

27 November UCU/1053

University and College Union

Carlow Street, London NW1 7LH, Tel. 020 7756 2500, www.ucu.org.uk

To Branch and local association secretaries

Topic **Agendas, motions for debate, nominations to the committees at the Equality Groups Conference 3-5 December 2020**

Action For information

Contact **Sue Bajwa UCU Conference Officer (sbajwa@ucu.org.uk)**

Dear Colleagues

Equality Groups Conference– 3 -5 December Agenda, motions, and committee nominations

This year's Equality Conference will be held from **Thursday 3 – Saturday 5 December**

Thursday 3 December	Migrant Members' Conference (10:00 – 13:00)
Thursday 3 December	Women Members' Conference (14:00 – 17:00)
Friday 4 December	Joint plenary session (10:00 – 13:00)
Friday 4 December	Disabled Members' Conference (14.00 – 17.00)
Saturday 5 December	LGBT+ Members' Conference (10:00 – 13.00)
Saturday 5 December	Black Members' Conference (14:00 – 17.00)

MIGRANT MEMBERS AGENDA, & NOMINATIONS

AGENDA



Migrant Members' Annual Conference 2020
Thursday 3 December 10.00am – 1.00pm

Fighting back against the hostile environment

Agenda

- 10.00** **Welcome - Introduction by Dima Chami, Chair: role and function of conference**
- 10.05** **Conference business**
- **Minutes of February 2020 Migrant Members' conference**
 - **Annual report of the Migrant Members' Standing Committee**
 - **Elections to Migrant Members' Standing Committee**
- 10.20** **Panel session 1: tackling the hostile environment**
- **Anne Stoltenberg, Migrant Voice**
 - **Gwyneth Lonergan, Unis Resist Border Controls**
- Q&A**
- 11.25** **Break**
- 11.40** **Panel session 2: Intersectionality and the diverse experience of migrants**
- **Dickson Tarnongo, disability rights campaigner**
 - **Gisela Valle, Latin American Women's Rights Service**
 - **Moira Dustin, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Claims of Asylum (SOGICA) project**
- 12.50** **Summary**
- 13.00** **Close of conference**

NOMINATIONS

Vacancies to which nominations are sought

- Five vacancies for a term of two years

And one statements have been submitted:

Nominee	College / University
Fasil Kildane Dejene	Loughborough University

Name: Fasil Kildane Dejene
Institution: Loughborough University
Word count: 103

Fasil Dejene is a lecturer in the physics department the school of science at Loughborough University. He is a member of the international staff group, member of the school of science equality and diversity committee and Athena Swan evaluation committee. I have the first-hand grasp of the day-to-day issue's fellow foreign colleagues face in their work and social life. As a migrant member of the UCU, I hope to be a voice for all international staffs and advocate for better support of migrant staffs who, under prohibitive and expensive visa requirements, are frustrated by the lack of equity at the workplace.

WOMEN MEMBERS AGENDA, & NOMINATIONS

AGENDA



Women Members' Annual Conference 2020
Thursday 3 December 14.00 – 17.00

Re-shaping the future: protecting women's rights

Agenda

- 14.00** **Welcome - Introduction by Pura Ariza, Chair: role and function of conference**
- 14.05** **Conference business**
- **Minutes of women members' conference 2019**
 - **Annual report of the Women Members' Standing Committee**
- 14.15** **Panel session 1: employment issues**
- **Kate Moran, Maternity Action - Insecure labour: The realities of insecure work for pregnant women and new mothers**
 - **Feizy Ishmail, SOAS – anti-casualisation campaign and impact of restructuring on women**
 - **Aimee Le, Royal Holloway University of London – corona contracts**
- Q&A**
- 15.15** **Break**
- 15.30** **Panel session 2: Black Livers Matter**
Panel chair: Juliana Ojinnaka, The Sheffield College
- Invited speakers:*
- **Sharon Clarke, Prison education, West Midlands**
 - **Gargi Bhattacharyya, University of East London**
 - **Naina Kent, Hackney Adult Education**
- 16.30** **Motions from branches and regions**
- 16.50** **Summary**
- 17.00** **Close of conference**

MOTIONS

1 motion has been submitted from the following institutions/branches:

Motion	Proposed by	Title
1	University of Leeds	Caring responsibilities during the pandemic

Motion 1 Caring responsibilities during the pandemic

Proposer University of Leeds

Word count 148

Conference notes that:

- Many members, often women, have caring responsibilities for children or for family members who are older, ill or disabled.
- COVID-19 has particularly impacted carers' ability to work their full contracted hours, due for example to children being home because of nursery/school outbreaks, difficulty in arranging tests, and needing to support household members who have symptoms or are otherwise required to isolate.
- This is not a temporary problem which can be accommodated through normal carers' or parental leave policies.
- Expecting carers to fit their full contracted hours around caring responsibilities, i.e. by working evenings and weekends, is unacceptable and will result in health problems.

Conference resolves that:

- UCU should develop guidance for branches on negotiating policies for:
safe flexible working and additional special leave for carers during the pandemic
no career detriment through carers being unable to achieve expected research outputs or other objectives.

NOMINATIONS

Vacancies to which nominations are sought

- Four vacancies for a term of two years

and the following seven statements have been submitted:

Nominee	College / University
Cecily Blyther	Petroc
Saira Weiner	Liverpool John Moores University
Sharon Clarke	Novus
Claire Marris	City, University of London
Matilda Fitzmaurice	Durham University
Juliana Ojinnaka	The Sheffield College
Jennifer Dods	Leeds Beckett University

Name: Cecily Blyther
Institution: Petroc
Word count: 137

During the pandemic, more inequalities and vulnerabilities have been revealed and have increased. Many abusive domestic relationships have become intensified; the problems faced by women, Disabled and older people living alone have also been exacerbated.

Many of our members are affected by these situations. By linking and contributing to national and international women's initiatives, the Women's Committee works to raise awareness and contributes to alleviating – if not eradicating – current and emerging situations. We work towards a level playing field – it's incredible that equal pay was legislated for 50 years ago!

As a woman, who is also casualised and disabled, I want to play a part in the UCU's fight for recognition of all women in education.

My current UCU posts;

- Petroc Chair
- Women's Committee Vice-chair
- Anti-casualisation Committee
- SW Regional Committee Anti-casualisation Officer
- NEC Rep for Casualised Members

Name: Saira Weiner
Institution: Liverpool John Moores University
Word count: 133

I am the branch secretary at Liverpool John Moores University, the Disability rep on the NW Regional Committee and currently on the NEC as NW HE rep. I was the Women's rep on NEC from 2014-2016 and Chair of the Women's Standing Committee 2015-2016.

The Women's Committee has much work to do in the coming years. The Covid19 has increased pressures on women, juggling multiple demands working from home and caring for children and relatives. Domestic violence has also increased. The Women's committee has been a driving force behind the UCU taking the issue of sexual harassment seriously, and in supporting work around closing the gender pay gap.

I am a lifelong socialist, anti racist and pro-choice campaigner as well as an advocate for transgender equality. I am a member of UCU Left.

Name: Sharon Clarke
Institution: Novus
Word count: 152

I have been a member of UCU for several years and an active member for 12 months. I have an interest in self development, improving my confidence, understanding the equality and diversity policies and procedures more in depth and how it affects us as individuals.

Working in prison education, as an art lecturer, I have great interest in rehabilitation through art and supporting others to develop their skills not just artistically but also communication, improving confidence.

My personal interest are art, museums and galleries developing ways of collaborative working within establishments and institutions to gain an understand on how different cultures have helped shape British society.

The decolonising of education curriculum, is imperative to eradicate racism and shape a better future, with understanding and equality.

I have organised several prison education art exhibitions, spoke at conferences about the benefits of art within the prison education and the effects on the rehabilitation process.

Name: Claire Marris
Institution: City, University of London
Word count: 150

I became more politically engaged with UCU during the USS strike. I was a founder member of USSBriefs and joined my branch executive committee in 2018. I then became more involved at the national level, campaigning for Jo Grady during the General Secretary election and successfully standing for election to UCU's NEC in 2020.

My two key motivations for standing for election to the Women's member committee are:

1. My concern about the prevalence of sexual harassment of staff and students across the post-16 education sector and belief that UCU should be addressing this issue much more effectively.

2. My commitment to upholding the rights of transgender, non-binary, intersex and gender diverse colleagues and students. I believe that academic freedom for all is dependent upon such individuals having the right to self-identify. I am a signatory of the "Election Candidates' Statement on Academic Freedom and Trans Inclusion" available here: <https://bit.ly/3kLnUga>

Name: Matilda Fitzmaurice
Institution: Durham University
Word count: 139

For the past year, I have been a PGR departmental rep, working through two periods of strike action and then the onset of the pandemic. My priority has been helping to build solidarity among Graduate Teaching Assistants, who face unique difficulties in the workplace and are frequently forgotten by both employers and permanently employed members. I am in full support of UCU's campaign to recognise PGR members as staff. As a PGR and GTA member, I can bring a valuable and overlooked perspective to the WMSC.

I am a proud intersectional feminist and trans ally, who stands in solidarity with all LGBT+, BIPOC, migrant, precarious, neurodivergent, disabled and chronically ill members. I am determined to use my position of relative privilege to stand up for those in riskier positions, and I will bring these political commitments to the WMSC.

Name: Juliana Ojinnaka
Institution: The Sheffield College
Word count: 147

I would like to be considered for continued tenure on UCU Women Standing Committee because I am committed to the attainment of equality of opportunity, and to genuine diversity and inclusion of women generally, women of colour in particular and for all, in the work place. I have served as branch Equality, Health and Safety representative, deputy chair at regional, BMSC and WSC at national level. Women face oppression and discrimination on a daily basis in a multiplicity of ways, resulting from their protected characteristics, the intersectionality of these, manifests in low pay, precarious contracts, sexual harassment, racial discrimination, unequal caring responsibilities at home and work, poor political representation and in these times of COVID-19, women are disproportionately and adversely impacted upon. An intersectional approach to policies and strategies will ensure the representation of all women, not just in the work place but other aspects of life.

Name: Jennifer Dods
Institution: Leeds Beckett University
Word count: 148

As an equality officer, I have deep commitment to equality & diversity issues and personal interest in women equality matters, career aspirations & development, career breaks & promotional opportunities and related factors such as work-life issues, personal development and pensions.

As a part-time lecturer, I am particularly concerned about the vulnerable position of a major (largely female) workforce relied on in many colleges and universities. Despite legalisation, many still lack secure employment and experience wide-ranging discriminatory practice.

Lifelong trade unionism means I well remember promising changes in discrimination legislation. Progression of women in employment has changed considerably but many equality issues and challenges in the workplace remain. Further improvement and vigilance is needed for better equality balance and I would welcome an opportunity to continue and develop the work of the WMS Committee. Equality issues affect all members and we must ensure strengths of equality duties are retained.

PLENARY SESSION AGENDA



Plenary Session at Equality Annual Conference 2020 Friday 4 December 2020

Programme

- 10.00 – 10.15:** Welcome and housekeeping: Victoria Showunmi, Chair of the Equality Committee
- 10.15 – 10.50:** Keynote: Marsha De Cordova, Shadow Secretary of State for Women and Equality
- 10.50 – 11.00** Comfort break
- 11.00 – 11.10** Dr Jo Grady, UCU General Secretary
- 11.10 – 12.00** Panel session: The impact of Covid-19 on different equality groups
- Speakers:**
- Larissa Kennedy, President, National Union of Students
 - Milly Williamson, UCU Goldsmiths branch
 - Dr Laia Becares, University of Sussex – researcher on Queerantime study of impact of Covid-19 on LGBT+ people
- 11.45 – 12.00** Comfort break
- 12.15 -13.00** Discussion workshops: putting equality at the heart of branch agendas

These short facilitated sessions will be a chance for members to

exchange ideas about how to foreground equality concerns in local bargaining and campaigning work at their institution.

DISABLED MEMBERS AGENDA, & NOMINATIONS

AGENDA



Disabled Members' Annual Conference 2020

Thursday 4 December 2020

14.00 – 17.00

Online via Microsoft Teams

'Organising Disabled Workers'

14:00	Welcome and housekeeping
	Introductory address by the Chair of the Disabled Members' Standing Committee
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Role and function of Conference▪ Minutes of Disabled Members' Annual Conference 2019▪ Elections to Disabled Members' Standing Committee (we have six nominations for five places)
14:30	Report from the Disabled Members' Standing Committee – with contributions from the committee
14:30 – 14:45	Questions comments from members submitted in advance– to be responded to by the Committee
14:45 – 15:00	Comfort break
15:00 – 15:15	Keynote address: Zita Holbourne, PCS Vice President
15:15 – 15:45	Workshop 1: Intersectionality, redundancy and Covid-19
15:45 – 16:00	Comfort break
16:00 – 16:30	Workshop 2: Reasonable adjustments and workloads
16:30 – 16:45	Comfort break
16:45 – 17:00	Closing remarks and close of conference

NOMINATIONS

Vacancies to which nominations are sought

- 5 vacancies for a term of two years

and the following six statements have been submitted:

Nominee	College / University
Andy Shaw	Warwickshire College Group
Ruth Fairclough	University of Wolverhampton
Themesa Neckles	University of Sheffield
Vera Kubenz	University of Birmingham
Odette Hutchinson	Aston University
Jennifer Dods	Leeds Beckett University

Name: **Andy Shaw**
Institution: **Warwickshire College Group**
Word count: **150**

I have been in the UCU for a number of years and was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome in 2015

I have served as branch Equality Rep for Warwickshire College, Disability Officer for West Midlands Region and on DMSC for the current term of office. I have attended TUC Disability Conference, UCU Equality Conferences and UCU Congress, therefore have experience of attending and talking / presenting at these events.

I was part of the committee that instigated the inaugural Day of Action for people of Disability, culminating in a meeting in Parliament.

I have been involved in many aspects of work that UCU has been involved in when making sure of the promotion of disability awareness and particularly where hidden disabilities are concerned.

I have recently started a PhD at University of Worcester, my research project is around Adults with Autism and how they can use creativity as a visual language.

Name: Ruth Fairclough
Institution: University of Wolverhampton
Word count: 136

I have worked within Higher Education for 17 years at the University of Wolverhampton within the Mathematics department. During this time, I have been a UCU rep, caseworker and Branch Equality rep.

I have multiple disabilities, including a physical, mobility related disability (I am a wheelchair user) and I am also dyslexic. I believe passionately in disability equality and that further and higher education is the route to that equality as it gives us access to well-paid employment. This was why I moved from industry in to education - to enable the next generations of disabled people to gain financial independence.

I have seen first-hand how disability discrimination has increased in recent years, and would relish the opportunity to shape UCU policy and practice to eliminate disability discrimination in post-compulsory education for both staff and students.

Name: Themesa Neckles
Institution: University of Sheffield
Word count: 150

I seek nomination to the disabled members standing committee to continue advocating for disabled members facing direct and indirect discrimination. Due to the impact of the pandemic, I can make significant contributions to how the union supports disabled members. As a black woman with a hidden impairment, I bring personal experience of administrative and environmental factors and microaggressions acting as barriers to my work.

I previously acted in the role as Vice Chair on the DMSC. This role enabled me to contribute to members day of action, develop motions, policy and guidance for equipping and supporting disabled workers throughout the union. I participated in UCU webinars as an advocate for disabled members to help raise disability awareness.

I feel positive about being able to challenge the intersectional disadvantages faced by members and to advocate for better working conditions and handling of reasonable adjustments for both FE and HE disabled members.

Name: Vera Kubenz
Institution: University of Birmingham
Word count: 149

I am seeking to join the Disabled Members' Standing Committee as I am currently involved in the national UCU Disabled Members' network and the great solidarity in this group has inspired me to take on a more formal role in the fight against disablism and discrimination. I was previously a Unison Disabled Members' branch officer for several years.

I am currently employed on a research project investigating the social impact of COVID-19 on disabled people, and can bring this expertise to inform the union's national standpoint on disabled members' issues during the pandemic. I am also interested in the implementation of reasonable adjustments and the bureaucratic hurdles that are often put in disabled people's way when we seek to assert our rights. I have first-hand experience of this and would like to take a more collective approach to address these systemic barriers that are often made into individual issue

Name: Odette Hutchinson
Institution: Aston University
Word count: 135

I am a Reader in Legal Education at Aston University with a sustained track record for leadership in Higher Education. Over the last sixteen years I have held a number of senior management positions including: Dean of Law (Interim), Associate Dean Learning and Teaching; Deputy Head of Law; Director of International Programmes.

I am a passionate learning and teaching activist committed to supporting positive change in HE, through innovation, widened participation.

As a National Teaching Fellow and a Principal Fellow of the HEA, I champion the UKPSF and support others to develop their own professional practice. I have chaired a number of University Committees and I currently serve on the Association of Law Teachers Executive Committee and the Bar Council's Education and Training Committee where I am supporting the widening of participation for the profession.

Name: Jennifer Dods
Institution: Leeds Beckett University
Word count: 113

- Equality officer at Leeds Beckett University.
- Yorkshire & Humberside Regional Exec Committee.
- Yorkshire & Humberside Regional TUC Exec

UCU members with disabilities in educational institutions are increasing experiencing disability discrimination and deteriorating working conditions. Many of them are feeling

more isolated because of the current work situation and are finding their rights and needs disregarded and unsupported.

As an equality officer, I have deep commitment to equality & diversity issues and personal interest in disability equality matters, reasonable adjustments, career goals and development, career breaks & promotional opportunities. I would welcome an opportunity to join the DMSC and work to highlight and eliminate the barriers our members are facing across diverse educational settings.

LGBT+ MEMBERS AGENDA, & NOMINATIONS

AGENDA



LGBT+ Members' Annual Conference 2020
Saturday 5 December 10.00 – 13.00

LGBT+ voices: intersectionality and issues

Agenda

- 10.00** **Welcome - Introduction by Ryan Prout, Chair: role and function of conference**
- 10.05** **Conference business**
- **Minutes of LGBT+ members' conference 2019**
 - **Annual report of the LGBT+ Members' Standing Committee**
- 10.15** **Panel session 1: intersectionality**
- **Sen Raj: LGBT+, Refugees and Asylum Seekers**
 - **Rohit Dasgupta: LGBT+ and Race**
- Q&A**
- 11.20** **Break**
- 11.35** **Panel session 2: LGBT+ in FE and HE Now**
- **Trude Sundberg: Report from LGBT+ Pilot Survey**
 - **Sam Heyes: Trans in Post School Education**
- Q&A**
- 12.40** **Motion**
- 12.50** **Summary**
- 13.00** **Close of conference**

MOTIONS

1 motion has been submitted from the following institutions/branches:

Motion	Proposed by	Title
1	University of Leeds	Campaign for GRA reforms and against asylum seeker persecution

Motion 1 Campaign for GRA reforms and against asylum seeker persecution
Proposer University of Leeds
Word count 73

Conference notes:

That the rise of the alt right and political scapegoating has led to a very significant rise in LGBT+ hate crime and a consequent rise in LGBT+ asylum seekers. Conference further notes the failure of the Government to implement the Gender Recognition Act (GRA) reforms.

Conference resolves:

1. To raise the profile of the UCU campaign for reform of the GRA.
2. To campaign for an end to the persecution of asylum seekers.

NOMINATIONS

Vacancies to which nominations are sought

- Five vacancies for a term of two years

and the following five statements have been submitted:

Nominee	College / University
Stephen Desmond	Solent University
Martin Chivers	City, University of London
Bee Hughes	Liverpool John Moores University
Katie Nicoll Baines	The University of Edinburgh
Anthony Drummond	Leeds Beckett University

Name: Stephen Desmond

Institution: Solent University

Word count: 125

- Previous Chair of the National LGBT+ Standing Committee at UCU Head Office
- Twice won election to UCU NEC as representative of LGBT+ members across the UK
- Served twice as UCU Representative on the TUC LGBT+ National Standing Committee
- Currently LGBT Officer for the Southern Region
- Currently Equality Officer for my local Branch Solent University
- Recently ran for Vice President of UCU with the unanimous nomination of my local branch Solent University
- Currently a Trustee of the national charity for refugee teachers: RECONNECT. We run a funded programme for refugees-into-higher-education at UCL

In the past:

- Equality Officer for The Southern Region of UCU
- Memberships Secretary UWL Branch, London.
- I am mixed-race (Black and White British/Irish, LGBT+, Non-Binary-Identified, a Non-British National and a migrant to the UK).

Name: Martin Chivers
Institution: City, University of London
Word count: 141

I have previously been a member of the LGBT+ MSC and have been the TUC LGBT+ Delegate for UCU 3 times. After being co-opted for 1 year I am standing for election.

Writing nomination statements these past few years' fees like deja vu, we are still trying to push for GRA reform, and UCU have been instrumental in putting non-binary inclusion into government responses, and I have been pushing that through the TUC.

There is much more work need to be done on inclusive healthcare, whether that is increasing sexual health provision, expanding mental health services that are also tailored to LGBT+ needs (particularly under the on going pandemic), and moving healthcare beyond a binary.

I have been Honorary Secretary in my Branch for 5 years, Equality Rep before that, I am a cisgay man, and Vice-Chair HE for London Region.

Name: Bee Hughes
Institution: Liverpool John Moores University
Word count: 149

My name is Bee Hughes, I'm nonbinary. My pronouns are they/them.

I've been a UCU member for 8 years, and active in my branch for around two years as a Branch Committee member and Branch Organiser before taking the role of Acting Chair in April. I was elected as Chair of LJMU UCU in November 2020. I am newly elected LGBT+ Officer for the North West Region. In November 2020 I was also elected Chair of UCU Left, and I am an organiser with UCU Solidarity Movement.

Outside UCU, I'm a member of the LJMU Together LGBT+ network, newly in the role of the network's Community Liaison Officer, and will be part of the team organising our LGBT History Month events. I am part of the first cohort of GIANTS (Gendered Intelligence Activists Network of Trans Spokespeople), an activist-led project aimed at with of the trans-led charity Gendered Intelligence.

Name: Katie Nicoll Baines
Institution: The University of Edinburgh
Word count: 134

I am one of two Equality Officers for UCU Edinburgh. I'm a bisexual woman, and I co-chair the University of Edinburgh Staff Pride Network. I have been involved in

negotiations with management around implementing policies which support LGBT+ equality at the University. I am a staunch ally to all members of the LGBT+ community and at present find myself particularly focused on supporting reforms to the gender recognition act and ways in which our institutions can be more inclusive to trans and non-binary people as well as education about asexual/aromantic identities. I have a keen interest in the importance of visibility of LGBT+ identities in the workplace and how we must dismantle colonial era legislation that prevents equality. I also strive to approach my understanding of all equality matters through a critical whiteness lens.

Name: Anthony Drummond
Institution: Leeds Beckett University
Word count: 153

Over the last year I attended Standing Committee Meetings gaining further experience of issues impacting LGBT+ members. These meetings have taken place in person and online. In the last two years I also gained experience attending a TUC meeting and therefore widened my knowledge as to national issues concerning the LGBT+ community.

In the work-place I continue to raise awareness of LGBT+ issues amongst staff and students and this is achieved in part via membership of the Rainbow Rose Committee, a voluntary group set up to support LGBT+ staff and students and as an LGBT+ representative for UCU I feel competent and confident to raise any pertinent issues raised via the Rainbow Rose Committee with the head of our Equalities unit and ultimately HR. In my role as a lecturer I am also publishing work on LGBT+ issues therefore I believe I can bring added value to the role of standing committee member.

LGBT+ MEMBERS AGENDA, & NOMINATIONS

AGENDA



Black Members' Annual Conference 2020

**Saturday 5 December 2020
14.00 – 17.00**

'Know your past, shape your future'

Agenda

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 14:00 – 14.10 | Welcome and housekeeping
Introductory address by the Chair of the
Black Members' Standing Committee,
Victoria Showunmi |
| 14.10 – 15.00 | Panel session: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contributors: Zarah Sultana and Gary Younge.• Launch of Black Members' Standing Committee, Community Accountability programme, Gargi Bhattacharyya.• Panel discussion |
| 15.00 – 15.15 | Report from the Black Members' Standing Committee – with contributions from the committee <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minutes of Black Members' Annual Conference 2019• Elections to Black Members' Standing Committee (we have seven nominations for six places.) |
| 15:15 – 15:30 | Comfort break |

15:30 – 16.30

Workshops:

- Protecting and empowering yourself in the workplace
- BLM – Beyond 2020 – Meeting the challenges we face as black workers after the resurgence of BLM in 2020
- Developing black activists – black activists as black leaders
- Decolonising Community and Prison education – addressing the issues faced by black educators in prison and community education

16:30 – 17.00

Workshop feedback, closing remarks and close of conference

NOMINATIONS

Vacancies to which nominations are sought

- Five vacancies for a term of two years
- One vacancy for a term of one year

and the following seven statements have been submitted:

Nominee	College / University
Rahul Patel	UAL Central St Martins
Shalini Sharma	Keele University
Cynthia Akwei	Liverpool John Moores University
Abdullah Yusuf	Dundee University
Gargi Bhattacharyya	University of East London
Kirstin Forkert	Birmingham City University
Sharon Clarke	Novus

Name: Rahul Patel
Institution: UAL Central St Martins
Word count: 148

The treatment of black academic staff in UK's Higher and Further education is rightly the focus within UCU since the inspirational Black Lives Matter movement that exploded globally after the murder of George Floyd in the USA. The figures are shocking and the refusal to accept that there is a systematic problem of racism and the urgent need to change this should be the driving force in UCU. The need to recruit, retain, promote and personally develop black staff at every level of HE/FE education needs to be at the heart of our union's campaign. Black Lives Matter and to make that a reality and how we shape this in UCU should be a cornerstone of the Black Members Standing Committee. I would like to be a part of this campaign by offering my understanding and experience in and outside of education in antiracist campaigns for this role.

Name: Shalini Sharma
Institution: Keele University
Word count: 143

I have been a member of the union as long as I have been employed. In my current role at Keele, I coordinate the BAME staff network, mentor early career staff and recently been elected on to university Senate. In the last year I have been helping to lead a student & staff initiative around decolonising the university curriculum. I am also part of the team that is monitoring the Race Equality Charter data and formulating an action plan.

I am very committed to the union's mission. As we know from our own experience, and from a host of recent studies, academia remains affected by inequality and discrimination, by race, gender and age amongst other things. Disadvantaged and under-represented groups demand our attention. As someone who took part in the recent industrial action organised by UCU (early 2018) I know very well how we take on and win battles as long as we are organised, focused and above all inclusive. As a black woman I am conscious of the need for all voices to be heard and for those in power to be held account both within academia and within our union. I welcome your support

Name: Cynthia Akwei
Institution: Liverpool John Moore University
Word count: 143

I serve as the equality lead and branch vice-chair- equality to promote equality and diversity in my institution. I also serve on other national equality and diversity committees such as the Chartered Association of Business Schools. As a black woman, I believe that a significant culture-change needs to take place for a sustainable race-equality of black staff and students. I am keen to rid the world of stereotypes in our institutions concerning race equality, and my interest span the following areas:

- Decolonisation of curriculum
- Black students' attainment gap
- Black representation at HE institutions and institutional leadership roles
- Redress centres and accessible routes to address racism issues in institutions
- The progression of black people to readers and professors
- End the race pay gap

I will use my role in the black members' standing committee to promote and achieve equality and diversity in these areas.

Name: Abdullah Yusuf
Institution: Dundee University
Word count: 150

I'm Dr Abdullah Yusuf - I am a lecturer in Politics at the University of Dundee. I currently hold the role of equality officer jointly for DUCU and would love the opportunity to serve as a member for the Black Members' Standing Committee. I believe I can carry on and improve on the work our UCU Black Members' Standing Committee has done over the years. I've been actively involved in the national and local Equality and BAME networks for the last few years and through the trainings and workshop sessions I've gone through I think I'm aptly equipped to communicate the value of equality, diversity and Black Lives Matter to both employers and colleagues. I've been an active member of our local branch advocating action, where required, and have been a fixture on all our picket lines. I am a socialist and anti-racist - I hope you consider voting for me.

Name: Gargi Bhattacharyya
Institution: University of East London
Word count: 146

I have worked hard to build the work of BMSC and to devise with others innovative projects and approaches to extend the anti-racism work of the whole union. In the aftermath of this summer's protests, as a committee we have put together a programme for community accountability for racial justice in education. We are at the beginning of this work, just starting to work with branches and creating outreach and training materials.

I have been branch chair at University of East London, but, at present, am facing compulsory redundancy. We are fighting this and building the branch in the process. I believe that black members must also be at the heart of the union in all its activity, campaigning, negotiating and representing at all levels. We will not be able to defend activists against discrimination until we build a union that belongs to all of us.

Name: Kirstin Forkert
Institution: Birmingham City University
Word count: 147

I'm currently UCU Branch Chair at Birmingham City University, where I'm based in the Birmingham Institute of Media and English. Since 2013 I've played a key role in rebuilding the UCU branch, treating Equality as central and pushing for greater involvement of Black colleagues in the branch. More recently I have campaigned for specific health and safety measures to protect Black members in the Covid-19

pandemic and awareness of the role of structural racism in the pandemic. I'm also currently a NEC member.

If elected I'll campaign for 1) better representation of Black members within the union's structures; 2) responsiveness to grassroots movements including Black Lives Matter; 3) joint working with the Black Students campaign, and other Equality standing committees (operationalising intersectionality). As (until recently) a non-EU citizen, I am opposed to the hostile environment and will work together with the Migrant Members committee to oppose this.

Name: Sharon Clarke
Institution: Novus
Word count: 157

I have been working in the criminal justice system for 17 years. Currently employed by Novus as an Art lecturer. I have become an active UCU Rep over the past few months supporting members due to the current situation.

As a female of afro Caribbean descent, its of great interest to me, that prison education supports the change to how the curriculum is delivered, decolonizing the information, therefore I know that I have to be part of that change. I actively incorporate culturally diverse historical event within the qualification that I deliver

I am actively reading and researching my historical ancestry. Having experienced discrimination within the industry, I feel that for change to happen I have to stand up and be part of that change.

As by confidence increases, I feel that this will be beneficial to the BMSC and give black and brown members working in prison education a voice they desperately needed over the years

