

Motion on job cuts and workload, with amendment

The following motion from SUCU Committee on job cuts and workload, with amendment proposed by Angela Shann and seconded by George Chapman, was overwhelmingly agreed at the EGM 14 July 2009.

This Branch notes that:

1. The university has published its intention to reduce its ongoing salary costs by £15 million by 2011
2. This represents between six and seven percent of the total salary bill.
3. In his last update (9 June 2009) the VC stated “I gave you my commitment to doing all we can to continue to provide an excellent student experience, preserve our research environment, and to protect jobs. I repeat that commitment.”
4. Contracted hours of work for Grade 6 are “35 hours normally worked over 5 agreed days”. Contracted hours for Grades 7, 8 and 9 are “A nominal working week of 35 hours
5. The University has recently stopped overtime payments for a number of staff including those in Porterage and Security Services.

This Branch believes that:

1. “The reduction of staff by the proposed amount will seriously undermine this institution’s ability to “continue to provide an excellent student experience” and “preserve our research environment”
2. A workforce reduction of the magnitude proposed will inevitably have a serious impact on any remaining staff, particularly their workload, leading to potentially serious stress-related health and safety issues.
3. The proposed cut in staffing levels is a problem for all university staff.
4. The overtime ban not only has a massive financial impact upon the staff directly involved but also affects the ability of those staff and UCU members who provide 'out of hours' services, often to vulnerable students, to provide these services and the ability to work outside nominal 35 hours.

5. The expected shortfall in the University's budget and resultant increase in workloads is not simply a local issue but is part of a national assault on higher education. It reflects the political priorities of this and probably the next government to give precedence to waging war and protecting bankers above protecting citizens from the financial crisis. UCU does not accept these priorities.

This Branch Resolves to:

1. Work collectively with other campus unions to resist all attempts to increase workloads beyond what can be reasonably expected within contracted hours
2. Support any members who find themselves presented with unacceptable workloads
3. Use Health and Safety legislation to protect staff from the potentially deleterious impact of unreasonably increased workloads.
4. Support any action initiated by the campus unions representing staff directly affected by the overtime ban.
5. Support local and national disputes and campaigns to defend education, jobs and pensions.