



Continuing fight for better pay: pay negotiations, by Emmanuel Okyere

UCU resubmitted the multi-year pay agreement from last year during the pay negotiations on January 16, 2026. This comprises an interim pay increase of 3.5% in July 2026, 3.5% in January 2027, and 4.3% in July 2027, for a total of 11.3%. This was based on a 4.1% RPI for 2025 and 40% real terms pay devaluation since 2018.

It was emphasised that members continue to prioritise a cost-of-living pay increase for all staff, and the continuing real-term pay erosion was mentioned. The necessity of prioritising job preservation and pay increases during the institution's transition to CEG was also emphasised.

University management was reminded of the consultative ballot context and reiterated UCU's preference to avoid industrial action and the need to acknowledge the strength of member sentiment and disappointment with the most recent pay increase of 1.5%, which fails to address the long-term erosion of our salaries.

University management stated that the university's finances are extremely tight, and any potential pay increase would be made known by the end of March following the budget planning and approval by the University Board. It is acknowledged that university management has revisited staff benefits, including career progression and promotion, leave entitlements, and broader structural issues affecting wellbeing and equity.

With a resounding 87% majority in our recent consultative ballot supporting action should pay not be addressed after the partial takeover is finalised, our message could not be clearer: *members are united, determined, and ready to stand together to secure fair pay and protect our future!*

Faculty Workload Guide Workshops, by Sam Bracey and Lucia Morawska

UCU Executive members and Officers have been actively taking part in the ongoing Workload Guide Workshops with University management and HR, ensuring that staff voices are heard as the University works through updates to the Guide. These sessions cover a wide range of issues, including

governance, the balance between teaching and Research and Professional Engagement (RPE), service expectations, and support for different roles across the University. Throughout the process, we have raised several important points on behalf of colleagues, including the need for more transparent and consistent point allocations, fair treatment for early-career and fractional staff, and concerns about the overreliance on overload teaching, which can sometimes mask longer-term staffing shortages.

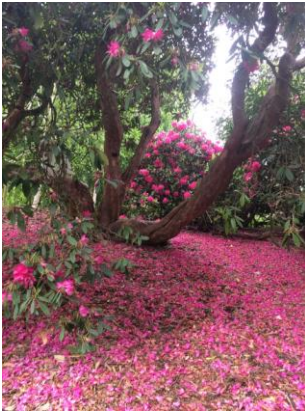
Across the first four workshops reviewing the Workload Guide, UCU representatives have worked constructively and persistently with senior management to secure meaningful improvements for staff. Led by our Chair, the team has focused on ensuring that workload allocation across all areas reflects the time required to complete work rather than perceptions of quality, while also pushing for a guide that supports staff rather than appearing punitive in tone. In Workshops 1 and 2, UCU secured key changes, including embedding overwork prevention as a core principle and revising unclear or overly punitive wording relating to class sizes, service expectations, and dissertation supervision loads, directly addressing concerns raised by members. Workshop 3 delivered further progress, with UCU influencing greater transparency in RPE allocations and helping shape more appropriate expectations within the new operating model. By the fourth workshop, UCU also secured agreement that Faculty Education colleagues will have a distinct, clearly defined section in the guide, improving signposting for career progression, enhancing clarity around roles, and recognising the often-fractional nature of these positions. We also welcomed the constructive comments and ideas contributed by Dr Kandida Purnell, Head of RPE, whose input has helped shape some of the discussions and keep them moving in a productive direction.

With two workshops still ahead, UCU Officers remain fully committed to ensuring members' voices continue to shape the final version of the Workload Guide. This collaborative process is already delivering tangible improvements, and we believe the remaining sessions will further embed clarity, fairness, and alignment with the new operating model. Together—through your feedback, our collective expertise, and sustained engagement—we are working to build a workload framework that better protects staff wellbeing, recognises professional contribution, and supports every colleague to thrive. The workshops are still ongoing, and we will continue to ensure that staff experiences and concerns

are reflected as the Workload Model Guide develops. We will keep you updated as things progress.

Green and Sustainability Campaigns, by *Fiona Ffoulkes*

Thank you to everyone who took part in Phase 1 of the challenge to brighten up our campus interior whilst raising awareness of the beauty of our natural world. Phase 2 is taking place in April. Richard Bevan and Alex Hughes (Film & Photography) will run a project with their photography students involving local areas such as the Gunnersbury Triangle Nature Reserve or Kew Botanical Gardens. The mounting of work in different areas from classrooms to corridors and public spaces is still the aim of this challenge with prizes, to be announced.



From 23 to 27 March Inma Ramos (Business School) is holding Sustainability Week, 'Waste, Recycling and Circular Economy'. The courses in the Business School and beyond, plus student societies, are being encouraged to take part. Ideas include a [student challenge](#) around upcycling preloved fashion garments or accessories.

Adjunct and Faculty Issues, by *Piola Massarotto*

At the heart of our university are the people who do the teaching. UCU is committed to ensuring our Adjunct Faculty and Faculty Education (FE) contract holders feel truly appreciated and supported. Since September 2024, the FE contract has offered greater job security, better access to research funding and, more recently, access to progression and promotion. Nevertheless, the decision to change FE contracts from permanent to fixed-term undermines their original purpose, by restricting their long-term efficacy.

UCU is pushing for the university's Workload Model book to include clearer and more transparent guidance regarding FE roles and points allocation. It is also increasingly evident that, despite the teaching- and service-based nature of our contracts, FE colleagues significantly enhance the university's reputation through their scholarly activities and publications, and it is only right that is recognised either financially or through some equivalent mechanism.

Regarding adjunct faculty, their role remains essential to Richmond's teaching operations despite the recent restructure. UCU is determined to end casualisation while campaigning for adjuncts to be included in progression and promotion schemes, to avoid career stagnation and contract-based discrimination and disadvantage. Ultimately, we are all in this together. Whether securing fair points for FE faculty or fighting for an adjunct career ladder, UCU remains committed to making Richmond a place of equitable treatment, genuine respect, and fair reward.

Call to Action: If you've experienced issues with contracts, workload, or unpaid duties, or have concerns you'd like us to raise; please get in touch. Your input helps us advocate effectively. Email the Branch or speak to your Reps.

Get Involved with your Union!

We are looking for volunteer Caseworkers and Departmental Reps to help build and diversify the voice of the Union. Please [get in touch with us](#) with any news, ideas, or concerns you might have.

UCU Richmond Branch Committee Officers

Chair - Samantha Bracey

Co-Secretaries – Lucia Morawska and Catherine Dille

Adjunct Faculty Officer - Piola Massarotto

Membership Officer – Shuna Neilson

Equalities Officer – Kandida Purnell

Treasurer - Emmanuel Okyere

Health and Safety Officer – Martin Brown

Green Officer – Fiona Ffoulkes

RIASA Officer – Molly Bettie

Staff Officer – Vacant (Please email RichmondUCUbranch@Richmond.ac.uk with expressions of interest)