UCU Update from UCU news

News for members @ ***Tyne Coast College***

Disappointing Pay Offer from College of 3% June 2023

Branch Committee unanimously vote to reject

The College have put an offer of 3% for all staff to the trade unions. **UCU Reps think that members should reject this offer.**

So, what does the percentage offer mean in real terms? Well, for a lecturer on **£27,000** p.a. the 3% being offered means that your salary for the year would go up to **£27,810**. How does that compare with the recommendation from the Association of Colleges? The 3% for the year is **less than** the AoC offer. If the AoC pay offer were to be applied, your salary would rise from £27,00 to **£28,175** for the year (£500 of which would be a one-off payment). We asked for the College to go to 5%, which would have been **£28,350** over 2022/23. One of the most disappointing aspects of the behaviour of the senior management team is the bad faith approach that they took in the negotiations. Having asked us to consider an offer of 4% for all staff earning less than £42,000, the Chief Executive took that off the table as a possible option with no notice. 4% for staff earning £27,000 would have seen their salary increase to **£28,080**. Have a look at the table below as an example:

	What you earn now	What you would earn with the current College offer	What you would earn if the College implemented the AoC recommendation	What you would be earning if the College implemented our recommendation	What the Chief Executive currently earns
Percentage	-	3%	2.5% + £500	5%	>100%*
Annual salary for 22/23	**£27,000**	**£27,810**	**£28,175**	**£28,350**	**£240,000+**

*since starting in 2009

Want to find out more?
You can find a detailed account of the pay negotiations in a separate document which has been emailed to members. Please do read it so you can see how things have progressed (or not) through the discussions that we have been having with the senior College Executive members. We are also asking the UCU Regional Office to put this report on their website: *www.ucunorthern.org.uk* and if you want to listen to some of our reps talking, the latest podcast (search UCU Northern Region in any podcast app, including Spotify) features the dispute at Tyne Coast College.

Bigger, Better, Stronger – **Really!?!?**

Tyne Coast College hit the headlines once again as the big salary paid to the Chief Executive again put us at the top of the pile. Dr Lindsey Whiterod is now paid a whopping **8.65 times more than the median average salary of staff**. An increase from 8.52 last year. This puts our Chief Executive in third place nationally with a huge salary compared to the staff, at a time when the College is getting smaller.

If you know someone who wants to join UCU:
www.join.ucu.org.uk

Members of the Branch Committee give their reasons for voting to reject the 3% offer

I will be voting to reject this offer as in real terms this is a 7% pay cut on top of previous year pay cuts, whilst the CEO has received an average 10% pay rise year on year since their appointment.

We give our all for our students, it's about time the college recognised this and paid us what we are worth.

I will be voting to reject the pay offer as it further weakens my actual pay after losses every year against the cost of living.

The offer simply does not meet the AOC recommendation for those earning over £25,000 and represents another real term pay decrease.

We're told the money simply isn't there, but while we cut provision (staff and student numbers decrease) we continue to hire for lucrative management roles.

After continual pay erosion for the entire time I have been employed by this college, a further 8% real terms pay cut is completely unacceptable.

With 8.7% inflation and 4.5% interest rates and rising, 3% pay award offer is ludicrous! Please get real.

SUPPORT
UCU will financially assist all members who took strike action at Tyne Coast College. You can find more details by going to the **home page** and clicking on the information about the **Fighting Fund**

Problems with Teachers' Pensions for Tyne Coast College employees. After checking their own pension, a UCU Rep tells the story…

Originally there were no entries made after October 2022, spotted by some members, and reported in April. On checking, some members reported problems with Employment History around the time of furloughing in 2020.

Following on from this, mistakes were noted in the records of overtime payments and "days out".

The last time records were updated figures were put in for November 2022, and January 2023. This meant December 2022 was shown as a break in service. Some members got letters about leaving the scheme, which they had not done.

All members should check their Teachers Pensions Employment History, and any extra payments are properly recorded. If you have a query, you should ask HR the question.

It is now eight weeks since the records were questioned, and beyond the time when the college was obliged to correct mistakes. Action can now be taken through the Pensions Ombudsman to enforce the obligations on the college.

Support for our action
The Branch has received an incredible amount of support for our action, including: Emma Lewell-Buck MP; Kate Osborne MP, Mary Glindon MP, South Tyneside Green Party, North Tyneside TUC, Northumbria University UCU, Newcastle University UCU, Durham University UCU, Darlington College UCU, Jo Grady, UCU General Secretary, Maxine Looby, UCU President Elect, and more!

Speaking about the pay talks and the strike action, Jon Bryan, UCU Regional Support Official, says:

"Members are to be congratulated for their resolute stand. Taking strike action is never an easy decision, and it was great to see over 40 people out on picket lines for both days of action. I was lucky enough to be able to attend the picket lines at both Tyne Met College and South Tyneside College and speak to members. They made their views clear to me."

"It has been disappointing that the talks about pay have not been conducted in a manner which would lead us to a resolution. There seems to be a lack of urgency being displayed by the College Executive team to an issue which is pressing to both our members, and those in our sister trade union, UNISON. Not only has there been a lack of willingness to find additional money for our members, but the additional elements of the pay offer around increasing leave simply do not go far enough. However, we are a member-led trade union, and it will be our members who decide the next steps through voting in our ballot on the offer."

UCU MEMBERS
Please check and update your personal information at
https://my.ucu.org.uk/