



Our newsletter is free to all members.

If you're not a member, we need you to join now!

Join by 12th October to get a pay ballot vote.

Fill in a paper form or join online. Just ask a steward or follow the link from Staff Central.

University of Brighton Branch Newsletter

September 2019

**Stand up for
decent pay and
decent jobs**

HE pay ballot 9 Sept – 30 Oct



**Vote
yes
for
strike action**

This month's newsletter comes with a simple message.

If you work directly for the University, then you should receive a pay ballot in the post to your home address this month.

This ballot asks you to make a choice: you can vote no, and in effect, accept the pay offer, payable (and backdated to August 2019), and suffer what for most people will be another real terms pay cut, or you can vote

yes to reject the offer and be prepared to campaign for something better.

Your branch and your union recommend that you vote to reject the offer by voting **YES to strike action**, as the only way we'll get the employers to pay us what we're all worth.

We need a strong vote and a decent turnout.

Every vote matters, so please make sure you have your say.

Follow us...

Online: blogs.brighton.ac.uk/unison

Facebook: [UNISON at University of Brighton](#)

Twitter: [@UniBtonUnison](#)

Here's our fool-proof guide to voting in the Pay Ballot:

We know our members are not stupid, but we want to make sure that everyone votes, so here's how to make sure you do.

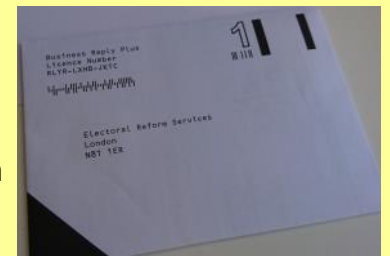
1. Receive your ballot

It should be addressed to you and look something like this, but in a brown envelope. They are being posted from Monday 9th September so you should get one within a week or so. If you haven't received one by late September, see below.*



2. Open the letter and you should find a ballot form.

Please make sure you vote either YES or NO with a cross (it's up to you, but we recommend a YES) and then put it in the envelope, which should look like this.



3. Make sure you post it!

We've all carried post around in our bags for weeks. This needs to get back to Electoral Reform Services by 30th October, so do it today!

If you want to help us, let us know when you've voted. Email us (UnisonHelp@brighton.ac.uk) and we'll tick you off our list. We're aiming for a 100% turnout. So we'll be trying to contact all our members until 30th October.



*If you haven't received a ballot.

There's clearly a problem. Either

- (a) It's been received but thrown away by accident,
- (b) UNISON do not have your current address and it's gone somewhere else,
- (c) You've joined UNISON recently (since mid-August) and you've missed the cut-off point for the ballot.

Either way, you can still vote, but you need to call UNISON Direct on **0800 0857 857**. (we can't do this for you, sorry)

They should be able to fix the problem and send you a new ballot paper.

Please let us know if you have any problems. **Thanks for voting!**

Here's why we want you to vote YES for Strike Action

Nobody wants to go on strike. Losing pay and disrupting the University and the students' education is not what we're about, but we can't just sit back and accept year after year of pay "rises" which fall well behind the rate of inflation.

Over the last ten years, we have received pay offers between 0.4% (2010-11) and 2.0%, (last year) with some years including additional rises for the poorest paid members of staff.

Meanwhile, the cost of living has increased for all of us, meaning that our pay today is well behind what it would be if it had kept up with inflation.

Every year, the employers meet with unions and discuss the issue. Every year for a decade, the result has been that our pay increases have been inadequate.

This year, we have been offered 1.8% as a final offer with better increases for people on grades one, two and three. This is detailed in the table below.

Grade	Spinal Point	Current Annual Salary £	Proposed Annual Salary £	Increase £	
1	5	17,079	17,361	282	1.7% *
	6	17,079	17,682	603	3.5%
	7	17,408	18,009	601	3.5%
2	8	17,751	18,342	591	3.3%
	9	18,189	18,709	520	2.9%
	10	18,688	19,133	445	2.4%
	11	19,202	19,612	410	2.1%
3	12	19,730	20,130	400	2.0%
	13	20,275	20,675	400	2.0%
	14	20,836	21,236	400	1.9%
	15	21,414	21,814	400	1.9%
	16	22,017	22,417	400	1.8%

* The current spinal point 5 is matched to spinal point 6 so that the University fulfils its commitment to pay its own employees at least the National Living Wage.

At the time of writing, RPI is 2.9% and CPI is 2.0%. RPI is a better way of measuring inflation because it takes into account housing costs. (It's used to calculate the annual increases of train fares for example.) CPI is what the government wants to use when it tries to keep our wages down. (It's generally lower.)

Even if you were to accept that the price of things that we buy (rent, travel, food & drink) is rising by only 2.0% per year, this pay offer is still not enough to maintain a decent standard of living and does not make up for the past decade of lost earnings. It's worth pointing out that every percentage point, up or down, is a pay rise or a pay cut for the rest of our time working for the University.

So, the best scenario is that the employers, faced with a potential series of strikes, back down and offer us a better deal which we will put to our members again. For that to happen though, we have to be prepared to stick up for ourselves and **vote YES for strike action**.

As a democratic union, we will act on the voice of our members, but we need that 50% turnout.

Please make sure you have your say and vote!

Branch Donations

As a trade union branch, we use a small amount of our resources to support other groups fighting injustice or campaigning for a better life for working people.

Over the last year, we have made many £100 donations, for example:

- Supporting the strike of Birmingham University staff over pay.
- Supporting Eastbourne Trades Council to improve their communications
- Supporting Thousand 4 £1,000 to provide help for refugees refused asylum

Our branch rules (agreed at our last Annual General Meeting) say that we can only support trade union based organisations or those campaigning, rather than charities with no element of campaigning work.

If you have any ideas on a donation your branch could make, please let us know.

UNISON Offers for our members

Being a member of a trade union is fundamentally about joining with fellow workers to make our working lives better. It's not about what you as an individual can get out of it. It's about what we can achieve collectively, because we're always going to be stronger as a union.

UNISON uses the bargaining power of over a million working people to negotiate deals which allows members to take advantage of certain offers. You can see the full range of offers available on UNISON's national website.

benefits.unison.org.uk/all-benefits/

***Stand up for
decent pay
and decent jobs***

HE pay ballot 9 Sept – 30 Oct

unison.org.uk/payupnowforHE

UNISON
the public service union

**Vote
yes
for
strike action**