

Mr P Harding  
UUK JNC Chair  
Woburn House  
20-24 Tavistock Square  
London  
WC1H 9HQ

29<sup>th</sup> November 2019

Dear Phil,

You will be aware that our members have very clearly shown their resolve on the USS dispute, just as we warned you that they would back in the early summer. It is a travesty that student education is being heavily disrupted due to a failure to take seriously the need for a serious change of direction from your constituents. We want to resolve this dispute, the grounds of which are clearly set out in the dispute letters served to institutions on 7 June 2019. This letter in no way supersedes or affects the terms of that formal dispute letter.

As UCU has repeatedly made clear, the legal dispute would be resolved if employers are able to keep total contributions to 26% or, failing that, to hold member contributions to 8% of salary. This is in line with the well-established policy position set by UCU's membership that a fair valuation would show no deficit in the scheme, and that accordingly that there should be no detriment to members as an outcome from the 2017/2018 valuations. So far you have been unable to come close to matching these demands from our members.

In recent informal meetings, we have underlined to you the validity and importance of the 8% member contribution rate. We have also discussed with you concrete actions that could be taken on the wider issues in the scheme that our members have established as of high importance.

Below we outline some areas where we ask you to commit to meaningful actions on issues similar to those in your letter of 20 November (which fell well short of any substantive commitments). We are willing to prepare a draft proposed joint letter to the USS board on such matters for your consideration.

- A firm demand to USS on how we require its executive team to engage with us as respected stakeholders of the scheme, effective immediately (throughout the 2020 valuation preparations and ongoing), with particular reference to the role of the scheme's Chief Executive, and making it known that failure to uphold the standards we expect would lead to

a loss in confidence among both parties in the administration of the scheme which would require remedial action.

- A request for the Chair of the board to stand down early with immediate effect or, failing that, to recuse himself from the board pending a full investigation into his conduct, with particular reference to the suppression from the board of a complaint of misrepresentation from the regulator and the treatment of and decisions taken with respect to the UCU-nominated trustee Jane Hutton.
- A request for the report into Jane Hutton's conduct which led to her dismissal to be made available to the Joint Negotiating Committee in the first instance and, with the support of Jane herself, made public. Should the report make clear the unfair nature of Jane Hutton's dismissal, we ask that you join UCU in calling for her reinstatement.
- A request for the trustee to endeavour to reach agreement with the scheme's stakeholders on the methodology for the valuation as a result of genuine collaboration rather than imposition, noting that the legal requirement for agreement with you as employer representatives is downgraded by the scheme rules (the unilateral rate setting powers) to a need only to consult.
- An approach along the lines set out above to be made public and visible to all scheme members.

The points set out above are entirely fair, realistic and well overdue demands of the employers which could allow progress to be made in this entirely avoidable dispute.

We are amazed at the lack of urgency on behalf of the employers to find a solution to the situation we are in. Our students deserve better.

Yours sincerely,

Vicky Blake,

UCU Vice President (HE) Superannuation Working Group Chair

Paul Bridge Head of Higher Education