

September 2021

University and College Union

Meeting of Richmond UCU Branch

Location On-line meeting

Date 09/09/2021

Time 09:30

1 Apologies for absence

2 Chair's business

- 2.1 Sue described the work of the Branch over the summer; FPPW, International and home working, adjunct contracts, health and safety including COVID-19

3 Minutes of the previous meeting held (17/05/2021)

- 3.1 The minutes were APPROVED

4 Matters arising

- 4.1 There were no matters arising.

5 COVID-19 and back to campus

- 5.1 SP set out an overview of recent work and consultation with HR
- 5.2 A number of members asked questions to which the chair responded on the following issues
- Lack of strong policy on COVID security
 - Discussion re mask-wearing, ventilation
 - Need for faculty to be informed, consulted

MOTION for a clear policy from RAUIL Exec/HR and for this to be circulated to all faculty, carried

6 UCU Priorities

6.1. CD introduced her report on adjunct contracts describing all the work completed including survey of adjunct members.

6.3 SB introduced update on FPPW. Members raised concerns which were responded to by the chair and secretary

- research continued to be inequitable.
- Pathway for Adjunct promotion also missing from phase 1 of the matrix.
- Discussion of Business School offering additional payment for work to adjuncts.

7 Close of meeting

7.1 The chair closed at the meeting at 11:00.

REPORTS

REPORT 1: Adjunct Issues

Important to understand contractual position:

- After 4 years employees considered permanent.
- RAIUL adds 'permanent' to contracts but all adjuncts on zero hours. Sector standard, but illegal to discriminate.
- People primary income was Richmond. Contracts make them vulnerable.
- Adjuncts fell through cracks, with no support, no redundancy.
- Legally obliged to pay redundancy but not applicable to adjuncts.
- Adjuncts do not feel well represented by UCU. Other contracts cover prep time and better annual pro rata salary.

Letter, timely. CD – case work and campaign work: Adjunct Faculty Rep., reported that over the summer we conducted an Adjunct Faculty Contract Survey of UCU Members better to understand the types of temporary contracts at Richmond. There were ten respondents, and it is estimated that there are about 12 Adjunct faculty members in the branch. The majority of respondents did not receive teaching during the 2020-21 year,

and it appears that Adjunct Faculty, who are nearly all on zero-hours contracts, bore the brunt of teaching cuts. She outlined some of the exceptional hardships colleagues are facing due to the zero-hours contracts.

Exec agreed CD needs more support, distribute work, support each other. What is the campaign? To make the experiences of adjuncts visible

ACTIONS

A draft letter had already been circulated among the Executive, and it was agreed that with some further revision in the Adjunct Faculty Working Group this would be sent by email to members in advance of the Branch meeting and then put to a vote of the membership.

- Draft letter, mainly done, couple more points; ending zero hours, transparency, equity of pay including annual leave. Address benefits
- Strong letter to SMT, with consent of members, agreed at meeting next week
- End zero hours, after 2 years
- Review payscale: Pay disparity ends, when have course fees to adjuncts increased
- Need to make strategic financial case? No, we need to make an ethical and moral point, with strong case to advance.
- Annual leave in adjunct contracts? It should be clearly broken down by law.
- Not required to do service and research...This is a benefit, as they will be free to advise and do committee work.

REPORT 2

FPPW

Work on the faculty progress, promotion and workload models has continued over the summer. The Branch have contributed to this work by commenting on draft documents and asking questions via email as no meetings have been held in August due to working group members' annual leave.

We have continued to emphasize the need to distinguish between the contractual obligations for the workload model (i.e., quantity of work), and the quality of work outputs in the progression and promotion model. We have also asked for clarity in the expected outcomes for Assistant, Associate and Professor and contributed to the descriptors created for this purpose. The next FPPW meeting is on September 10th where it is hoped we will have greater clarity of the multiple documents produced over the summer, that form the guidance concerning the FPPW matrix.

The implementation of the progression and promotion framework and workload model is going to be rolled out this semester as a 'live trial' in effect. Phase one of the FPPW is intended as an assessment tool to better understand current practice of all faculty. Thereby identifying where faculty are working below, in line with, or beyond contractual obligations. In short, HoDs will use the points to assess how, and where outputs meet or exceed expectations. If output expectations are not met, HoDs can redeploy faculty to fulfil their contracts. We have been assured that the points system will not penalise faculty, and we will continue to advocate for all our members to work to promote fair working conditions for all. This points-based approach should improve equity across the institution. However, where faculty exceed points in an area (e.g., service, research), HoDs will recommend faculty limit their output in these areas (e.g., service, research). Faculty who then continue to engage in extra service or research activities do so at their own volition and risk. In other words, any stress or negative impact incurred by faculty who continue to work over and above regulated contractual hours, is not the responsibility of RAIUL. This is at odds with our stress campaign as clearly, members will experience stress as faculty have an imperative to retain professional credibility through these non-teaching activities.

This is where we have difficulties in supporting the workload model as it largely ignores the need for faculty to continue their professional development to remain relevant in their field and employable elsewhere.

It has also been clearly stated by SMT that any additional support for research or service in the form of course relief will not be available during phase one. Indeed, until the deficit is greatly reduced, SMT will not consider initiatives that incur significant cost to the University, such as budgets to fund recruitment, end casualisation or provide course relief.