



Our newsletter is free to all members.

If you're not a member, we want you to join us. Either follow the links on-line from our blog on Staff Central, or ask us for a paper membership form.

University of Brighton Branch Newsletter

August 2022



In case you've not noticed (!), we're balloting all University-employed members over pay this month.

So if you work directly for the University, you should have received a ballot paper **at your home address** by now. Please make sure you play your part in our ballot and return it as soon as you can. As usual, anti-trade union laws mean we have to have a 50%+ turnout, so every vote counts!

If you've not received yours, please call **0800 0 857 857** and ask for a new one. Ballot papers have to be received by 26th August, so please don't put it off - do it today!

There's more on the ballot and why it's important in this month's newsletter....

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Our members have been really busy over the last few days, getting their ballot papers posted back, so that we can do something about our falling pay.



Have you posted yours yet?
Send us a picture and let us know.
We need that 50% turnout!

Why we're balloting

The cost of living crisis is affecting us all. We've seen our pay fall against inflation for many years, but the current crisis is totally off the scale. The employers are due to impose an "increase" in wages in August, but the rate of inflation is so high that University of Brighton workers will be seeing a real-terms cut in pay of 8.8%, which for the very lowest paid, falls to 3.8%. This is, without a doubt, the largest cut in pay for university workers that we've ever seen. After months of talks, 3%, plus a bit more for grades 1 to 4, is all we've been offered.

The only way we can make the employers reconsider their offer, is for us to threaten strike action, and be willing to go on strike if necessary. We've seen how other groups of workers are fighting back, and we have to follow their example.

It is true that the University of Brighton is not cash rich, and we'd be happy to campaign for better funding for all universities alongside UEB, but we can't and won't accept massive wage cuts just because the government is privatising higher education. We have to fight back.



The laws that are designed to make life difficult for us say that we have to do this as a postal ballot and that we have to get a turnout of over 50% of those balloted, or it doesn't count! So every ballot paper that doesn't find its way back to CES in the envelope provided, means it's harder to get the result we need. If you work for the University, as most of our members do, please make sure you vote. You have until 26th August, so realistically, your vote would need to be posted by Tuesday 23rd August, at the latest.

University of Brighton "pay rise" to be imposed from 1st August 2022

Grade	Spinal Point	Pay from August 2021	Hourly Rate	Pay from August 2022	Hourly Rate	Change	Real change with inflation at 11.8%
1	5	17,901	9.28	19,333	10.02	8.00%	-3.80%
	6	18,212	9.44	19,578	10.15	7.50%	-4.30%
	7	18,529	9.60	19,863	10.30	7.20%	-4.60%
2	8	18,852	9.77	20,134	10.44	6.80%	-5.00%
	9	19,209	9.96	20,400	10.57	6.20%	-5.60%
	10	19,623	10.17	20,761	10.76	5.80%	-6.00%
	11	20,092	10.41	21,197	10.99	5.50%	-6.30%
3	12	20,600	10.68	21,630	11.21	5.00%	-6.80%
	13	21,135	10.95	22,149	11.48	4.80%	-7.00%
	14	21,686	11.24	22,662	11.75	4.50%	-7.30%
	15	22,254	11.53	23,144	12.00	4.00%	-7.80%
	16	22,847	11.84	23,715	12.29	3.80%	-8.00%
4	17	23,487	12.17	24,285	12.59	3.40%	-8.40%
	18	24,174	12.53	24,948	12.93	3.20%	-8.60%
	19	24,871	12.89	25,642	13.29	3.10%	-8.70%
	20	25,627	13.28	26,396	13.68	3.00%	-8.80%
	21	26,341	13.65	27,131	14.06	3.00%	-8.80%

The University's announcement about pay - what it says, and what it really means....

We have recently been advised by the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA), who undertakes negotiations on behalf of the sector, that the annual negotiation process and consequent dispute resolution meetings with the Unions with regard to this year's pay review have now concluded.

UCEA have spent months talking to the unions, cynically wasting time to prevent a pay ballot in the Spring, only to offer staff a massive real-terms pay cut at the end of it.

Therefore, I can confirm that the pay award for 2022-23 will be implemented from 1 August.

Even though it's not been agreed, we're going to impose it, as if it's a done deal.

You may have seen from the UCEA communications that the awards are higher for those who are on the lower points of the pay scales with a minimum award of 3% for all those covered by national bargaining.

Our lowest paid staff have got more, because we recognise that pay levels for cleaners and catering workers are so close to the minimum wage that they have to go up. We're paying the real living wage at the University, but it's no longer enough for people to live on. With RPI inflation at 11.8% at the moment, at Brighton, the real terms pay cut is therefore 3.8% for the lowest paid, rising to 8.8% (!) for those close to the top of grade 4 and above. This is probably the largest pay cut ever imposed on university workers.

I can also confirm that the senior pay scales will increase by 3% in line with the national pay offer.

We're short of money, but we've still chosen to increase senior staff pay by 3% as well. This also represents a real-terms pay cut for the highest paid, but for reasons best known to ourselves, we're using "public money" to voluntarily give those on £100,000 a pay rise of £3,000, compared to the top of grade 4 getting £790.

At a national level there have been a number of meetings in connection with the pay negotiations and an extract from a recent letter from Raj Jethwa, UCEA Chief Executive, provides some helpful context for the offer:

Don't blame us. We're just doing what UCEA have asked us to do, based on feedback from universities, like us.

“We recognise the difficulty the current inflationary pressures place on our members, our colleagues, and all employees.

We know it’s rubbish.

“Our offer represents our best attempt to meet these rising costs while recognising the real terms fall in the unit of resource alongside other significant inflationary cost pressures for employers. In making this offer UCEA has both exhausted its mandate and proposed an uplift which we know will be financially challenging for many institutions in the absence of any increase in undergraduate fee levels and ongoing expenditure increases.

We’re expecting government funding and fee income to continue to fall in real terms, so we’re expecting universities to pay for this by reducing staff wages.

“An uplift at this level, in order to ensure their continuing financial sustainability, will require increased levels of efficiency in very many institutions.

You’ll probably need to close down courses and buildings.

“Virtually all sectors are finding it impossible to get close to inflation at this time and, in a sector where price increases are not possible and expenses are rising significantly, we believe the offer we set out in this letter is comparable to or better than very many others in the economy.”

We’re not looking at large parts of the economy where pay offers are much higher than this. We’re hoping that higher education workers will put up with it, if we can convince them we’re all in the same situation.

Our own financial situation continues to be challenging as a consequence of the items Raj refers to above. Continuing with the strong controls we have introduced on spending and ensuring improvements in the experience of our students will continue to support recruitment and retention and will be important factors in helping the University to return to a position of financial strength and resilience, with the ability to strategically invest for the future.

We’re hoping for the best and trying not to buy stuff.

Look, if you can please just put up with it and overlook the fact that your wages are about to see a massive fall in value.

You’ll be much poorer, but happy that the University is kind of okay in the future, maybe.

Please don’t make a fuss. We’ll all just have to accept it.

Now get back to work.

Why we think you need to join a trade union



If you're reading this, the chances are you're already a member of UNISON, but whether you are or not, it's in all our interests that we strengthen our branch and our union by recruiting more members.

Trade unions are not groups of people who moan about everything, or clubs for lazy workers. We're organised workers who see the need for workplace organisation that's based around mass membership and collective interest.

We support all members with their individual problems at work, but the main reason we're all members is that we can do so much more when we have the weight of hundreds of members with us.

Many people working at the University will be concerned about what's round the corner. Universities like ours are facing all kinds of uncertainty. Public services in general are being cut, sold off and privatised. Workers' terms and conditions are being attacked, as those in charge are forced to run things as "efficiently" as possible. In short, we're all expected to work harder for longer and less money.

The entire system means we have to fight back. Trade unions are about working people seeing that we're much stronger together. You can fight and win on your own, but you're much more likely to win if you're fighting alongside hundreds and thousands of other people like you.



Please make sure you join a trade union and stick up for your rights at work.

If you're already a member, please ask those working alongside you to join as well.

You can join UNISON on-line, or ask a steward for a paper membership form.