

Motion – University of Bristol UCU Priorities Regarding the current USS Negotiations between UCU and UUK

This branch notes:

- We agreed a joint statement with the University of Bristol on 15th March.
- The joint statement stated that ‘the University is willing to consider an improved offer for staff within the bounds of affordability’, that the University would reconsider ‘the accrual rate and inflation cap as well as employer and employee contributions’ and that the University supports ‘an independent, expert advisory board chaired by a world-leading academic authority to bring fresh thinking to the valuation’ of USS’.
- The University also informed UUK in our joint statement that they supported ‘the removal of the clause pertaining to rescheduling of lost teaching activity’ in the UUK/UCU ‘Agreement reached between UCU and UUK under the auspices of ACAS’, circulated on Monday, 12th March.
- The indicative decision of the Bristol UCU meeting on Tuesday 13th March to reject the the Agreement was reflected in the decision of UCU Higher Education Committee on the same date not to approve the terms of the Agreement.
- The discussion among members around what would constitute an ‘acceptable’ deal and the diversity of views amongst members on such issues as salary threshold, accrual rate, the transitional nature of the deal, employer and employee contributions.
- Any deal reached between UCU and UUK will be subject to approval by all members in USS-participating branches.

The branch believes:

- Any future agreement must not include three of the most contentious parts of the UUK/UCU Agreement: ‘UCU undertakes to encourage its members to prioritise the rescheduling of teaching in order to minimise the disruption to students’, an accrual rate of 1/85th and the CPI cap of 2.5% p.a.
- Any independent review of the valuation should reflect a broad range of academic pension expertise, and the chair of that body should not be an appointment closely associated with pension industry orthodoxy.
- Binding branch decisions on the precise nature of any eventual UUK and UCU deal are unhelpful at this stage. Decisions, for example, on accrual rate and on DB/DC salary

threshold are dependent on a range of associated factors that negotiators need to consider in the round when making proposals.

- echoing the national UCU position, the September 2017 valuation of USS must be the basis for meaningful UUK/UCU negotiation this week.

The branch asks:

- Our national negotiators, lay officers and members of Higher Education Committee to take into consideration the terms of our joint statement with the University of Bristol to inform their negotiations this week.