

## Lancaster UCU newsletter June 07 2023

It's Wednesday already! We may not be marking, but somehow our working day hasn't got any shorter #workloadoverload. Maybe you can take a bit of time today - reclaim your tea-time break perhaps? - to keep abreast with the latest local developments of your union.

- LU's response to MAB could waste months, if not years, of hard work and exorbitant fees
- Open Letter to The Guardian
- Cambridge and Sussex are leading the way, let's push Lancaster to follow suit.
- Raising a grievance
- Local hardship fund guidelines
- Migrant members' update
- Emergency General Meeting
- George Floyd memorial event tomorrow
- Lancaster and Morecambe Trades Council Event at the Gregson this Friday

### **LU's response to MAB could waste months, if not years, of hard work and exorbitant fees**

Our latest blog post criticises Lancaster University's abandonment of quality assurance procedures, which will result on unfair inequalities between students in the same year, the same programme cohort, and even the same module. Go to our blog to read what students and UCU members think about this.

### **Open Letter to The Guardian**

Our comrades at UCL wrote an open letter to The Guardian on May the 30<sup>th</sup>. Since then, it has been signed by thousands of colleagues in the UK and abroad. **Add your signature to it. Use it to target Lancastrian news outlets.** We need to be more vocal about how the erosion of our profession and the marketisation of higher education is impacting students, universities themselves, and drastically curtailing possibilities for social mobility.

### **Cambridge is leading the way, let's push Lancaster to follow suit.**

As you may have heard, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of May Cambridge University and Cambridge UCU issued a statement calling for UCEA to resume negotiations. Last Friday, Sussex University and Sussex UCU released a similar statement calling for negotiations to resume. Contact our VC, Professor Andy Schofield to urge him to seek a resolution to the dispute in time for graduation.

### **Raising a grievance**

Unfortunately, many of us have seen our salaries cut in half this month due to the university's decision to withhold 50% of pay for MAB participation. If you have been affected by this, you may want to raise a grievance. **Raising grievances in high numbers will put extra pressure on management**, as they would struggle to process each of them. In short, we have an opportunity to clog the system. Alone the thread of members raising grievances has worked at other universities (e.g. Birmingham). Please, find the relevant documentation attached to this email along with Sunil's proposed template for a grievance

re MAB. If you have questions, please contact your departmental rep. They will be able to help you and/or raise the question through the rep list.

### **Local hardship fund guidelines**

For the past week your reps and executive committee have been discussing guidelines for our local hardship. We hope these encourage members to apply, as the effectiveness of our industrial action depends on us continuing to apply pressure onto employers by participating in the MAB. Please, find them attached. If you are not participating in the MAB, please donate. You can contact Michele Luxon ([m.luxon@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:m.luxon@lancaster.ac.uk)), look up our bank details in our website and do a transfer, or you can use our fundraising page ([Donations - Lancaster UCU Strike Hardship Fund \(peoplesfundraising.com\)](https://peoplesfundraising.com)) and donate anonymously. We believe everyone knows best what they can afford to donate, so we refuse to suggest a concrete quantity.

### **Migrant members' update**

Last week UCU hosted an information session for migrant members. Immigration law experts from Bindmans gave short, and very general, presentations on how different types of visas work, how to apply for ILR, and how participation in industrial action may impact applications for ILR. The session also included some basic information on how the protest bill may/will (it is still a draft, so nothing is definitive) industrial action and union activism more generally. Jenny Sherrad, National head of equality and policy, explained that the union advises migrant members participating in MAB to let employers know as soon as they start participating in the action because when it comes to MAB and visa rules, we are moving in an uncharted territory, so UCU believes its best to play it very very safe. In any case, several of you have expressed your disappointment with the session and sent us questions. We have fed those to regional and we will keep you posted. At the same time, we recommend you check the UCU website for an update on [advice to migrant members](#) as Jenny Sherrad assured attendees that they would update this very soon in light of questions addressed by Bindmans' migration experts during the session. Also, feel free to contact Jenny directly with your comments and/or questions. You can email her using the email link on this [page](#).

### **Emergency General Meeting**

Remember, our Emergency General Meeting to discuss Industrial Action Next Steps is today at 12 noon. Join via this [link](#). Just in case it doesn't work (because technology is truly great sometimes) the zoom invite is below.

### **George Floyd memorial event**

The UCU Black Members' Standing Committee has organised a George Floyd memorial event for this Thursday the 8th June 2023, 18.30-20.00. If you would like to attend, you can register by emailing [egadmin@ucu.org.uk](mailto:egadmin@ucu.org.uk) with your membership number and you will be sent a link. See poster attached for more info.

### **Lancaster and Morecambe Trades Council Event at the Gregson this Friday**

Join us this Friday for an evening of solidarity, good tunes and even better vibes! Flyer attached!