepper spray during prison protests.
5. Prosecution of alleged organisers of civil disobedience for zoom calls and press conferences.

Congress believes:

a. UCU must defend the right to fair trials, freedom of expression, and the dignity of those within the criminal justice system.

Congress resolves to:

i. Campaign against suppression of protest, censorship and attacks on the right to a fair trial in coordination with MPs, TUC and civil society organisations such as Amnesty, the Palestine Coalition, Defend our Juries and prisoners' families

Notes:

38: Fighting for professional respect and against generalisation of ARPS jobs

Academic related, professional services staff committee

Congress notes:

1. The increase in use of generic job titles and move away from respected professional titles, often enforced through restructure.
2. Motion 20 passed at Congress 2024 committing the union to call for employers to support workers membership of professional bodies.

Congress believes that specialist skills should be cultivated and celebrated throughout post-16 education and that generalisation of roles has a detrimental impact on workers and students.

Congress resolves to:

a. Call upon post-16 education institutions to properly respect and value their specialist professional workers through recognising the skills required, supporting professional registration, and respecting the role of ARPS staff. b. Seek out and support organisations such as the Technician Commitment, which campaigns for recognition, visibility, and career progression for HE specialist technicians, in all sectors of specialist ARPS work.

Notes:

39: UCU and political representation - Parliamentary group oversight

Submitted by: Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College

Congress notes

1. The funding crisis across all sectors of post-16 education and Labour's intent for further austerity, not funding.
2. Motion 63 “Enough is enough! Post-16 education needs new political representation” passed overwhelmingly at Congress 2025.
3. UCU has established a cross-party parliamentary group.

Congress believes

a. Post-16 educators need political representatives who proactively campaign for our union's policies, including for fully funded, free education. b. UCU members should have a say on the conditions of membership of the parliamentary group. c. The parliamentary group should meet regularly with UCU's lay elected leadership.

Congress resolves

i. UCU will establish mechanisms for UCU member oversight of the parliamentary group, including: A. Conditions of membership B. Regular meetings between the NEC and parliamentary group members.

C. Input on the agenda of parliamentary group meetings/communications.

ii. support a cross-union conference to discuss political representation for the working class and trade unionists.

Notes:

40: A Charter for Jobs

Submitted by: London regional committee

Congress notes:

1. One million 16–24-year-olds are not in work, education or training.
2. Overall unemployment stands at 5%: for 16-24-year-olds it is 16%.
3. 1 in 8 young people are not in work, education or training.

Congress believes:

a. Youth unemployment is a political choice, not a cast-iron economic law. b. Government failure to create well-paid and meaningful work is at the root of the problem, not the introduction of a minimum wage or alleged failings of teachers or lecturers delivering ‘irrelevant’ training or education. c. The Right to Work campaign and the Peoples March for Jobs are examples of campaigns that played an important role in highlighting youth unemployment in the 1970s and 1980s.

Congress resolves UCU will:

i. create a Charter for Jobs ii. approach other unions to discuss launching a campaign around youth unemployment and education for all. iii. organise a hybrid conference to launch the charter.

Notes:

41: Pension business at Congress

Submitted by: Scotland retired members

Congress notes

1. that important aspects of most pension schemes to which members belong are cross-sectoral;

2. that informed discussion of these is hampered by the artificial restriction of, for example, USS to HE and TPS to FE;
3. that nevertheless there are certain issues where the employed status of members is key.

Congress therefore urges NEC to

a. ensure that a section of full Congress business is allocated to discussion of pension matters not relating directly to employment status; b. provide guidance for CBC to allocate pension motions accordingly;

c. further consider the issues of TPS in HE, USS in FE, and other groups such as Prison Educators, in order to ensure that all members are franchised in pension discussions, regardless of their designated sector

Notes:

42: International solidarity and cooperation

Submitted by: National executive committee

Congress:

1. notes the increasing assaults on human rights, democracy and the rule of law around the world.
2. welcomes international activities and campaigns to defend workers and students under attack in countries like Palestine, Sudan and Ukraine and member-focused events such as the UCU/EI international conference on academic freedom.
3. recognises the importance and benefits of an international dimension to UCU's day-to-day work – e.g. in responding to the growth of Artificial Intelligence and UK transnational education (TNE) - and the value of mutual learning from international union partners.
4. calls on the NEC to continue engaging members, branches and regions in practical international work, including the use of webinars, e-actions and solidarity actions and visits.
5. resolves to organise an event as part of Congress, Cradle to Grave or similar, to highlight the international dimension of post-16 education work. 42A.1University of Dundee

Add bullet point 6 to resolves:

6. Support the Campus Voices for Palestine tour 2026-27, on the same basis of previous years, and to do so on a continuing annual basis (working with BRICUP, UCW4P and the Emergency Committee for Universities in Gaza and the Right to Education Campaign)

Notes:

43: Solidarity with the people of Iran

Submitted by: Newcastle University

Congress notes:

1. the vicious crackdown of the latest wave of courageous social protest in Iran has an unknown but significant numbers of deaths.
2. sufferings of ordinary Iranians brought by the repressive character of the regime, sanctions and the last wave of Israeli airstrikes that would only be exacerbated by US intervention threatened by Trump.
3. the participation of educators, students and trade unionists in the wave of protest.

Congress resolves:

a. To extend our solidarity and sympathy for Iranian colleagues and students at Newcastle University.

b. To send a message of solidarity to educators, student and trade union groups facing repression. c. To amplify this position within the trade union movement. 43A.1Newcastle University Replace in notes 1: “the latest wave of ” with “the December-January wave of ” Replace in note 1: "numbers" with "number" Replace in notes 2: “sanctions and the last wave of Israeli airstrikes that would only be exacerbated by US intervention threatened by Trump” with “devastating US-led sanctions and previous Israeli airstrikes has been exacerbated by the US-Israeli launched war.” Add notes 4: the bombing of civil and educational infrastructure including more than 30 Iranian universities, tantamount to scholasticide.

Replace in resolves a: “at Newcastle University” with “in UK post-16 education and in Iran itself” Add to end of resolves b: “and US-Israeli bombing” Add resolves d: To demand the government lifts UK’s sanctions against Iran. Add resolves e: To demand a sanctuary scheme for Iran students wishing to study in the UK.

Notes:

44: Solidarity with US workers and anti-fascist resistance

Submitted by: Yorkshire and Humberside regional committee

Congress condemns

1. The encouragement given by Trump to far-right and fascist groups
2. Trump's opposition to equality policies and action on climate change
3. Trump's attacks on academic freedom
4. Trump's support for Putin and other dictators
5. Trump's imperialist policies, military attacks and threats to invade and annex countries
6. Trump's attacks on migrants and the racial profiling by ICE of US citizens and residents
7. The murders by ICE of Alex Pretti, Renee Nicole Good, Keith Porter Jr, Luis Gustavo Nunes Caceres, Geraldo Lunas Campos, Victor Manuel Diaz and Parady La, and other deaths in ICE custody Congress salutes the heroic resistance of the people of Minneapolis and anti- fascist activists in the USA.

Congress resolves, in conjunction with the TUC and Education International

a. To build solidarity with US workers and anti-fascists

b. To publicise the crimes of the Trump administration c. To support demonstrations in support of US workers, including protests at US embassies.

Notes:

45: Anti-militarism, human rights and Trump

Submitted by: UCU Scotland

Congress condemns Trump's unprovoked aggression:

1. Unprecedented kidnapping of the democratically elected Venezuelan president.
2. Threats to invade Greenland.
3. Support for genocide in Gaza and human rights violations worldwide.
4. Calls for increased military spending in NATO countries.

Congress believes:

a. Our responsibility as trade unionists is to campaign for peace and social justice for all. b. This is achieved by resolving problems such as poverty, climate change, water shortages.

Congress calls on UCU UK executive to:

i. Put out a statement condemning Trump's aggression and violation of democratic rights. ii. Publicise and encourage members to participate in broad based demonstrations and to sign petitions condemning Trump and supporting anti- militarism. iii. Organise an anti-militarism event together with students and other unions. iv. Call on universities to ban arms companies from university recruitment fares.

Notes:

46: Demilitarising higher education – Welfare over warfare

Submitted by: University of Warwick

Congress notes:

1. BAE Systems produces F-35 components used in bombing Gaza;
2. Universities maintain research links with arms manufacturers including BAE Systems, Leonardo, Atomic Weapons Establishment, and Teledyne
3. Many institutions have ethical investment policies prohibiting investments in arms companies, especially those complicit in war crimes

Congress believes:

a. The military-industrial complex profits from human and environmental devastation b. University partnerships with arms companies violate their stated ethical commitments c. Public institutions have a civic duty to advance peace and sustainability

Congress resolves to:

i. Support the Demilitarise Education open letter calling on universities to adopt the dED Treaty

ii. Campaign for institutional transparency and termination of partnerships contravening ethical standards and international law

iii. Organise campus events amplifying the campaign with staff and students

iv. Build coalitions with UNISON, Unite and other unions supporting demilitarisation of education. 46A.1University of Bath

Add "resolves to:

v. support the ending of placement and internship relationships with arms manufacturers; vi. defend the right of staff to raise the nature of arms companies in their teaching and research."

Notes:

Amendments

46A.2: London Regional Committee

Submitted by: Add to notes

4. Congress 2019, motion 34 'Citizenship stripping/immigration measures' notes the Terrorism Act's expansion of state surveillance
5. Liberty and Al Jazeera investigation revealing that UK universities spent £440,000 since 2022 to ‘spy’ on student protestors and academics, impeding academic freedom Add to believes d. The 2025 national security strategy is actively reshaping universities, directly leading to redundancies and transforming institutional missions Add to resolves v. Embed dED's demilitarising education course into UCU CPD, and fund £1000 towards course creation

Notes:

47: Composite: Wages not weapons - international peace conference

Submitted by: Westminster Kingsway College, University of Brighton

Congress notes:

1. Increase in Arms spending.

2. US and Israeli attacks on Iran have added to the growing climate of war across the world.

3. UK involvement in the US/Israeli actions and Starmer’s aim to accelerate increases in UK military spending.

4. French trade union involvement in the successful Paris Peace Conference in October 2025.

5. UCU's existing anti-war policies.

Believes that:

a. Government funding priorities are a political choice and not a cast iron economic law.

b. The UCU motion, carried at the TUC conference, overturning policy that committed the TUC in supporting an increase in arms spending was a significant step forward for the British trade union movement.

c. There is an urgent need to build an international movement against war comprising trade unions, peace organisations and progressive forces.

d. The slogans 'Wages Not Weapons' and 'Welfare Not Warfare' can mobilise workers against the militarism of our governments.

e. The issue of war is a trade union issue.

Congress resolves that UCU will:

i. Support the international Peace Conference called by Stop the War and peace organisations from across Europe organisations for 20 June in London, under the heading 'The People of Europe Demand Peace'.

ii. Offer its leading office-holders as speakers.

iii. Encourage its branches to send delegates to the conference.

iv. Offer financial support and assistance to the conference organisers.

v. Continue to promote the Wages Not Weapons campaign.

Notes:

48: Composite: Stop the war in the Middle East

Submitted by: University of Cambridge, Royal College of Art

Congress notes that:

1. Keir Starmer dragged Britain into war on Iran with his announcement allowing the US to use bases in Britain (including RAF Fairford) as part of the assaults.

2. Air strikes on Tehran and Beirut, evacuation orders covering half of Lebanon, and ongoing genocide in Gaza demonstrate threat posed by Israeli military.

3. After Iranian security forces killed thousands, Iranian independent trade unions rejected claims that US bombs would bring freedom.

4. Iranian independent unions and civil society organisations organising resistance to Iran's authoritarian regime have condemned intervention by foreign powers, stating it is up to Iranian people to decide who should rule them and how.

Congress believes that:

a. Liberation from oppression and authoritarianism cannot be achieved through foreign intervention.

b. Trade unions must oppose militarism and organise for international solidarity and peace.

Congress resolves to:

i. Call on NEC to work with Stop the War, CND and trade unions to protest at RAF Fairford and other UK bases and sites that the US military machine uses to facilitate war by the US or its allies in the Middle East.

ii. Support other local and national protests against the war on Iran called by Stop the War, CND, the Palestine movement and the trade unions.

iii. Call for the immediate withdrawal of all British military and diplomatic support for this war.

Notes:

49: No to war - no to conscription

Submitted by: Capital City College Group – CANDI/Camden Road

Notes:

1. The escalation of war in the Middle East.
2. The moves towards conscription in Germany, France and other European states.
3. Trade Unions in Italy and Greece took action in solidarity with Palestine and against genocide and war.
4. The school strikes in Germany against plans to introduce conscription.

Believes:

a. The increase in arms spending are part of a Europe-wide drive to war. b. Working class people will be expected to pay the price of rearmament through austerity c. A new arms race will only make the world a more dangerous place as States compete and will lead to increasing levels of funding going to the military at the expense of public services and the welfare state.

Resolves:

i. To campaign against the British government increasing military spending and any moves to conscription.

ii. To send a motion to the TUC congress opposing any moves to conscription. (New paragraph) Other matters

Notes:

50: Support the Reinstate Wojtek Campaign

Submitted by: New City College Poplar

Congress notes

1. The Reinstate Wojtek campaign
2. Wojtek, a rep at Tower Hamlets, was sacked in December
3. He has worked for the College for 23 years
4. The 92% Yes vote for strike action at the branch calling for reinstatement
5. Branch vote for escalating strike action
6. The employer report said that none of his actions were sackable in and of themselves

7. The UCU's support to the branch and Wojtek

8. the website in support of the campaign.

Congress believes

a. Wojtek was unfairly sacked for activities and communications related to trade union activities b. Innocuous emails Wojtek sent on a public union work email list were used as evidence of a pattern of trouble making c. This is trade union victimisation and attack on free speech and of national significance Congress resolves

i. Support the campaign to Reinstate Wojtek 51 Increase legal support to defend local trade union rights University of Sheffield Congress notes that

1. Our sectors face unprecedented attacks on the rights of trade unionists from employers, using novel tactics such as the ‘double deductions’ recently imposed at the University of Sheffield.
2. That in common-law countries, employment law can be advanced through litigation in courts and tribunals.
3. Litigation and legal advice are often beyond the financial reach of local branches.

Congress believes

a. UCU must strategically balance the need to avoid unsustainable legal costs against local branches’ need for centralised legal support.

Congress resolves that

i. NEC should review UCU legal's level of funding and their approach to taking legal action on behalf of branches, to increase the ability of local branches to challenge novel forms of trade union victimisation. ii. UCU should lobby for ‘double deductions’ to be proscribed as a form of detriment for participating in strike action under the Employment Rights Act

Notes:

52: Academic freedom and freedom of speech require industrial strength

Submitted by: London regional committee

Congress notes:

1. Palestine-related staff, student, and trade-union repression across HE and FE.
2. Far-right harassment and institutional repression at KCL, including Usama Ghanem's suspension and possible deportation.
3. 91% support for branch concerns in KCLUCU informal ballot (55% turnout) and 82% support in formal industrial action ballot linking academic freedom to divestment from genocide (49% turnout).
4. Staff-student action prevented fascist group Betar from organising at KCL.

Congress believes industrial strength is the strongest defence of staff-student freedoms and safety against threats posed by Zionist pressure and political and/or financial investment in genocide.

Congress resolves to:

a. Advise HE and FE branches about dangers posed by Zionist groups. b. Strengthen support for branches to oppose Zionist and institutional repression including through industrial action. c. Make defence of academic freedom, freedom of speech, and divestment part of UCU's national and local industrial strategy. d. Adapt this motion for TUC submission.

Notes:

Amendments

52A.1: National executive committee

Submitted by: Sentence beginning 'Congress believes…', after 'Zionist pressure', add 'where

this is repressive to staff and students' Resolves point a, before 'Zionist groups', add 'far-right'. After 'Zionist groups', add 'where these are repressive to staff and students' Resolves point b, delete 'Zionist and'

Notes:

53: Improving UCU membership data recording

Submitted by: Morley College London

Congress resolves to:

1. Introduce collection of members' pension scheme data to strengthen industrial action planning and national negotiations, ensuring UCU can

bargain with full knowledge of members' retirement security and exposure to pension inequality

2. Record whether FE members deliver adult education provision, as an organising priority

Notes:

Day 2: Thursday 28 May — FE Sector Conference

New Deal for FE

FE1: FE Pay

Submitted by: Further education committee

Conference approves the report on FE England pay 2025/26 and notes the developments with pay 2026/27 and the report on the New Deal for FE campaign as circulated in UCUBAN/FE25.

Notes:

FE2: Evolution of the NDFE campaign

Submitted by: Bolton College

Conference notes:

1. The success of the NDFE campaign.
2. The evolving political and industrial landscape.

Conference believes that:

a. We must continue to build branch organisation and unite all branches around the campaign to win national binding bargaining. b. National disputes and local bargaining must be complementary and self- reinforcing to build maximum support and participation. c. Further

research into options for implementing nationally binding pay / conditions, workload agreements, and strategic development of the campaign is essential.

Conference resolves:

i. To produce updated national bargaining research, templates and resources.

ii. To hold branch briefings in the Autumn to consider the new resources and template claims.

iii. To hold a Special FE Sector Conference in early 2027 to decide on national grounds of dispute and ballot arrangements for the next stage of the NDFE campaign.

Notes:

FE3: ND4FE next steps

Submitted by: Luminate Education Group – Leeds City College

Conference notes:

1. That the NDFE campaign became focused on pay instead of national bargaining as it progressed.

Conference believes that:

a. The annual pay uplift is determined locally with employers and differs widely within the sector.

b. Pay and workload are within an individual employers remit to resolve.

National bargaining is not.

c. National disputes should focus on demands that build core national pay scales, T&Cs and workload protections in every college.

Conference resolves:

i. That the next national dispute should not focus on the annual pay uplift.

ii. To campaign for national level expectations around workload, teaching hours, minimum national pay spine, starting salary, and pay parity with teachers, rather than the annual pay uplift.

iii. That national bargaining should also be a major focus of the national campaign.

iv. That the annual pay uplift should not form part of any national dispute this year.

Notes:

FE4: Composite: Branches working together for a New Deal

Submitted by: Bradford College, New City College Poplar

Conference notes

1. The New Deal for FE campaign has worked to coordinate branches to get better deals for their members.
2. The goal of the New Deal for FE is to get national binding agreements that cover all colleges.
3. Colleges have seen mainstream 16-18 funding increase over the last few years but funding for apprenticeships, Adult Education and HE have all stagnated.
4. National agreements will only occur if all branches work together.
5. FESC 2025 voted 2:1 for national strike action to win the New Deal
6. The AoC recommendation of 4%
7. 32 colleges secured a mandate for strike action
8. 17 branches took 3 days of coordinated strike action in January Conference believes a. It was right to aim to transition from local to national strikes b. We renew our approach to achieve it and do more to promote our core demands c. Opt-in and opt-out culture is not solidarity, it is a barrier to achieving a national strike. Members in adult colleges cannot opt out of national pay freezes Conference resolves

i. To continue to develop the New Deal for FE campaign and negotiate national agreements for 26/27 to focus on getting improved pay and conditions for all in FE. ii. Ensure the claim is promoted to members iii. To organise an aggregated ballot in England in the event that negotiations fail to enable a national coordinated strike

Notes:

Amendments

FE4A.1: Composite

Submitted by: Morley College London, South and City College Birmingham

Add believes: d. Recently we have held successful strike rallies, two New Deal Parliamentary lobbies, and a large Adult Education lobby. Add believes: e. We can beat thresholds. Many UCU branches have membership of circa 100. In many cases, to meet the threshold in a ballot is a dozen or so votes. Resolves: iv. Incorporate mass lobbying of our MPs, Mayoralties and Parliament, into our campaign timetable. Resolves: v. Ensure GTVO targets resources at branches who need help to get over the threshold

Notes:

FE4A.2: London regional FE sector committee

Submitted by: Add believes:

Synergy matters. It is easier to a win ballot when members feel it is a big national campaign rather than a local strike. If we are to have an impact and a voice we need a bigger critical mass of branches to take national action together that can apply pressure to the government and on the employers. Add resolves: Call on all branches to take part and opt-in demanding a national settlement for all.

Notes:

FE5: Continue our action - forward to an aggregate ballot

Submitted by: South Devon College

Conference notes:

1. The success of striking branches in achieving improved pay deals this year.
2. The NEU is preparing for a national ballot for a fully funded 6.5% pay rise and reduced workloads for school teachers.
3. NEU's strike in 6th forms won an additional £50 million in government funding.
4. UCU achieved above 50% aggregate turnout in a consultative ballot in 2023.

Conference believes:

a. Permanent increases in funding and binding national bargaining are needed, to stop the race to the bottom, and widening disparities with school teachers.

b. All members need decent pay rises and reduced workloads; not just those whose branches can surpass the 50% threshold, or whose colleges are in a comfortable financial position. c. We need a national campaign for FE, with all members out together.

Conference resolves:

i. To build for an England-wide, aggregate ballot for industrial action in 26/27.

Notes:

Amendments

FE5A.1: New City College Poplar

1. Add believes: Timing is a critical factor to apply pressure to the employer and momentum in the campaign. Coordinated action did not take place until January last year. Strikes prior to the census date at the end of October are more impactful.

Add resolves: Timetable the first strike action for prior to the end of October.

Notes:

FE5A.2: Westminster Kingsway College

Add a new notes 5. Joint action with NEU is popular with members, where possible. Add a new d. The union has the capacity to bring every branch out together, to put pressure on the government and employers to win on national binding bargaining, pay and improved conditions.

Notes:

FE6: Winning our campaign for binding national agreements in FE England

Submitted by: New City College Poplar

Conference notes

1. UCU Claim to the AoC framed on binding, pay and workload
2. The recruitment and retention crisis facing the sector
3. FE England is the only part of the UK education sector without binding national bargaining Conference believes a. Consecutive government pay interventions have aligned FE pay with schools.

In practical terms demonstrating our case. Adult student funding and pay have been excluded

b. Securing binding national bargaining is the core union demand to address the gaps between school and college pay and between colleges c. We need to ensure all members are educated on what binding national bargaining is, why it matters and ways we can work to secure it d. Binding is the key to underpin FE investment Conference resolves

i. to promote our core demand for binding with regular publicity and a national rally, invite a speaker from EIS and UCU Wales FE.

Notes:

Amendments

FE6A.1: South and City College Birmingham

Add believes: The ND4FE Campaign last time did include some discussion with individual employers on their attitude to binding national bargaining. Reps need support on how to approach those conversations. Add resolves: Our campaign should include materials to popularise binding national bargaining and include lobbies and protests at the AoC, DfE and Treasury during strikes.

Notes:

FE7: The national binding agreements campaign

Submitted by: Yorkshire and Humberside regional FE committee

Conference notes

1. The New Deal for FE and previous national pay campaigns have worked to gain improvements for branches.
2. The demands for parity with schoolteachers, national agreements on workload and national binding bargaining needs to continue to be our demands.
3. The campaign has helped to organise branches, win national ballots and take industrial action but deals are still being made at local levels.
4. The need to win national improvements to benefit all working in further and adult education.

This conference resolves

a. To keep industrial and political pressure on the AoC, the government and devolved regions. b. To support any branch still in dispute over 25/26 pay round. c. To organise and prepare for an aggregated ballot if national negotiations fail to meet the New Deal for FE demands. d. To ensure all FE members and branches can engage in political campaigning.

Notes:

Amendments

FE7A.1: Westminster Kingsway College

Add new notes 4, text below, and current note 4 to be renumbered to 5: Branches can be pressured into low (or no) pay deals due to employers arguing they are in deficit / would go into deficit. Add a believes section between notes and resolves:

Believes: Holding down staff pay, is used by management to maintain non-deficit budgets Always setting non-deficit budgets, makes it harder to convince government to increase FE funding.

Add a resolve e Campaign nationally and locally for colleges to pursue a growth strategy rather than cuts, low pay and a non-deficit budget

Notes:

Workload campaign

FE8: Workloads are not working in FE campaign

Submitted by: Bolton College

Conference notes:

1. That workload intensification and excessive working hours continues to be a significant issue for members.
2. the success of the recent workload reps training and briefing.

Conference believes that UCU needs to further develop effective workplace organisation to reduce workload intensification and the associated detrimental impact this has for members.

Conference recognises that a joined-up approach - incorporating health and safety, campaigning, and organising elements - builds leverage with the employers and supports effective local and national workload collective bargaining.:

Conference resolves:

a. to support, prioritise and resource the Workloads Are Not Working in FE campaign. b. to develop model claims and new materials. c. to train more workload reps d. to organise a FE workload conference e. to develop and launch a nationally coordinated workload campaign.

Notes:

FE9: Workload: time for action

Submitted by: Capital City College Group – CANDI/Camden Road

Notes:

1. The high turnover of teaching staff.
2. The continued rise of physical and mental health in FE.

Believes:

a. The increase in workload plays a significant part within the sector being unable to retain staff , who according to the government white paper, only 40% of teachers remain after 5 years. b. The AoC has failed its duty of care to staff working in the sector by refusing to agree a national set of guidelines to deal with the problem.

Resolves to launch a campaign on workload around a set of demands that include:

i. An increase in guided learning hours.

ii. To cut contact time

iii. Employ staff to chase attendance

iv. Staff to only have one tutor group

v. Employ trained staff to refer students for exam arrangements.

vi. Produce wellbeing protocols to prevent the setting of unachievable deadlines and the contacting of staff out of work-times.

Notes:

FE10: Improving pay and conditions for newly qualified educators

Submitted by: West Midlands regional FE Committee

Congress notes:

1. There's a record shortage of educators coming into FE
2. Almost 50% educators leave their role within 3 years.
3. Workload and stress for them is often higher than more experienced staff.
4. Pay in most places of work is below 30k per annum

Congress resolves:

a. to campaign for a national agreement for supporting newly qualified educators such as mentoring b. a 30% reduction of workload for the first two years compared to more experienced staff. c. the minimum starting wage for newly qualified educators to be the same as schoolteachers starting pay.

Notes:

FE11: Impact of JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) access arrangement evidence req

Westminster Kingsway College FESC notes:

1. JCQ introduced new evidence requirements for exam access arrangements from September 2025.
2. These require detailed evidence of a student's "normal way of working", including teacher observations, evidence from timed classwork and mock exams, and subject-teacher comments across multiple subjects.
3. Teaching staff are increasingly required to produce written evidence and documentation to support applications.

4. These changes were implemented amid rising numbers of students requiring exam access arrangements.

FESC believes:

a. These requirements significantly increase administrative workload for teaching staff, who have not been specially trained. b. Additional responsibilities are being introduced without additional time, staffing or resources.

FESC resolves:

i. To raise the workload impact of the new JCQ evidence requirements with the JCQ and awarding bodies.

ii. To gather evidence from branches on workload related to access arrangements.

iii. To campaign for additional staffing, time and resources to support this work.

Notes:

FE12: Time to get serious about stress

Submitted by: UCU Cymru FE Sector Committee

Conference notes that the recent TUC H&S reps survey demonstrated that nearly 80% of respondents cited stress as the largest hazard. Conference notes that despite the hard work by UCU reps, the scourge of heavy workloads, uncontrolled class sizes and excessive admin is still having a damaging effect on our members. To address this, we need a whole sector approach that every college is bound by.

Conference calls for the FEC to formulate a stress management policy.:

Notes:

FE13: Ofsted inspections: protecting staff wellbeing and reforming accountability

South and City College Birmingham

Conference notes: Continuing sector-wide concern about the impact of Ofsted inspections in Further Education, adding to UCU policy critical of the inspection regime and its consequences for staff and students.

Conference believes: The inspection framework is not fit for purpose. High-stakes inspections, single- word judgements and shifting frameworks impose unrealistic expectations on FE staff while failing to account for funding constraints, local demographics and wider pressures in the sector. This regime drives excessive workload, confusion and fear across colleges, harming staff mental and physical health and wellbeing. A system that damages those delivering education cannot effectively serve students or the sector.

Conference resolves:

1. To intensify UCU's campaign against high-stakes inspections and single-word judgements.
2. To lobby the Department for Education and Parliament for an accountability system that protects staff wellbeing and holds Senior Leadership Teams responsible where workplace practices or inspection preparation place staff health at risk.

Notes:

FE14: Greater support for students needs and mental health

Submitted by: Westminster Kingsway College

Notes:

1. Over a quarter of 16 – 24-year-olds have mental health problems, an increase from 17.5% in 2007
2. Over 1 in 3 reported deteriorating mental health while waiting for support
3. 16 – 19-year-olds with EHCP's has increased, but real terms top-up funding has decreased.
4. ALS, LSA and mental health support has been cut in many colleges

Believes:

a. Young people's access to education is being reduced due to these cuts and lack of specialist support b. LSAs and ALS staff are overworked, due to mounting caseloads c. Teaching staff workloads further.

Resolves to:

i. Work with other trade unions, NUS and mental health charities to build a national campaign demanding increased funding to support students.

ii. Produce branch resources to challenge excessive, unsafe workloads linked to this issue.

iii. Gather evidence from branches on increased needs and cuts to support, use this to lobby government and management for increased investment.

Notes:

Amendments

FE14A.1: LGBT+ standing members committee

Add to notes 1 after ‘problems,’ With significantly higher rates among LGBTQ+ young people
Add to resolves

iv. Ensure that any campaign and resources explicitly recognise and address the mental health needs of LGBTQ+ students

Notes:

Prison Education

FE15: Rebuilding prison education branches after PES

Submitted by: NOVUS

Conference notes

1. The disastrous PES contract with the subsequent redundancies and TUPE transfers of UCU prison education members.
2. The devastating effect on branches and the loss of members and reps.
3. The need to undertake a major rebuilding exercise so that members in Prison Education retain their representation and their industrial power.
4. The need for resourced and targeted campaigns.

Conference believes

a. Those left are experiencing increased workloads to service the contract b. The curriculum is narrowing with a move to non-accredited courses

c. Class sizes are increasing d. There is a two-tier workforce developing.

Conference resolves

i. To continue the campaign to get Prison Education back under the DFE

ii. A targeted political lobbying campaign and involvement of JUPG and JUPA

iii. Resource and prison specific training to help branch rebuilding and development

iv. A workload survey and campaign to challenge the increase workload

Notes:

Adult Education and Skills

FE16: Restore funding to adult education

Submitted by: Yorkshire and Humberside regional FE committee

Conference notes

1. Funding for adult education was reduced by 6% in 2025
2. This contributes to an overall reduction of around 30% since 2004
3. This affects ACE providers and FE colleges
4. The importance of adult funding to individuals and communities
5. UCU's Save Adult Education campaign is a good start but needs to go further Conference resolves a. To organise rallies and demonstrations to protect b. To rename/redefine the New Deal for FE campaign to include Adult Education and HE in FE. c. To commission a report on the effect of adult funding on the finances of FE colleges. d. To campaign for an improved structure of adult funding to make colleges more able to plan. e. To oppose all attempts by local or national politicians to make adult education less inclusive.

Notes:

FE17: Addressing funding inequality between FE providers

Submitted by: Morley College London

Conference notes UCU's recognition at the 2026 Adult and Community Education Annual Meeting of an emerging two-tier funding situation in Further Education, whereby providers with predominantly 16–19 provision receive significantly greater funding than those with mixed 16–19 and adult education provision.

Conference further notes that this disparity disproportionately impacts Institutes of Adult Learning (IALs), threatening the sustainability of provision, student experience, and member job security.:

Conference resolves to:

1. Raise the funding disparity in upcoming and all subsequent national negotiations until it is resolved
2. Secure a published commitment naming Adult Education funding parity as a UCU national FE bargaining priority
3. Commission a report within twelve months quantifying the funding gap between provider types
4. Report measurable progress against a funding equity benchmark annually to Congress
5. Campaign for ring-fenced Adult Education funding in the next government spending review

Notes:

FE18: Expanding UCU's definition of Adult Education

Submitted by: Morley College London

Conference notes that UCU's current definition of Adult Education does not formally include colleagues in Further Education who teach adult learners, despite significant overlap in practice, pedagogy, and professional context across these groups. Conference further notes that the Annual Adult and Community Education Conference in March 2026 saw significantly increased attendance when eligibility was relaxed to include FE colleagues teaching adult learners.

Conference believes that broadening this definition would strengthen our collective voice and better reflect the breadth of adult learning within UCU.:

Conference resolves to:

1. Permanently expand UCU's official definition of Adult Education to include FE members who teach adult learners
2. Update ACE Conference eligibility criteria accordingly
3. Review relevant UCU policy documentation and structures to reflect this change
4. Report progress to Conference 2027 on membership uptake, changes to conference participation, and any recommendations for further structural or policy alignment

Notes:

FE19: Strengthening UCU policy on ESOL provision and adult education funding

Submitted by: South and City College Birmingham

Conference notes: Cuts to the Adult Skills Fund are reducing adult education provision, with ESOL particularly vulnerable despite high demand and growing waiting lists. The Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority, under Reform UK mayor Andrea Jenkyns, has voted to end publicly funded ESOL from 2027 despite overwhelming opposition, signalling a politically motivated attack on provision.

Conference believes ESOL is central to widening participation, social justice and community cohesion, and that the cuts will worsen provision and job insecurity.:

Conference resolves:

1. To publish a UCU report on ESOL demand, waiting lists and unmet need.
2. To launch a national campaign defending ESOL and lobby for ring-fenced funding.
3. To build coalitions with migrant organisations and unions.
4. To support branches facing local attacks on ESOL, including Lincolnshire, through solidarity and organising.

Notes:

FE20: Stop the cuts to ESOL and adult and community education

Submitted by: City of Bristol College

Conference notes:

1. That cuts to adult learning of up to 6% nationally, and 3% in the devolved authorities are already having a significant impact on vocational courses, as well as ESOL, English, digital skills and maths pathways.
2. That this comes on top of previous cuts the DFE has made to the Adult Skills Fund

Conference believes that:

a. these cuts will negatively impact adult, community and ESOL education in colleges. b. the majority of adult learners who will lose out are women and from minoritised ethnic groups. c. these are direct cuts to classes, jobs and communities, and the fundamental role of FE in adult learning.

Conference calls on the NEC and the General Secretary to:

i. raise the profile of the UCU campaign for ACE

ii. To lobby local MPs and the elected mayors to support a more flexible approach to adult learning

Notes:

FE21: Protect and extend English learning and migrant rights

Submitted by: Bradford College

Conference notes:

1. The recent decision by the Greater Lincolnshire Combined Authority to scrap ESOL provision from 2027 in favour of narrow "literacy" programmes against the needs of refugees.
2. Reform councils have attacked free City of Sanctuary library schemes.
3. The current government is restricting Indefinite Leave to Remain. This will cause uncertainty for communities.
4. The government is restricting applications for some visas to those who can show English proficiency to A-Level standard.

Conference resolves

a. To campaign for the immediate restoration of adult education funding to 2010 levels and the ring-fencing of ESOL budgets against local authority "redirection." b. To demand that the Department for Education (DfE) removes the "ordinarily resident for three years" rule nationally, ensuring all migrants can access subsidised learning from day one. c. To work with the migrant members' standing committee to produce a "Know Your Rights" toolkit for members. (New Paragraph) Education policy and employment special interests

Notes:

FE22: Reclaiming education in FE – end the corporate model!

Submitted by: Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College

FESC is asked to consider the increasing corporatisation of further education colleges, including the widespread adoption of CEO-style leadership structures with executive-level salaries and corporate governance models. Many members report that this shift has distanced decision-making from staff and learners, reduced meaningful democratic accountability, and prioritised financial and branding concerns over educational values. FESC is further asked to recognise that colleges are public educational institutions, not private corporations, and that leadership models should reflect educational purpose rather than corporate hierarchy. FESC is therefore asked to support lobbying government to review and reform college governance frameworks, with a view to moving away from CEO-style structures and restoring principal-led, education-focused models that include genuine staff voice and accountability.

Notes:

FE23: Combating the explosion in insecure work in further education

Submitted by: City of Bristol College This Conference notes that

1. An increasing number of FE staff are employed on fixed term contracts and other forms of casualised contracts
2. The pay, terms and conditions of people on fixed term contracts vary widely from one FE employer to another

3. Around 30% of FE teachers are on non-permanent contracts, with some institutions having over 50% of staff in these roles.
4. 98% of FE colleges use "flexible" contracts, including fixed-term, zero-hours, and variable hours This Conference calls on the FEC and the General Secretary to: a. Draw up a strategy and allocate resources for the FE Sector to combat this continuing explosion of insecure work b. Challenge the negative portrayal of Further Education as the poor relation of Higher Education

c. To promote the positive successes of our members in FE in delivering life changing training to young people, ethnic minorities, etc.

Notes:

Amendments

FE23A.1: LGBT+ members standing committee

Under notes add

5. Casualisation disproportionately affects marginalised groups, including LGBTQ+ staff, with particular impacts in adult education where insecure and variable hours are more prevalent Under calls add d Ensure that work to combat casualisation recognises and addresses its disproportionate impact on marginalised groups, including LGBTQ+ staff, and within adult education provision

Notes:

FE24: Improving the job security of part-time hourly paid (PTHP)

Submitted by: UCU Cymru FE sector committee

Conference notes that in further education, we have a full-time and part-time salaried academic workforce and a pool of part-time hourly paid staff (PTHP). Traditionally PTHP was the starting point of a career, leading to part-time and full-time permanent contracts. Conference also notes that progression from PTHP to salaried staff is not guaranteed and varies from college to college with PTHP staff facing insecurity of tenure and difficulties in getting mortgages, planning for retirement, etc. With this in mind, we ask that FEC co-ordinates a campaign to create a common UK framework for transition from PTHP to full-time/part-time for those staff wishing to do so. (New paragraph) Equality

Notes:

FE25: A no tolerance approach to racism in prison education

Submitted by: Black members standing committee FESC notes:

Prison education is the most challenging of teaching environments. Institutional racism remains widespread, with members reporting persistent racist abuse, including overt and pernicious racism, racist tropes, and everyday racism from both prisoners and staff. These experiences present serious risks to staff wellbeing and safety and are clearly evidenced in UCU's report: The Career Aspirations and Experiences of Black Prison Educators. FESC believes: UCU must actively implement the findings of this report, adopt a no tolerance approach where racism is recognised as a workplace hazard requiring systematic prevention, monitoring, and accountability. FESC resolves to:

1. work with TU partners in JUPA (Joint Unions in Prison Alliance) to pressure HMPPS (His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service) and providers to address racism as a H&S hazard.
2. Identify, mitigate against risk, monitor and report on the psychological and physical impacts of racism.
3. hold employers accountable and escalate findings to relevant bodies.
4. develop robust reporting, member support mechanisms for race-based psychosocial hazards.

Notes:

Amendments

FE25A.1: Black members standing committee

Replace 'work with TU partners in JUPA (Joint Unions in Prison Alliance) to pressure HMPPS (His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service) and providers to address racism as a H&S hazard', with 'work with TU partners in JUPA (Joint Unions in Prison Alliance) to pressure HMPPS (His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service) and providers to address racism as a H&S hazard and duty of care'. Add a final bullet point 5: 'Make a referral to the Health and Safety Executive.'

Notes:

FE26: Underrepresentation of Black leadership in further education

Submitted by: Black members standing committee FESC notes:

Further education is central to social cohesion serving some of the most racially diverse communities in the UK. The Ethnic Equity in Education: FE Report (2024) highlights significant racial inequality in leadership, with only 7.2% of FE leaders identifying as Black, despite Black students comprising around 30% of FE learners. This demonstrates a persistent disconnect between FE leadership and the communities and students it serves. FESC believes: Leadership and management structures in FE should be representative and equitable. However, Black staff remain markedly underrepresented in senior leadership roles across college, prison, adult education and skills and community provision. FESC resolves to:

1. undertake research, including FOI requests, into recruitment and progression of Black senior leaders
2. launch a national campaign to raise awareness
3. pressure the Association of Colleges and employers to develop equitable recruitment/career development opportunities
4. work with partner organisations to support meaningful change.

Notes:

Amendments

FE26A.1: Black members standing committee

In the third bullet point after ‘FESC resolves to’: replace ‘pressure the Association of Colleges and employers to develop equitable recruitment/career development opportunities’ with ‘pressure through campaigning and industrial work for the Association of Colleges and employers to develop equitable recruitment/career development opportunities.

Notes:

FE27: LGBTQ+ pay gap in UK FE

Submitted by: LGBT+ members standing committee

Conference notes:

1. In UK, pay disparity for LGBTQ+ workers in FE is a significant but often "hidden" issue due to a lack of mandatory reporting.
2. In 2023-2024 median salary in FE was about £36k whereas in sixth-form colleges it was £47k.
3. Recent data from individual institutions and TUC suggests a 16% LGBTQ+ pay gap. The poll revealed only 13% of workplaces contacted monitor LGBTQ+ pay gap

Conference believes: The main contributing factors include:

a. Under-representation of LGBTQ+ workers in senior roles; b. Non-disclosure and data gaps; c. The “Pink Ceiling” of subtle discrimination or lack of inclusive networking.

Conference calls for

i. Mandatory Reporting: making sexual orientation pay gap reporting a requirement.

ii. Ring-fenced Funding: Ensuring pay increases are used to specifically address disparities in lower pay spines where LGBTQ+ are concentrated.

iii. Introduce national bargaining and standardised pay scales in line with 6th form colleges

Notes:

FE28: Inclusive facilities

Submitted by: LGBT+ members standing committee

Conference notes:

1. The recent Supreme Court ruling on sex and gender has created uncertainty and anxiety, especially for trans and non-binary people.
2. UCU policy affirms equality, dignity and safety for all members.
3. DfE non-statutory Gender questioning Children guidance for schools and colleges (December 2023) was consulted on (closed March 2024) has not been released

Conference believes:

b. The DfE draft guidance failed to consider the significant differences between schools and FE colleges. c. Inclusive facilities are essential to safety, wellbeing and full participation at work and

study. d. No-one should be excluded, marginalised or singled out because of sex, gender identity or expression.

Conference resolves to:

i. support provision and maintenance of fully inclusive facilities (including gender-neutral toilets and changing spaces) alongside existing single-sex provision.

ii. oppose compulsory disclosure of trans identities.

iii. support trans and non-binary inclusive FE provision using findings from the UCU LGBTQ+ survey and further research about LGBTQ+ issues in FE

HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR CONFERENCE 2026 Motions for debate

Paragraph 2, Pay and New JNCHES Motions HE1-HE4 in this section will be taken in private session

Notes:

Day 2: Thursday 28 May — HE Sector Conference

Pay and New JNCHES

HE1: Negotiators report

Submitted by: Higher education committee

HE Sector conference notes the report and approves the recommendations of the national negotiators which will be contained in UCUBANHE/93.

Notes:

HE2: Disaggregate ballots by default

Submitted by: Northern regional HE committee

HESC notes:

1. Recent failures to win UK-wide aggregate ballots in higher education national (UK) bargaining.
2. That a number of branches have passed the 50% threshold in UK-wide ballots according to their own local voting records.

HESC believes:

a. It would be better for at least some branches to win mandates in UK-wide ballots than none at all. This would allow for local coordination with other unions that have local mandates. b. That during UK-wide disputes where industrial action has been stronger and where certain branches have passed the threshold in UK-wide disputes, these branches have won important local concessions which have also paved the way to UK-wide improvements on USS.

HESC resolves:

i. At least until such time as the 50% threshold no longer applies, national ballots (i.e., ballots covering the UK and/or Scotland, England, and Wales) should be disaggregated by default.

Notes:

HE3: Progressing HE14: Opening trade dispute with the Secretary of State

Submitted by: Goldsmiths University of London

Conference Notes:

1. UK Higher Education is in crisis, and tens of thousands of jobs have been and are at risk of being lost.
2. the SoS Dispute Motion (HE14) overwhelmingly passed at the UCU Higher Education Sector conference 2025 and resolves to open a trade dispute with the Secretary of State for Education over HE funding
3. the dispute has not been progressed.

Sector conference resolves:

a. to begin the process of opening the dispute with the Secretary of State for Education over HE funding; b. to provide regular updates on the progress of the dispute to all regional committees; c. to materially support the SoS campaign and fund related meetings in different regions. d. to

call on the UCU general secretary to work with other higher education unions to establish a democratic “Higher Education Workers Conference” to plan the next steps in the dispute.

Notes:

HE4: Defend national/UK wide agreements

Submitted by: University of Westminster

Conference notes

1. the attacks on national/UK wide agreements across HE
2. the reluctance of UCEA and some local managements to commit or adhere to UK wide agreements
3. the work undertaken by the post-92 Steering Group in 2024
4. the motion HE7 2025, resolving to reinstate the Ratification Panel; provide an online inventory of local agreements of all UK HEs including any deviations; and provide CPD on the National Framework Agreement

Conference resolves to:

a. continue and complete the work of the post-92 steering group b. urgently implement HE7/2025 c. support branches where L to SL progression is jeopardised or stalled d. support branches where fractionalisation of Hourly Paid Lectures is resisted e. UCU to urgently organise a campaign on protection of national/ UK wide agreements

f. UCU to hold monthly meetings of post-92 institutions g. UCU to organise a Parliament lobby on national/UK wide agreements protection.

Notes:

HE5: The gender promotion gap in higher education

Submitted by: Women members standing committee

Conference notes: Identifying women in Higher Education (HE) are underrepresented in professoriate and leadership roles. Progression is hindered by structural barriers, including unconscious bias, caring responsibilities, lack of mentorship, and opaque promotion processes.

They are less likely to be encouraged to apply for promotion and experience greater scrutiny in research outputs and leadership

evaluation. Equality intersections compound this. Job insecurity disproportionately limits promotion.

Conference resolves to:

1. Demand accountability from HE institutions through gender equity audits, pay gap reports, and supportive pathways to senior roles.
2. Advocate for fairer evaluation metrics that recognise the full spectrum of academic contributions, including teaching, pastoral care, and service roles.
3. Strengthen mentorship and sponsorship programs that actively support women's progression, especially in returning from career breaks.
4. Mobilise branches to collectively hold institutions accountable for addressing gender disparities, and campaign for binding sector-wide agreements on equitable career progression, and mandatory gender equity training.

Notes:

HE6: Better paternity leave in UKHE

Submitted by: Northumbria University

HE sector conference notes:

1. That paternity leave in HEIs remains low.
2. Better paternity leave enables staff to balance family and paid work, while bolstering the employer's reputation.
3. Better paternity leave will generate significant benefits for UK society, as confirmed by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's and Bath University's analyses of the economic benefits of this policy.

HE sector conference believes:

a. That HEIs should offer more generous paternity leave.

HE sector conference resolves:

i. To encourage University branches to join the national campaign for a minimum of 6 weeks of well-paid paternity leave.

ii. That UCU adopt the ‘Six Weeks for Dads’ campaign led by the Fatherhood Institute as national policy.

Notes:

Amendments

HE6A.1: LGBT+ standing members committee

Submitted by: Under HE sector conference resolves: add iii. to ensure that paternity leave includes all non-birthing parents

Notes:

HE7: Controlling excessive senior management pay in higher education

Submitted by: University of Portsmouth

Conference notes that:

1. Senior management salaries in HE institutions continue to increase, with Vice-Chancellors regularly being paid more than £300,000 annually, often with additional bonuses and benefits. Their pay is typically determined by unaccountable boards of governors and remuneration committees;

2. In contrast, other staff have consistently received below-inflation pay rises and are threatened by compulsory redundancies and poor pensions schemes.

Conference believes that:

a. Senior management salaries should be determined within nationally agreed pay scales; b. No non-academic senior manager should be paid more than the most eminent senior academic who works in an active research or teaching role; c. The unfair disparities between senior managers’ pay and that of others would be reduced if all higher education pay was determined by transparent negotiation.

Conference therefore resolves to:

i. Campaign for the inclusion of senior management roles within a published pay spine for HE.

Notes:

HE8: Challenging academic career pathways Manchester Metropolitan

Submitted by: University

HESC notes:

1. The increasing siloing of academic roles into separate research and teaching pathways by employers.
2. The erosion of professionalism and academic roles that this often entails.
3. The frequently unilateral imposition of these pathways to existing staff resulting in significant unwanted changes to job descriptions.
4. The implications of the rigidity of these pathways for equality, performance management, workload, progression, job security, and additionally at post- 92 institutions for the interpretation and variation of the post-92 contract.

HESC resolves:

a. To survey all branches on the prevalence, form, process, and impact of academic pathways on their branch. b. To submit FOI requests for equality data on pathways. c. To produce: i. A UK-wide report for branches on pathways. ii. A bargaining and action guide on negotiating around pathways.

Notes:

Amendments

HE8A.1: LGBT+ standing members committee

Under notes add

5. That the imposition and structuring of academic pathways may reinforce existing inequalities, particularly affecting marginalised groups including LGBT+ staff, through restricted progression routes and differential access to opportunity

Notes:

HE9: Data collection on teaching-focused and teaching-only terms and conditions

Higher education committee

HESC notes:

1. The significant barriers experienced by teaching-only and teaching-focused staff in conducting research
2. Research showing that fixed-term academic contracts lead to stalled career progression
3. The continuing importance of research profiles for academic recruitment, probation and promotions
4. REF-related specifications about ‘activity’ versus ‘contract type’

HESC believes:

a. There could be significant variation across the country in employment conditions for teaching-only and teaching-focused academic staff

HESC resolves:

i. To recommend that UCU undertake preliminary data-gathering on how terms and conditions for teaching-only and teaching-focused posts vary across UK HEIs ii. That the resulting data be used to develop a manifesto that serves to improve security and working conditions of teaching-only staff.

Notes:

Amendments

HE9A.1: Disabled members standing committee

Submitted by: Add to believes new, b and c:

b. Disabled, intersectional disabled staff and other staff on equality strands are likely to be disproportionately represented in teaching only and teaching focused staff.

c. The disadvantages on these grounds are likely to be increased by disability,

intersectional and other discrimination.

Add to resolves, new iii:

iii. This data should include data on disabled, intersectional disabled and others staff on equality strands.

Notes:

Redundancies

HE10: Race, intersectionality and redundancies

Submitted by: Black members standing committee

Conference notes escalating redundancies across HE and clear evidence that Black staff are disproportionately concentrated in precarious, fixed-term, migrant and lower-graded roles most vulnerable to job loss.

Conference believes race is not incidental but structural in determining who is casualised, under-promoted and rendered expendable. Structural racism:

operates intersectionally: Black women, disabled Black staff, migrant staff, and those on visa-dependent or insecure contracts face compounded risk where race intersects with gender, disability, migration status, age and contract precarity. Redundancy processes that ignore these dynamics reproduce inequality. Failure to conduct robust, intersectional racial equality analysis may amount to indirect race discrimination under the Equality Act 2010 and breach consultation duties under the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

Conference resolves to:

1. Back collective grievances and strategic litigation challenging discriminatory selection criteria.
2. Demand publication of fully disaggregated redundancy data.
3. Publicly name institutions where Black staff are disproportionately affected.

Notes:

HE11: Restructuring, redundancies, and student solidarity

Submitted by: London Metropolitan University

HESC notes:

1. That management at London Metropolitan University plans cuts of around 120 teaching and teaching-related posts.
2. These cuts threaten teaching quality, supervision, and the university's widening participation mission.
3. That students are already organising petitions and public opposition to the proposals.

HESC believes:

a. That defending academic staff jobs and defending students' education are inseparable. b. That strong staff–student solidarity is essential to win this dispute.

HESC resolves:

i. To declare London Met a dispute of national significance. ii. To launch a national political campaign with the NUS, foregrounding student protection. iii. To convene a Branch Delegate Meeting of branches fighting redundancies. iv. To launch a student-staff lobby of Parliament and the Senedd Cymru on HE funding.

Notes:

Amendments

HE11A.1: London regional HE committee, London Metropolitan University v.

Submitted by: Add at end of HESC resolves

To call on the union to develop a coordinated national campaign across higher education to defend jobs, pay and pensions.

vi. To move urgently towards national industrial action, including a ballot where appropriate, to ensure that the fight against redundancies and job losses is taken up across the sector.

vii. To ensure national coordination and support so that no branch is left isolated when facing redundancies or restructuring.

Notes:

USS

HE12: USS Higher education committee

HE sector conference notes the report and approves the recommendations of the SWG which will be contained in UCUBANHE/94.

Notes:

HE13: Composite:

Submitted by: USS Conditional Indexation University of Oxford, University College London, London regional committee, Southern regional HE committee, Royal Holloway University of London

Conference notes:

1. USS lost £1bn in the past year but reports a £multi-billion surplus based on gilts+ valuation; the 2026 valuation of USS is likely to report a surplus.
2. The reduction in USS benefits since 2011, including the closure of the final salary scheme and increase in normal pension age.
3. USS Limited and the Employers are promoting 'Conditional Indexation' as a future 'reform' of USS. The second Conditional Indexation (CI) report compares current DB scheme (rather than one improved by the surplus), and a hypothetical CI scheme, but fails to take proper account of political and regulatory pressures that could prevent indexation, and underestimates uncertainties involved in 30-year predictions.
4. 'Indexation' is the method of uprating your accrued pension. Currently USS is increased annually by a 'soft cap' formula based on CPI. Conditional indexation means uprating pension according to whatever USS actuaries say is affordable in a given year.
5. TPS employers see USS as a cheaper alternative – reducing the Employer Covenant makes USS even more attractive.

Conference believes:

a. Exploring CI was a response to the result of the 2020 valuation, itself a product of a poor valuation method.

b. Conditional Indexation transfers investment and inflation risks from employers to members, and reduces the Employer Covenant; and creates greater inequality between different categories of members.

c. Employers' interest in ‘stability’ (low risk to them, low contributions and no industrial action), is different from ours – stable, fair contributions, guaranteed pensions and no employer attacks on pensions.

Conference resolves:

i. To actively oppose CI ii. To focus instead on improved governance, accrual and benefits to keep scheme sustainable – and stop hemorrhaging members’ money iii. To continue to work with USS to improve valuation methodologies. iv. That any surplus and lower FSC reported by the 2026 valuation should prioritise the further restoration of benefits and stability of the scheme while retaining current contribution rates.

Notes:

Amendments

HE13A.1: Compositing amendment

Submitted by: University College London, London regional committee, Southern regional HE committee, Royal Holloway University of London

Under ‘resolves’, add point v:

v. move to industrial action if USS or employers seek to impose CI.

Notes:

HE13A.2: Southern regional HE committee, University College London

In Conference believes ‘b’, delete “investment and inflation” before “risks”. In Conference believes ‘c’, delete all after “stable” and replace with "fair, well-indexed, guaranteed and sustainable DB pensions for us and for future generations of staff, fair contributions, and no employer attacks on pensions." Replace Resolves ‘iv’ with "That any surplus and lower FSC reported by the 2026 valuation should prioritise improving benefits." Paragraph 5, Teachers Pensions Scheme (TPS) Motions HE14-17 in this section will be taken in private session

Notes:

Teachers Pensions Scheme (TPS)

HE14: Composite: Defend TPS in post-92 institutions

Submitted by: University of Westminster, Yorkshire and Humberside regional HE committee, Bournemouth University

Conference notes:

1. HE20/2025 carried as amended by HE20A1 and HE20A.2

2. That the latest valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) has significantly increased employer contribution rates.

3. Several post-92 universities have already withdrawn from TPS or begun consultations on exiting the scheme, citing financial pressures to justify withdrawal are occurring alongside sector-wide restructuring and job losses.

4. The continued attacks on TPS in post-92 and in merged institutions, including in Northumbria, Solent and Greenwich, and the continued incentivising of opt-outs for TPS members

5. TPS is vital for providing a dignified retirement for members in post-92 HEIs.

6. Detrimental exit from TPS is being achieved by coercion or the use of subsidiary companies.

7. UCEA is lobbying government to allow exit from TPS.

8. Government will lose approximately £1 billion annual revenue if HEIs withdraw from TPS.

Conference believes that

a. Access to TPS must be retained or reinstated for all academic staff in post-92 HEIs as a fundamental component of pay and conditions b. HEIs must employ academic staff directly. c. Withdrawal from TPS represents a substantial cut to deferred pay, undermines recruitment and retention, and risks deepening inequalities across the sector d. It is essential to ensure pension justice for casualised or low paid workers. e. Staff with protected characteristics, including women, disabled workers and those with caring responsibilities, are likely to be disproportionately affected. f. Exit from TPS at post-92 HEIs would lead to wider pension threats in the pre- 92 and FE sectors. g. Urgent action is required.

Conference resolves:

i. To engage immediately with UCEA and the government to retain TPS provision. ii. To call a meeting of post-92 HEI branches to coordinate campaigning. iii. UCU to launch a national campaign in protection of the right to access TPS in post-92 institutions. of post-92s to TPS. iv. Lobby government to address funding pressures used to justify pension cuts. v. To devise a national strategy to prevent further exits and reverse those completed, potentially including industrial action. vi. Legal advice to become available to all post-92 branches. vii. Develop a national strategy to defend defined-benefit pensions across higher education. viii. Comparison tables to become available to members to compare TPS, USS and inferior DC private schemes ix. Local disputes on pension matters to be declared of UK wide importance. x. Support branches facing TPS withdrawal consultations.

Notes:

Amendments

HE14A.1: London Metropolitan University

Insert under Resolves iii:

Congress notes that the Teachers' Pension Scheme is increasingly under threat. Employers blame rising costs and use subsidiary companies to exclude staff from the scheme.

Congress believes that pensions are deferred pay, and calls on UCU to organise a campaign and industrial strategy, as we did for USS, to defend the TPS.:

Notes:

HE15: Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS), casualisation, and rolled-up pay (post-92)

Submitted by: London Metropolitan University

HESC notes:

1. Continued reliance in post-92 universities and colleges on hourly-paid, fixed- term, and fractional contracts.
2. That rolled-up hourly rates obscure or exclude equal payment for preparation, marking, feedback, administration, and student support.

3. That unpaid and under-declared labour reduces pensionable earnings in the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS), lowering employer contributions and long- term retirement income.
4. That contract fragmentation, variable hours, and earnings thresholds restrict TPS access and continuity of service.
5. That pension detriment disproportionately impacts women, racialised, and disabled staff.

HESC believes that:

a. Casualisation structurally shifts pension risk from employer to worker. b. All hours worked must be paid, declared, and pensionable.

HESC resolves:

i. To demand the abolition of rolled-up pay and, through contractualised workload models, payment for all duties.

ii. To require automatic TPS enrolment and parity of employer contributions.

iii. To demand pay and pension remediation for labour which is not currently paid.

Notes:

HE16: Sham subsidiaries, TPS and the role of consultants Southern regional

Submitted by: HE sector committee

Conference notes that Southampton Solent University (SSU) is moving 357 academics by TUPE-transfer into a sham subsidiary SUSL (Solent University Services Limited), which will involve the replacement of Teachers Pensions Scheme (TPS) with a private AVIVA pension. Conference notes that it came to light on 31 March that SSU paid Mercer Consulting £100,000 for actuarial and technical advice, partially in relation to the replacement of LGPS and TPS with the AVIVA pension scheme.

Conference notes that Mercer's long business relationship with AVIVA Insurance has not been declared by the University to Solent staff.:

Conference agrees that the Branch should have full support from UCU to adequately advise on whether the unacknowledged nature of the relationship between Mercer and AVIVA may have misled Solent employees receiving pension information from Mercer consulting, and to establish if relevant regulations have been breached.

Notes:

HE17: Pay and pensions justice

Submitted by: Northumbria University

HE Sector Conference notes:

1. Pension is deferred pay, and a right.
2. Many universities are aggressive pursuing coordinated plans to entrench pay and pension injustice, trashing terms and conditions and national collective bargaining to do so.
3. Such plans deprive people of dignity at work and after, affect TPS and USS members, and represent an existential threat to UCU.
4. Many branches (such as Northumbria and Southampton Solent) are fighting back individually and vigorously.

HE Sector Conference resolves to:

a. Recognise the fight for pay and pension justice for both TPS and USS members has national implications, requiring a coordinated response. b. Fully support and resource branches campaigning in this fight. c. Lobby UCEA, government, and pension providers to protect pension rights.

Notes:

Academic related, professional services staff (ARPS)

HE18: Meaningful career pathways and pay progression for ARPS staff

Submitted by: Academic related, professional services staff committee

HESC notes:

1. the absence of meaningful, transparent, and consistent career pathways for ARPS staff

2. the widespread impact of grade drift, role compression, and workload expansion without re-grading
3. that these contribute to pay inequality, retention problems, and unsustainable workloads

HESC believes:

a. fair and enforceable career progression routes are essential to tackling pay erosion and inequality b. progression must properly recognise skills, responsibility, and contribution across all job families c. career pathways are a core pay and conditions issue

HESC resolves to call on UCEA, in line with the JNCHES pay claim, to enter into formal negotiations with the recognised unions:

i. to agree nationally consistent and transparent career pathways for ARPS staff

ii. to establish clear progression within and between grades

iii. to prevent and reverse grade drift and role compression

iv. to ensure pay progression supports equality, retention, and professional development across professional services staff (New paragraph) HE funding

Notes:

HE19: Keep the profit-motive out of higher education

Submitted by: Open University

Conference believes privately-owned subcontractor ‘delivery partners’ and recruitment ‘agents’ in the teaching ‘franchising’ system, have motivations to maximise profit; inappropriately encouraging student enrolment and debt.

Conference resolves UCU:

1. Lobby governments for: a. Subcontracted teaching delivery partners and student recruitment agents’ receipt of income derived from tuition fees to be limited to use- cases that lead partner HEIs cannot reasonably meet directly, preferably under not-for-profit governance structures b. Strengthened oversight of franchising, going beyond the Secretary of State’s letter to HE providers (9th December 2025) c. Re-evaluation of mechanisms allowing receipt of maintenance loans without tuition loans

2. Via the Trades Union Congress (TUC): i. Campaign for the profit-motive's exclusion from publicly-funded HE ii. Support UnionLearn to develop actions and materials on the risks of inappropriate franchising and student recruitment agents, addressing Union Learning Reps, employers, and potential students.
3. Produce materials for UCU branches to bring to trades councils.

Notes:

HE20: Progress report on building and organising in HE private providers

Submitted by: University of Sheffield International College

The HEC are requested to make public their progress on the mandated motion HE26 from Congress 25.

1. Their report on the scope and scale of private provision in the UK HE provision and its impact on HE, through the survey which they were mandated to conduct with UCU members and HE institutions with staff working for Private Providers.

2. Their strategy to reach national agreements and deliver co-ordinated support to UCU members working in Private Providers with the aim of gaining recognition status for each branch / group.

3. Their progress in actively building UCU support in private provision.

Private providers are threatening the HE workplace, and we call for the HEC to prioritise this work and undertake to take action on the above points within the next four months with an expected delivery and publication by September 2026.

Notes:

HE21: For a serious political campaign to defend HE

Submitted by: University College London

Conference notes

1. The HE market crisis continues, with 15,000 jobs lost last year.

2. HESA data shows student numbers fell from 2022 to 2024.
3. Employers are expanding international campus operations while cutting UK jobs.
4. Government response to employer lobbying by raising fees.
5. The developing Research funding crisis triggered by UKRI ‘rebalancing’.
6. The successful campaign by the NUS highlighting the student loan scandal.

Conference believes Government policy on student visas contributes to a hostile environment dissuading students from studying in the UK.

Conference resolves:

a. UCU will launch a serious political campaign to make the case for fully- funded higher education and research, with mass participation events, including national and regional demonstrations and parliamentary lobbies. b. This campaign must also i. oppose ideas that ‘AI’ replaces the need for HE, and ii. defend international students and staff.

Notes:

Amendments

HE21A.1: University of Aberdeen

Add after 6.:

7. Employers are cutting provision of degree programmes in subjects such as modern languages, resulting in 'cold spots' across the UK.

Add after ii.:

iii. Defend equality of access to diverse degrees and disciplines across the UK.

Notes:

HE21A.2: Academic related, professional service staff committee

Remove ‘and’ from resolves b. i. Add new resolves b. ii.: consider the work of the Future of Work in Post-16 Education project in the defence of academic and ARPS jobs across the sector, and

Renumber original b. ii. to iii. (New paragraph) International and migrant issues

Notes:

HE22: International racisms

Submitted by: Black members standing committee

Conference notes the impacts of racist immigration systems across the world. Higher education is an international sector, reliant on global exchange/partnerships. However, university staff and students face risks of racial profiling/exclusion/barriers to travel or other detriments. Employers have a responsibility to safeguard staff against risk or detriment from racism arising from international travel, partnerships or collaborations. Conference demands:

1. An updating of employer risk assessments for all international collaborations/exchanges/partnerships to include risks or detriment due to racism in the partner site.
2. No detriment to staff unable to travel to international sites or engage in partnerships/collaborations due to risks arising from international racisms.
3. A review of processes to assess research and scholarly activity as internationally recognised to ensure fairness to all staff and students.

Conference agrees:

a. To devise guidance on safeguarding staff and students working internationally in locations that put them at risk from racist movements or official policies in that location.

Notes:

HE23: EU visa hurdles for migrant members from the Global South

Submitted by: Migrant members standing committee

Congress notes:

1. Many HE staff and PGRs from the Global South face a costly and time- consuming visa process for even short visits to the EU
2. Visa applicants need to provide proof of employment, bank statements, confirmed travel and accommodation, and biometrics in person
3. These restrictions deter participation in conferences, research collaborations, and professional development events
4. Casualised members face additional barriers, as precarious employment can be grounds for visa refusal

Congress believes:

a. Visa barriers are a structural disadvantage and discrimination that UCU must challenge b. Ease of movement for professional purposes is essential to higher education

Congress resolves:

i. To call on employers through UCEA & UUK for full reimbursement of EU visa costs for professional travel

ii. To lobby the UK Government to work with the EU to streamline the Schengen visa process, and to work with the Republic of Ireland for a visa-free Common Travel Area for all nationals.

Notes:

HE24: University's duty of care to international students

Submitted by: Yorkshire and Humberside regional HE sector committee Sector condemns:

1. HEIs keeping full tuition fees of deported international students.

Sector calls upon universities:

a. To meet the duty of care they have to international students b. To pro-actively assist international students in staying in the UK safely for the duration of their studies c. To work with campus unions to create resources for international students to be more aware of how to avoid deportation in UK's hostile environment. d. To agree to refund partial tuition fees for incomplete tuition.

Notes:

HE25: Supporting Palestinian students at UK universities

Submitted by: Royal College of Art

HESC notes:

1. Diligent organising by campaigns including Gaza 40, Support for Palestinian Students to Study Abroad and Gaza Scholarship Initiative successfully assisted evacuation of 100 Gazan scholars to study in the UK.
2. Since UK government's existing Gazan student evacuation policy ended on 31 December 2025, current Gazan student scholarship offer holders are unable to take up their studies.

HESC believes:

a. Lack of administrative coordination between UK Government and HE institutions means Gazan students have lost university offers and were denied evacuation to the UK, with little to no notice. b. Gazan students are unable to safely travel to registration centres to meet biometric data requirements for UK student visas.

HESC calls on UCU to demand UK Government extend the Gazan student evacuation policy indefinitely, campaign for Gazan students to receive comparable rights to Ukrainian students; grant further scholarships and facilitate twinning partnerships between UK and Gazan Universities. (New paragraph) Defending equality, diversity and inclusion

Notes:

HE26: Universities using covert investigations to suppress free speech

Submitted by: Southern regional HE sector committee

HE Sector Conference notes the very recent (April 2026) revelation that a number of UK universities have commissioned and paid a private security firm to investigate and collect data on students, academic staff and external speakers. Those targeted for these intrusive investigations are people who promote the human rights of Palestinian citizens and their protection from war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. Conference deplores these oppressive and unethical practices which stand in direct contradiction to the UK Government’s insistence that UK universities should at all times enable free speech on university campuses.

Conference instructs the HEC to challenge and oppose the commission of all covert investigations of individuals for the purposes of suppressing free speech.:

Notes:

HE27: Office for Students free speech guidance and equality

Submitted by: LGBT+ members standing committee

Conference notes:

1. The Office for Students' Regulatory Advice 24: Guidance related to freedom of speech (August 2025)
2. Higher Education institutions have implemented this guidance
3. University of Sussex High Court challenge OfS fine (Feb 2026)
4. An emergency motion carried at HESC 2024 to boycott all OfS guidance

Conference believes:

a. OfS guidance repeatedly suggests that free speech may be at odds with a commitment to equality in contexts including, but not limited to, promotions b. That the conflation of equality and free speech issues are harmful to marginalised staff and students

Conference resolves:

i. To commission independent legal advice on this aspect of the OfS guidance ii. To share practical info following advice with members iii. To provide support for branches on how they may safely push back against the OfS guidance iv. To develop a CPD based on this advice about how to progress equality, particularly trans and non-binary rights, whilst supporting freedom of speech

Notes:

HE28: Preventing political interference in higher education and defending EDI

Submitted by: Women members standing committee

Conference notes: Increasing political interference in Higher Education and coordinated attacks by far-right groups seeking to abolish Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) initiatives. These interventions threaten academic freedom, staff and student safety, and the sector's commitment to widening participation.

Conference believes that EDI is essential to fair working environments and high-quality education, and that attempts to dismantle it undermine human rights, trade union values, equality legislation, and the autonomy of universities.

Conference resolves to:

1. Campaign nationally to defend EDI frameworks and resist politically motivated restrictions on teaching, research, and institutional policy.
2. Oppose government or external interference that compromises academic freedom or silences marginalised groups.
3. Support branches in challenging attacks on EDI, including providing guidance, training, and coordinated action.
4. Work with students' unions and sector partners to promote inclusive, democratic, and independent universities.

Notes:

Amendments

HE28A.1: Manchester Metropolitan University

Submitted by: Add to Notes (New Para after '…widening participation.'): 'Conference notes the use by UK universities of private security firms to monitor campus activism and academic activity.'

Add after 'autonomy of universities': 'Conference believes that commissioning secret assessments on invited speakers and staff is unwarranted and inconsistent with UK universities' values and obligations and will have chilling impacts on EDI.' Add to Resolves point 2, after 'silences marginalised groups': 'and to call for the prohibition of the use of private security firms and similar agencies to monitor campus activism and gather data on staff, students and invited speakers.'

Notes:

HE29: Resisting racist Reform and the wider far right in HE

Submitted by: University of Brighton

Conference notes:

1. The far right is growing, boosted by Trump and Elon Musk.
2. The electoral threat posed by Nigel Farage's far right Reform UK, which now has 8 MPs and hundreds of councillors.

3. Reform UK and other far right groups aim to build support in universities setting up student societies.
4. Fascist Tommy Robinson's efforts to build a mass street movement in Britain.

Conference believes:

a. Reform UK is setting the agenda in British politics, pushing racist scapegoating of refugees, migrants and Muslims, along with targeting trans' rights, women's rights and the right to protest.

b. We need the broadest united activity against racism and fascism.

Conference resolves:

i. To continue to support future initiatives against the far right organised by Stand Up To Racism, the TUC and others. ii. To produce HE-focused anti-racist materials, stickers, and organise a speaking tour. iii. To organise campus staff-student assemblies against racism and fascism.

Notes:

Day 3: Friday 29 May — Congress

Rule changes – to be taken in private session

54: Rule change: LGBTQ+

Submitted by: National executive committee All instances of LGBT+, (rules 13.1.1, 18.11.2, 19.6, 20.5, 23.1,

38.2), delete 'LGBT+', replace with 'LGBTQ+'. Rules 18.11.2 and 20.5 replace 'lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans', with 'lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer' Rule 38.2, after 'trans', add 'queer'. 38.2 to read: 'In these rules, LGBTQ+ means lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, or any other non-heterosexual or non-binary identity.' Purpose: to add 'Q' (queer) to 'LGBT+' in the union's rules.

Notes:

55: Rule change: description of officer vacancy rules

Submitted by: National executive committee Delete existing rules 21.1 – 21.3. Replace with:

21.1 A vacancy in the presidency will be filled by the President-elect and the Vice-President succeeding early. A vacancy in the office of President-elect will be filled by the Vice-President succeeding early. A vacancy arising in the office of Immediate Past President will not be filled, subject to 21.4. 21.2 An Officer who succeeds early will continue to serve to the end of the term to which they were originally elected, including the presidential year to which they were originally elected. 21.3 If a vacancy or casual vacancy arises, or is due to arise, due to early succession or otherwise, in the office of Vice President, a by-election will be held, unless there will be no vacancy due to arise in the office of President Elect in the following year, consequent to 21.2. The term of office for a vacancy in the position Vice President will begin as soon as possible after election, but not before the vacancy has arisen, and not before a time that will allow succession in accordance with 21.4. 21.4 A member elected to a vacancy in the role of Vice President will succeed to the office of President Elect, and then to the office of President. If, on completing a year as President, the member elected to the vacancy has not served more than three years of office, they will succeed to the office of Immediate Past President. 21.5 A member elected to a casual vacancy in the role of Vice President may be required to serve two years in the role of Vice President, or two years in the role of President Elect, prior to their succession to the role of the President, in order to allow rule 21.2 to be fulfilled. In these circumstances, the member will

not serve as immediate past president. No member elected to a vacancy in the role of vice president will serve more than four years under this rule and rule 21.4. 21.6 Where the position of vice president is vacant, until such a time as that position is filled by a member duly elected under 21.3 where applicable, the relevant sector committee of the NEC shall elect one of its members to act as chair of the sector committee and, if relevant, sector conference. A member so elected as an acting sector committee chair is not under these rules an officer of the union. Purpose: to clarify and better describe in the rules the arrangements for filling a vacancy in the presidential run (there is no change to the current practice in these rule changes, only clarification).

Notes:

56: Rule change: Election schedule for unfilled NEC vacancies

Submitted by: National executive committee Rule 21.4: After 'If a vacancy for an ordinary member of the National Executive

Committee is the result of no nominations being received in accordance with the Rules, in the case of a two-year post, a by-election will be held', delete 'during the normal election period one year after the original election'. Purpose: To allow a by-election for an unfilled NEC seat to be held sooner than one year after the original election, on the same basis as NEC casual vacancies, described in rule 21.8.

Notes:

57: Rule change: NEC nominations – signatures in support of nomination

Submitted by: National executive committee Schedule A to the rules, paragraph 5c, add at end: 'The candidate's own signature cannot be used for 5.c.i in support of their nomination.'

Schedule A to the rules, paragraph 6c, add at end: 'The candidate's own signature cannot be used for 6.c.i in support of their nomination.' Purpose: To clarify that a candidate's own signature cannot be used in support of their own nomination to an NEC, officer or trustee position as one of the 10 or 20 supporting signatures required.

Notes:

58: Rule change: NEC nominations – certification of decision of branch meeting Na

Schedule A to the rules, paragraph 5c, add at end: 'The candidate's own signature cannot be used for 5.c.ii in support of their nomination.' Schedule A to the rules, paragraph 6c, add at end: 'The candidate's own signature cannot be used for 6.c.ii in support of their nomination.' Purpose: To clarify that a candidate's own signature cannot be used to certify a resolution of a branch meeting in support of their own nomination to an NEC, officer or trustee position.

Notes:

59: Rule change: Enabling all means of voting in NEC elections

Submitted by: National executive committee Schedule A to the rules, (Conduct of ballots to elect Officers, Trustees and

ordinary members of the National Executive Committee) Paragraph 7d Delete everything after ‘the date on which it is expected that’ (‘ballot papers will be sent to members, and the date by which ballot papers must be returned, which will not be sooner than 21 days after the papers are sent to members’). Replace with ‘the means of voting will be made available to members, and the date by which votes must be returned, which will not be sooner than 21 days after the ballot is opened’. Paragraph 11, before ‘postal,’, insert ‘technical,’ 11 In the event of any technical, postal, administrative, or other doubt or difficulty, the returning officer will seek the advice of the independent scrutineer. Purpose: to enable (though not compel) the use of secure electronic means of balloting in NEC elections, when this becomes legally possible for unions.

Notes:

60: Rule change: rule 13

Submitted by: National executive committee Rule 13.1.1, delete ‘In gender-based violence and bullying complaints, panels

will comprise 1 CMC member, and 2 members independent of UCU who are qualified in survivor-centred complaint investigation and resolution.’ Purpose: to delete from the rule book some operational constraints in respect of the rule 13 procedure; related points to address the issue set out in motion R8. [Motion 61 is not a rule change and does not require a two-thirds majority.]

Notes:

61: Complaints of gender based violence under rule 13 procedure

Submitted by: National executive committee

Congress notes the paper circulated to Congress by the NEC (UCU/2218) including an amendment to rule 13. Congress believes

1. Complaints about possible disciplinary offences involving gender based violence should be investigated by a qualified external investigating officer who is either a person with experience of survivor centred complaint investigation or has direct access to advice and support from such a person.

2. Any panel appointed to either determine whether to investigate such a complaint or deliberate on the outcome of an investigation (including any appeal) should have direct access to advice from someone with experience of survivor centred complaint investigation and resolution.

3. Access to specialist support or advocacy services for complainants in these cases should be explored.

4. Related training should be available to all members of the CMC.

Congress resolves to instruct the NEC to revise the procedure in line with the above points.

Notes:

62: Rule change motion - Amendments to rules 16.7.1 and 17.1

Submitted by: South West Retired Members' Branch In Rule 16.7.1, line 2, after 'associations' and before 'specialist committees set

up under Rule 25', insert 'the Retired Members' Committee set up under Rule 24'. In Rule 17.1, line 2, after 'sector)' and before 'and two members of each of the specialist committees set up under rule 25', insert 'two members of the Retired Members' Committee set up under Rule 24'. Information The amended rules would read as follows 16.7.1 Motions for National Congress, and amendments thereto, may be proposed by the National Executive Committee, branches/local associations, the Retired Members' Committee set up under Rule 24, specialist committees set up under Rule 25 and National Equality Standing Committees. Each branch/local association shall be entitled to submit one motion and one amendment to National Congress. 17.1 National Congress shall consist of the members of the National Executive Committee, two members of each standing committee set up under rule 23.1 (one from each sector), two members of the Retired Members' Committee set up under Rule 24, and two members of each of the specialist committees set up under rule 25 together with members elected from sector committees in English regions, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, institutions and central groups and regional retired members' branches. For the purpose of this Rule, the membership census date shall be 1 December in the year before the Congress. Purpose: Rule 16.7.1 sets out the entitlement of various bodies, including specialist committees, to submit motions and amendment to Congress, but omits reference to the Retired members' Committee. However, Rule 24.5 entitles the Retired Members' Committee to submit two motions and two amendments to Congress This proposal is intended to make Rule 16.7.1 consistent with Rule 24.5. Rule 17.1 lists the entitlement of committees and branches to Congress membership. The change to this rule gives the retired members' committee a new right, to send two voting delegates to Congress.

Notes:

63: Transparency

Submitted by: University of Bath Insert new rule

4.2.1: The union will routinely publish information which it holds, according to a publication scheme agreed by the National Executive Committee. The scheme shall be compliant with guidance for public authorities issued by the

Information Commissioner's Office under Section 20 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and at least as much information as is specified in the ICO's guidance shall be published. Purpose: UCU is not a public authority and does not fall under the Freedom of Information Act. The rule would have the effect of requiring the union to act as if it were covered by the act. The information which should be published according to a publication scheme is described by the ICO.

Notes:

64: Rule changes: General secretary instructions and breach of instructions

Submitted by: University of Sheffield

Add to 12.6.2 (rights and responsibilities of branches) new point (v):

v. to alert the NEC to any perceived breach of rule 28.2 and receive a timely reply.

Renumber current (v) as (vi) Add new 18.5: If at least 20 branches/local associations from separate institutions across the Union exercise their right under rule 12.6.2 in a quorate general meeting, the NEC shall initiate an independent investigation into the conduct of the General Secretary in accordance with the relevant procedures. Renumber the rest of rule 18 as appropriate. Purpose: To support democratic accountability of elected officers of the union by providing a mechanism requiring the NEC to initiate an investigation of the GS if 20 branches/local associations request it, should branches judge that rule 28.2 has been breached. To place the responsibility of initiating an investigation of elected representatives of the union (in this case the GS) with branches/local associations, as they represent the most fundamental

units of member representation in the union. For reference, Rule 28.2 states: “The General Secretary shall act in accordance with the instructions of the National Executive Committee.”

Notes:

65: Rule Change (rule 31.5)

Submitted by: Open University Add the following sentence to existing rule 31.5: “While officers and sub-committees may make recommendations, decisions that

affect or restrict members' eligibility for support from the fighting fund, including any required contributions from local branch funds, must be taken by the National Executive Committee in accordance with policy determined by Congress.” Purpose:To remove potential ambiguity in national rule 31.5, and ensure transparency and accountability for decisions that will affect assistance to members who lose pay following industrial action, and affect local branch funds.

Changes to standing orders of regional committees (in England)

Notes:

66: Regional committee standing orders - Environment Officer/Green Rep contracts'

Submitted by: City of Bristol College To Standing order 7 of the UCU Regional Committee Model Standing Orders, add 'an Environment Officer/ green rep' after 'a representative of members on casual

So the amended Model Standing Order 7 would read: The Officers of the Committee will be the Chair, the Vice Chair, the Treasurer, the Secretary and the Chairs and Secretaries of the sector committees, and for each sector, a representative of members on casual contracts, an Environment Officer/green rep, together with such other Officers as may be deemed necessary. Purpose: this explicitly adds an environment officer/green rep to the list of officer positions in the regional committee standing orders. Changes to model local branch rules

Notes:

67: Model local branch rules - ARPS representative

Submitted by: Academic related, professional services staff committee Under 8.1 in the UCU Model Branch Rules, add "ARPS Officer where applicable to

bargaining remit" to the list of committee roles. Amended model local rule 8.1 would read: 8.1 Members will be elected to the following officer roles within the Branch/LA: The chair/president The vice-chair/vice president The treasurer The secretary The membership secretary The equality officer The anti-casualisation officer ARPS Officer where applicable to the bargaining remit [other officers/representatives may be specified here, and elected in the order in which they are specified

Section 5: Business of the recruitment, organising and campaigning committee (chapter 6 of the NEC report to Congress)

Notes:

Recruitment, organising and campaigning

68: Recruitment, organising and campaigning

Submitted by: National executive committee

Congress notes continued campaigning, organising and recruitment work, including

1. support for disputes, at all levels
2. support for other priority campaigns including against the far right
3. campaigning and political lobbying for a fully funded post-16 education sector
4. organising work, including training.

Congress asks NEC to continue and grow this work, including

a. campaign support for branches in dispute and under threat, locally and nationally b. promoting a message of the value of post-16 education and the work of UCU members; using this to campaign for a new funding model, and to unify campaigns c. renewed focus on recruitment, finding opportunities to incorporate recruitment into all campaigns d. finding new ways to involve diverse groups of members, including digital resources for campaigning e. ensuring climate justice and sustainability, opposing increasing casualisation in all sectors, and campaigning on equality issues, are integral to this work

f. campaigning against the far right and against attacks on the rights of migrants.

Notes:

Amendments

68A.1: Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Committee

Add after point c, a new point d and renumber consequentially

d. reminding branches of UCU's right to information on staffing for purposes of union recruitment, including lists of leavers and joiners, surveying branches about what information is supplied by employers, and exposing and challenging those employers who block union access to this information, including on GPDR grounds.

Notes:

68A.2: Composite:

Submitted by: Westminster Kingsway College, Capital City College Group - CANDI / Camden Road

Add a point g: That due to the economic whirlwind that will hit the post 16 sector due to the impact of the war on Iran (i) campaign for a UK-wide defence of post-16 education; (ii) produce a briefing paper for members, challenging the employer's narrative that the war will mean the need for further cuts to the sectors. The paper will outline the moral case against increasing arms spending and the negative economic consequences on education.

War must not be an excuse for further cuts.

Notes:

69: Composite: National campaign to end casualisation and insecurity — enough is eno

London Metropolitan University, University of Westminster

Congress notes:

1. A deepening crisis of precarious work across the UK, with hourly-paid and research staff bearing greatest risk.

2. Institutions making redundancies, re-engaging staff on inferior casualised contracts, eroding collective agreements, and potentially breaching statutory obligations under the Employment Rights Act 1996 and the Equality Act 2010.
3. Casualisation undermines pensions by lowering pay and reducing accrual; serious pension detriment is caused by fixed-term contracts, rolled-up pay, and widening equality gaps.
4. Casualisation is a cost-shifting strategy undermining equality.

Congress believes that:

a. Casualisation erodes equality initiatives and harms careers and lives. b. Redundancy followed by re-engagement on insecure contracts is unacceptable.

Congress resolves to:

i. Develop test cases for legal and industrial action to challenge casualization.

ii. Call for a high-profile national campaign and parliamentary lobby to enforce employment law, abolish casualisation, and expose institutions engaging in sham practices.

iii. Pension justice and job security will be the main focus of the campaign.

iv. Call a BDM to escalate measures concerning job security and casualisation.

v. Call for a parliamentary debate to escalate action on job security and casualisation.

vi. Instigate a shaming campaign (with member stories) of institutions relying on zero-hour contracts and other casualised contract types.

vii. End casualisation by promoting fractionalisation.

Notes:

70: Campaign against use of ‘open-ended’ contracts with review date

Submitted by: University of Edinburgh

Congress notes that:

1. Members are rightly concerned about redundancies among permanent staff, but for casualised workers, hidden redundancies are business as usual.

2. There is widespread use of ‘open-ended contracts with review date’; contracts that sound secure, yet offer minimal job security, cause stress and anxiety, and lead to hidden redundancies.

3. While these contracts (also called ‘permanent finite’, ‘open-ended fixed- term’) fulfill employers’ legal obligations, in reality these fake open-ended contracts do not offer more job security, leaving workers trapped in precarious employment situations for many years.

Congress resolves to:

a. Campaign against the use of open-ended/review date contracts by suggesting alternative approaches: b. Move employees onto permanent contracts, providing much-needed stability to the HE sector c. Establish pools of researchers, to share work between existing employees d. Make bridging funds available to avoid compulsory redundancies due to gaps in external funding e. Call out employers’ misuse of these damaging and misleading contracts 70A.1Academic related, professional services staff committee

In resolves/c insert after "researchers", "and professional staff" Nest resolves/b-d under resolves/a and renumber resolves/e as resolves/b

Notes:

71: Opposing subcos and casualisation

Submitted by: Anti-casualisation committee

Congress notes that:

1. Staff in casualised and low-paid roles and from marginalised groups are more likely to have their work contracted out to a wholly owned subsidiary company (or ‘subco’) that has been established to undermine terms and conditions of employment;
2. Where a subco has ostensively been established to employ specific groups of staff, other staff may be misclassified in order to expand the scope of employment by the subco (for example, researchers classified as support staff);
3. The use of such subcos hides the extent of casualisation by employers in post-16 education.

Congress resolves to:

a. Work with the TUC and affiliated unions to continue to campaign against the use of subcos; b. Undertake research to better understand the impact of subcos on the nature and visibility of casualised employment in post-16 education; c. Use this research to provide guidance to branches/local associations and to develop UCU's anti-casualisation campaigns.

Notes:

Amendments

71A.1: Academic related, professional services staff committee

Renumber notes 2 and 3, to notes 3 and 4. Add new notes 2:

UCU rejects the use of subsidiary companies which diminish pay, conditions, and representation for all education workers. Paragraph 3, Other campaigns, including political influencing and work with other organisations

Notes:

72: Support the TUC national demonstration against austerity

Submitted by: Working Men's College This Congress notes

1. lifelong learning is a driver of social transformation, empowering working- class communities and individuals to be active citizens and participate fully in society;
2. the dire funding crisis facing Adult and Community Education, as a result of austerity;
3. TUC Congress agreed to call a national trade union demonstration against austerity.

Congress believes that

a. all sectors of education, from primary education through to adult education, do not receive the funding they need; b. joint, coordinated action with other education trade unions can highlight the need for more funding for education and can raise the confidence of all workers.

Congress resolves to

i. support the TUC calling an anti-austerity demonstration; ii. approach other teaching trade unions, including the NEU, to organise the biggest possible joint education contingent on the demonstration, calling for more funding for education. iii. encourage all UCU members to participate in the demonstration by funding transport from all regions.

Notes:

73: Campaigning in a hot climate

Submitted by: University of Liverpool

Congress notes:

1. Failure of governments globally to meet the Paris Agreement targets.
2. We are fast approaching climate tipping points.
3. Rise in far-right political ideas which deny / diminish climate science and advocate for increased fossil fuel extraction.

Congress believes:

a. Far-right climate misinformation must be challenged - it leads to damaging policies and feeds into anti-migrant rhetoric. b. There is no national security without international security.

c. The rollback on climate action by Reform councils, is being replicated by Conservatives. d. Colleges and universities should be places where climate education and action is prioritised and aligns with scientific understanding

Congress resolves to:

i. Create branch and teaching resources challenging climate misinformation. ii. Campaign with groups challenging far-right misinformation on climate and make the connection with increased racism. iii. Campaign to ensure the "Greening Education Partnership" is adopted by the UK government. iv. Set up a biennial Climate and Nature conference. 73A.1London retired members Add at end We call upon UCU to:

1. Raise the need for employers in all education sectors to conduct climate change risk assessments in conjunction with recognised unions.
2. Work with the TUC to campaign for a change in health and safety law to make it a duty on employers to conduct climate risk assessments.
3. Provide climate risk training and information for union members and reps.

Notes:

74: Recognising ecocide as an international crime

Submitted by: Yorkshire and Humberside retired members

Congress notes that:

1. UCU has been at the forefront of TU action on climate and ecological emergencies.
2. the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court does not currently cover environmental harm.
3. The campaign to recognise ecocide as an international crime has been growing in influence.

Congress believes that:

a. Mass damage and destruction of ecosystems have led to the current emergency. b. Existing treaties, agreements and civil lawsuits have not been able to address this. c. The establishment of an international crime of ecocide will create a greater deterrent to environmental harm. d. Organisational and trade union support is needed in the campaign for an international crime of Ecocide.

Congress resolves to:

i. Sign and publicly support the manifesto for the criminalisation of ecocide.

ii. Raise awareness amongst members and share teaching materials on ecocide with branches.

iii. Incorporate the language of ecocide into relevant CPD courses. 74A.1University of Exeter

Add as Congress notes item

4. The Ecocide Bill [HL] had a first reading in the House of Lords in November 2023. The Ecocide (Scotland) Bill progressed to the second stage in the Scottish Parliament in 2025/26. Neither bill has received sufficient parliamentary time to progress further.

Add as Congress resolves item iv

iv. Engage politically through appropriate means, including supporting relevant petitions, campaigns, members' motions and bills, parliamentary lobbies, conferences and seminars.

Notes:

75: Establishing a UCU National Day of Action in UCU calendar

Submitted by: University of Bedfordshire

Congress notes individual UCU branches across the four nations face increasingly hostile employers, characterized by unilateral restructures, redundancies, and punitive actions that undermine the right to industrial action. This crisis is exacerbated by consecutive governments failing to provide a fully funded Higher Education formula. In the last two years, in particular, numerous branches have been engaged in dispute and industrial action to defend members against employers' brutal redundancies. Congress believes that the isolation of branches fighting the same battles individually damages morale and student outcomes. A unified response is essential to demonstrate that no branch stands alone.

Congress resolves to call upon the UCU to establish an annual 'National UCU Day' in the UCU calendar. This day will serve as a collective platform for all branches and educational workers in UK to campaign and demonstrate in a manner they deem appropriate and showing unity.:

Notes:

76: Defend the state pension!

Submitted by: East Midlands retired members This Congress calls upon the NEC, in collaboration with other unions

and appropriate campaign groups, to defend the state pension. This ongoing campaign must include:

1. A defence of the Triple Lock;
2. Opposition to increases in state pension age;
3. Opposition to any proposals to means test the state pension.

Notes:

77: Bargaining and negotiation support for branches

Submitted by: Academic related, professional services staff committee

Congress notes:

1. The importance of cohesive bargaining and negotiation support for branches which can be applied in live negotiations
2. Challenges in representing and supporting members who fall between bargaining units or lack access to formal legal support
3. Significant and growing volumes of briefings, position papers, and counter- proposals to challenge management practices in disputes
4. Increasing workload of reps and officials given the growing onslaught of attacks on jobs and conditions Congress agrees: a. Effective collective bargaining requires practical, coherent tools grounded in the experience of reps on the ground

Congress resolves to:

i. Develop a centrally maintained, updated, reps-led toolkit bringing together practical guidance, model language, and case studies to support negotiations, casework, and collective bargaining, including references to employment law and agreements in place with employers

ii. Ensure this toolkit is regularly updated, clearly signposted, and includes template options suitable for use by institutions outside of New JNCHES (New paragraph) Other issues

Notes:

78: Exit X

Submitted by: University of Southampton, Southern regional committee

Congress believes that there is no justification for trade unions to continue to use the social media platform ‘X’. Elon Musk has failed to tackle racist, sexist, transphobic and other forms of discriminatory abuse on the platform, and the platform’s AI tool has been used to create and publish harmful, non- consensual sexualised images of women and girls.

Congress resolves:

1. that UCU, at all and every level (national, regional, branch, all committees, etc.), must leave X;

2. to encourage all UCU members to leave X. 78A.1Women members standing committee Add to “resolves 1”: “while maintaining an inactive account on X with a link to the UCU website to prevent UCU profiles being taken over by bots or other bad faith actors”

FURTHER EDUCATION SECTOR CONFERENCE 2026 Motions for debate

Paragraph 2, New Deal for FE Motions FE1-FE7 in this section will be taken in private session

Notes:

Motions Not Ordered Onto the Agenda

B1: Supporting the recognition of Ecocide as an international crime

Submitted by: University of Exeter

Congress notes:

1. The proposal that Ecocide be added as a crime to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and recognised within national laws - making those individuals responsible for unlawful or wanton acts causing severe and widespread or long-term environmental damage liable to criminal prosecution and arrest.
2. The campaign to recognise Ecocide as a crime is growing in influence, including in members bills at the House of Lords and Scottish Parliament.

Congress believes:

a. Human activities are responsible for mass damage and destruction of ecosystems. b. Existing treaties, agreements and civil lawsuits have not adequately addressed this. c. An international crime of Ecocide will create greater deterrent to environmental harm.

Congress resolves:

i. To sign this manifesto ii. To support recognition of an international crime of Ecocide through promoting public awareness and political engagement. iii. To share materials on Ecocide with branches and through CPD courses.

Notes:

B2: AI Worker Security

Submitted by: University of Leeds

Notes: The expansion of digital technologies in higher education is increasing workloads, driving unsafe levels of casualisation, and reshaping roles without adequate consultation. Employers are failing to engage meaningfully with staff, contributing to deteriorating working conditions, heightened stress, and reduced autonomy. Labour in opposition has pledged to ensure rights and protections keep pace with digital change.

Believes: Staff deserve secure employment, equitable workloads, and clear safeguards

around technologies that affect job design. Democratic, transparent governance requires genuine staff involvement. UCU members have the collective strength to challenge unfair practices when supported by clear strategy and strong communication.

Resolves: UCU shall launch a campaign defending jobs and workload fairness in the context of technological change; demand sector wide negotiations requiring union consultation before introducing systems affecting work; provide members with updates, training, and organising resources; support industrial action where necessary

Notes:

B3: Supporting effective internal union communications by provision of

digital tools University of Birmingham Congress notes effective internal communication within the union - both at branch and regional/national level - is one of the most important factors for ensuring effective organising and democratic decision-making.

Congress notes that the lack of internal communication structures increases the likelihood of debates taking place via social media.:

Congress resolves to mandate UCU HQ to:

1. invest in UCU's communications infrastructure, to better support the business of the union and engagement of all members in democratic decision- making.
2. to provide branches with the basic digital tools they need to conduct committee business, to free up their time from basic administration.
3. to provide a communications solution that allows cross- branch communications; that can facilitate regional, national and special interest group discussions in one secure and members-only space. Members need a single centralised digital space for; hosting video meetings and conferences; facilitating delimited and secure discussions; and enabling digital decision-making.

Notes:

B4: Creating a new vision for HE funding

University of Exeter

Conference notes:

1. HE14 “Trade union dispute with Secretary of State for Education over funding” and HE6 “Capping HE Salaries” from the 2024/25 UCU HE Sector conference
2. Motion 4 “Reorienting HE and FE financing for a just transition” from the 2024/25 UCU Congress
3. Written evidence by UCU (HEF0078), accompanying Jo Grady’s oral evidence to parliament: 8th April 2025

Conference believes:

a. A call for urgent action on sector funding will be strengthened by a vision for

a new funding model that guarantees HE as a public good, and addresses inter alia pay erosion, student debt, unmanageable workloads, inequalities, worker precarity, and the climate and ecological emergency

Conference resolves:

i. To convene a working group, including representatives from all HE unions, to develop and then consult on a new Union-led vision for HE sector funding. To include investigating the legal possibility of managing a UK HEI as a cooperative

Notes:

B5: For evidence-based staff-student policies against misconduct

University of Leeds

HESC believes:

1. UCU should support clear, evidence-based policy to prevent abuses of power

in HE, which must account for intersectional power relations

2. Clarity on staff-student relationships protects staff and students.

HESC notes:

a. Regulatory requirements on harassment and sexual misconduct in effect in

England from August 2025, in Wales from August 2026.

b. Most students are uncomfortable with staff-student relationships.

HESC resolves to: consult with UCU's equalities standing committees and anti-casualisation committee, NUS, 1752 Group, other survivor organisations call on branches to:

i. negotiate with employers and work with students' unions, drawing on peer- reviewed research to develop professional boundaries between staff and students

ii. seek policies prohibiting staff from entering intimate relationships with students for whom they have current / potential responsibilities

iii. demand universities have comprehensive, intersectional training on professional boundaries and preventing sexual harassment across academic hierarchies (including between staff)

iv. training for staff handling disclosures.

Notes:

B6: Culturally Sensitive Support for FE Staff

Submitted by: Coleg Gwent - USK

Congress notes that FE staff across the UK come from diverse backgrounds and that international and national events can disproportionately impact staff with protected characteristics.

Congress believes that some staff, including international staff, trans staff, Jewish staff and Muslim staff, may experience distress, isolation, or threats related to current events or policy changes, without access to appropriate specialist support.:

A lack of culturally sensitive provision can contribute to staff absence, wellbeing issues, and isolation, impacting staff retention and learner experience. All FE staff with protected characteristics should be entitled to specialist, culturally sensitive support and advocacy within their employment.

Congress instructs UCU to:

1. campaign for FE colleges across the UK to provide accessible specialist wellbeing services and culturally sensitive support networks
2. lobby the UK Government to fund inclusive staff support provision across the FE sector

Notes:

B7: UCU Complaints Process Delays

University of Oxford

Congress notes:

1. A Rule 13 complaint submitted in 2025 concerning racial harassment remains unresolved as of April 2026.
2. The advertised investigation and hearing timelines make resolution before Congress 2026 unlikely.

Congress believes:

a. Delays of over a year in resolving complaints are unacceptable and compound harm to complainants. b. A complaints process that lacks timeliness, transparency, and adequate resourcing undermines member confidence and safety.

Congress resolves:

i. To call on the NEC to ensure complaints are resolved within 9 months.

ii. To require regular, substantive updates to complainants throughout the process.

iii. To allocate sufficient resources to prevent delays.

iv. To review complaints procedures with the wellbeing and safety of complainants as a central priority.

II Motions (or parts of motions) not in order for debate by Congress Motions B8 and B9 were not considered to fall under UCU's aims and objectives, as set out in section 2 of the rules.

Notes:

B8: Fighting for social housing

Submitted by: West Midlands regional committee

Congress notes:

1. Plans to sell off the land of current council housing in Druids Heath, Birmingham, with no intention to replace like-for-like. Instead, the current 1200 council properties will be replaced with only 400 homes for social rent.

2. Overall, 1800 homes will be demolished and replaced with 3500 properties, 51% of which will be designated "affordable" i.e. up to 80% of market rents.

3. The campaign of local residents to challenge these proposals.

4. That similar plans are being resisted in other authorities, for example in London where all the council housing stock is at risk.

Congress resolves:

a. To donate £500 in support of the local campaign in Druids Heath. b. For UCU to actively campaign to protect social housing and fully support similar local campaigns to resist attacks on social housing.

Notes:

B9: Campaign for free public transport

Submitted by: London retired members

The transport sector has made the least progress in cutting fossil fuel use over the last twenty years. Free public transport could start to reverse this dangerous trend. Free public transport cuts across the dangerous populist rhetoric that tackling climate change costs ordinary people money. It shows that the opposite is true: measures to deal with climate change and air pollution can also make life better. There are many ways that free public transport could be paid for, including higher taxes and levies on the wealthy and corporations. It should not result in job losses for transport staff. Public transport is already free in many cities, including Luxemburg, Tallinn, Montpellier, Dunkerque, Albuquerque and Kansas City. We note the existence of Campaigns for Free Public Transport in London, Yorkshire and Scotland and call upon NEC to support these existing initiatives and promote their extension to the rest of the country. Motion B10: CBC asked that a full explanation be given in respect of the legal reasons why this motion has been ruled out of order. UCU has a legal duty to provide a safe working environment and to protect employees from harm, including harm by third parties that may criticise individuals or

groups of staff as this may cross into harassment, intimidation or degrading treatment. Such behaviour may also impact on the mental health of employees. UCU must take all reasonable steps to avoid this occurring. A motion that discusses staffing matters may impact individual employees. This is clear. A motion that discusses the Unite dispute in particular may impact negatively on staff, individually or particular groups of staff - many of whom are not members of Unite. Given the potential legal liability if UCU does not take all reasonable steps to protect its employees, it is vital for the protection of UCU as an organisation, and for the funds entrusted to it by way of membership subscriptions, that UCU

reduce the risks in meetings, conferences and at events such as Congress, of public criticism of staff, whether individuals or groups. It is possible, in relation to some claims that could be brought by employees, that third parties could also be claimed against on an individual basis. The risk is therefore both at organisational level and an issue for individual UCU members. A live debate of this motion therefore poses significant risk to the union, and more importantly, risk to individual members of UCU staff.

Notes:

B10: Solidarity with Unite UCU - against punitive deductions, resolve the dispute Goldsmiths University

Congress notes:

1. The ongoing industrial dispute and current mandate of the Unite LE127 branch (Unite UCU)
2. The HSE's rebuke of UCU for failing to ensure a safe and healthy workplace
3. UCU's decision to deduct 100% of pay from Unite UCU members for action short of a strike
4. Motion 11 passed at Congress 2023 and Motion 63 passed at Congress 2025

Congress believes:

a. UCU's continued failure to resolve the dispute with Unite UCU brings our trade union into disrepute.

Congress resolves:

i. To donate £20,000 to Unite UCU's strike fund ii. Call on UCU SMT to engage meaningfully in immediate talks to bring a swift resolution to the dispute, and the cessation of threats of any pay deductions for ASOS iii. Demand that the General Secretary and SMT ensures the NEC can discuss this dispute in line with their responsibilities under rules 28.2 and 29.2.

Notes:

B11: Submitted as resolves clause c to motion 31, this

rules. Congress adopts subscriptions that apply for the full year in accordance with rules 7.1 and 7.2.

Notes:

B11: 31 Securing UCU membership base through fairer fees

Submitted by: UCU Cymru

c. This reduction must be implemented within six months to protect and grow our membership base, thereby safeguarding the union's collective strength and long-term viability.

Notes:

B12: Submitted as resolves clause ii.to motion 31, this

union might provide to members. Legal support can only be provided under the terms of the legal support and assistance scheme in accordance with rule 4.5.

Notes:

B12: 37 Defend the right to protest

Submitted by: University of Dundee ii. Provide advice and legal support to members arrested for exercising their

right to protest.

Notes:

B13: Submitted as further parts of motion 53, motions which are critical of union staff

are not in scope for debate by Congress. Any such debate would breach of Congress standing order 44.

Notes:

B13: 53

Submitted by: Improving UCU membership data recording Morley College London

Congress notes that significant gaps exist in UCU's membership data recording, limiting the union's ability to organise effectively, plan industrial action, and negotiate with precision.

Congress further notes that incomplete data particularly undermines organising efforts in Adult and Further Education, with direct implications for understanding casualisation across both HE and FE sectors.:

Congress resolves to:

3. Audit current data gaps and publish a membership data improvement plan within six months
4. Report measurable progress on data completeness to Congress annually III Motions and amendments not the business of the conference to which they were submitted (and could not be reordered) Submitted to HE sector conference, considered to be the business of Congress

Notes:

B14: Campaign to defend migrant members and students

Submitted by: University of Liverpool

Conference notes:

1. Migrants have made a rich contribution to the history and culture of the UK.
2. Anti-migrant policies advanced by Reform UK, including calls for mass

deportations and withdrawal from human rights frameworks.

3. The Conservative Party's hostile environment measures and restrictions on international students and dependants.
4. Labour's commitment to strict border controls and offshore processing proposals.
5. Migrant staff and students are essential to Higher Education.

Conference believes:

a. Anti-migrant politics threaten jobs, educational access and sector

sustainability.

b. UCU must visibly and proactively defend migrant members and students.

Conference resolves:

i. To launch a national, cross-sector campaign defending migrant rights in education and at work.

ii. To produce branch organising guidance on resisting hostile environment policies by Summer 2026.

iii. To coordinate campaigning with TUC unions and migrant rights organisations.

Notes:

B15: Campus Voices for Palestine Solidarity

Submitted by: University of Dundee

HE Sector Conference notes:

1. The successful third Campus Voice for Palestine speaking tour in November 2025 with a speaker from Birzeit University and Right to Education Campaign.
2. The tour organised by the British Committee for Universities in Palestine (BRICUP), University and College Workers for Palestine in conjunction with the Emergency Committee for Universities in Gaza, the Right to Education Campaign and financially underpinned by UCU. The organisers also collaborated effectively with PSC, Scholars for Palestine and other explicitly pro-Palestinian groups.

Conference resolves to:

a. Authorise annually up to £4k financial support underwriting subsequent Campus Voices for Palestine tours starting in 2026-

27. the tours. c. Support and publicise the work of the Emergency Committee for Universities in Gaza and the Right to Education Campaign within UCU. d. Demand UK institutions work with Palestinian institutions directly.

Notes:

B16: Redundancies and their impact on different equality groups

Submitted by: Migrant members standing committee

Congress notes

1. The increasing number of branches facing redundancies in post-16 education
2. Government increase in funding for FE insufficient and no increase for HE
3. Migrant members made redundant typically lose their visa sponsorship as this is employer specific and face removal from the UK Congress believes a. Members belonging to equality groups are impacted more severely when facing redundancies, whether the redundancies are “voluntary” or compulsory

b. Workload implications for remaining staff may fall more on members belonging to equality groups Congress resolves

i. For UCU to carry out an anonymous survey in branches affected by any redundancies to gather information on members’ protected characteristics to identify patterns of members most impacted by redundancies

ii. For UCU to focus political work on the intersecting impact redundancies have on equality groups.

Notes:

B17: Demilitarising HE – Welfare Over Warfare, Demilitarise and

adopt dED Treaty Open University

Conference notes:

1. BAE Systems produces F-35 components used in Gaza bombings.
2. Some UK universities maintain research partnerships with arms manufacturers including BAE Systems, Leonardo, the Atomic Weapons Establishment and Teledyne.

3. Many institutions claim ethical investment policies prohibiting involvement with companies complicit in war crimes.

Conference believes:

a. The military-industrial complex profits from human and environmental devastation. b. University partnerships with arms companies contradict stated ethical commitments and risk complicity in human rights abuses. c. As public institutions dedicated to research and the public good, universities have a civic duty to promote peace, sustainability and social responsibility.

Conference resolves to:

i. Support the Demilitarise Education (dED) open letter urging adoption of the dED Treaty to end investments and partnerships with the arms trade.

ii. Campaign for transparency and termination of partnerships breaching ethical policies or international law; and work with all campus unions, including UNISON and Unite, to build a broad coalition for demilitarisation.

Notes:

B18: LGBTQ+ international protection

Submitted by: LGBT+ members standing committee

Conference notes:

1. The international nature of UK HE

2. The increasing number of UK HE provision in other countries

3. ILGA reports 64 UN member states criminalise consensual same-sex sexual acts, with death penalty in at least 7

4. That amongst the large number of international staff and students there are migrants from countries that are not safe for LGBTQ+ people

5. UK Government's 'Earned Settlement' proposals attempt to penalise, exclude and extend the precarity people face

6. UK Government plans to make refugee status conditional on someone's country of origin never becoming safe.

Conference calls on UCU to

a. Campaign against UK Government's 'Earned Settlement' proposals and reaffirmation of ECHR in full. b. Call on Government to end blanket safe country designations c. Raise awareness about conditions faced by LGBTQ+ people and solidarity in partnerships e.g. EI and ILGA d. Campaign for UK to uphold Refugee Convention.

Notes:

B19: Amendment to HE motion HE29

Submitted by: London regional HE sector committee

Add to end of notes

5. We note Tommy Robinson's protest on Nakba Day, opposed by SUTR and PSC. Far-right and Zionist movements have strategic alliances on our campuses, sharing racist ideologies that intimidate Palestinian solidarity. We affirm Zionism is racism, systematically enabling apartheid and displacement against Palestinians.

IV Amendments (or parts of amendments) considered to materially change the policy of the motion (standing order 61iv)

'Materially change the policy of the motion' includes consideration of whether an amendment adds a new, separate area of policy that was not part of the original motion, or substantially tries to reverse the intended policy of the motion.

Notes:

B20: Parts of Congress amendment 1A.1

Submitted by: University College London

Add final point: "challenging militarism in our classrooms and institutions, including armed forces recruitment stalls on our campuses and any attempt to introduce conscription." Add at end of motion: "and to send a motion to this year's TUC conference opposing any attempt to impose conscription."

Notes:

B21: Parts of Congress amendment 18A.2 LGBT+ members standing

committee 4 that Digital ID meet none of the Government's prerequisites: useful, trusted, inclusive. Digital ID was rejected in Parliament and devolved administrations. According to Liberty it would change the relationship between individual and state and exclude the most vulnerable people

Under resolves add bullet point i before the words "We also call upon …' replace 'we also' with the word 'to' and add ii to oppose the introduction of Digital ID in UK.

Notes:

B22: Amendment to Congress motion 48

Submitted by: New City College Poplar

Add amendment: a single democratic state with equal rights for all in Palestine is essential for lasting peace

Notes:

B23: Amendment to further education sector motion FE2 London regional FE

sector committee Add believes D: Last year the emphasis moved away from the national demands and of binding agreements to focus instead on local pay deals. Add believes E: Branches believed they were voting for a national campaign but ended being left to fight alone for local pay deals. Resolves ii. Remove "Autumn" and replace with "Summer Term" Delete resolves iii.

Notes:
