



# UCU

University and College Union

# Decarbonise and Decolonise 2030



## UCU's Model Claim for Universities and Colleges

#DecarbDecol2030



## UCU/SOS-UK Definitions

### DECARBONISE

*Decarbonising our education system means transforming how and what we learn so that education sufficiently addresses and prepares students for the climate crisis and ecological emergency. That means our curricula must equip students with the knowledge, skills, attributes, and values to tackle the reformation of our currently carbon-intense economic system. Furthermore, it means thinking critically and challenging the influence of corporations like fossil fuel companies in our research, funding, and sponsorship.*

SOS-UK, 2020

## UCU/SOS-UK Definitions

### DECOLONISE

*Decolonising education is often understood as the process in which we rethink, reframe and reconstruct the curricula and research that preserve the Europe-centred, colonial lens. It should not be mistaken for 'diversification,' as diversity can still exist within this western bias. Decolonisation goes further and deeper in challenging the institutional hierarchy and monopoly on knowledge, moving out of a western framework*

Sofia Akel, 2020

## Background: UCU's climate and sustainability work 2019-2021

- Building capacity and organising for power for collective bargaining within workplaces *UCU's Green New Deal for Colleges and Universities*
- Developing broader awareness of climate justice and education for sustainable development *UCU's Free Member Continuing Professional Development Courses*
- Developing capacity and awareness via social dialogue and campaigning  
*UCU's campaign tool for Climate-Themed Learning Events*

*Working with other unions and political lobbying around linking up the industrial and education strategies in the UK*



## What is Climate Justice?

*Climate justice is the moral, social and political side of the climate crisis, understanding that certain communities and minorities will face different and more damaging consequences of climate change sooner and harsher than others.*

Leah Duffy, Teach the Future campaigner



## Why can't we decarbonise without also decolonising?

- Efforts to address environmental and climate action must also deliver on issues of justice.
- Colonialism and imperialism, and their legacies, have stunted the economic capacity and social capital of many in the Global South, and often Black and Brown communities in the Global North, limiting their ability to respond to the climate crisis.
- To address the climate crisis, we need to address the very systems that have contributed its origins and our education system is part of this.

*The British education system itself, is firmly rooted in colonial epistemology, which centres and upholds the British empire and the forms that it takes today.* Sofia Akel, 2020



## Why can't we decarbonise without also decolonising?

*We need to reform the entire education system, embedding sustainability as a core principle of every single discipline, linking this to learning about our colonial past and its hand in creating the climate crisis.*

*The climate crisis is a racist crisis; climate impacts are disproportionately felt by black and brown communities due to structures retained from colonialism.*

Teach the Future, 2020



## What are we asking branches to do?

- The D & D bargaining claim strategy will be spearheaded by local UCU and student union branches building power in their institutions and local communities to organise around these key issues with a view to submitting bargaining claims to their employers via consultation and negotiating structures (eg JNCs).
- Making demands on issues of climate justice for substantial and far-reaching changes by 2030.
- 2030 as a target date is taken from ESDs.

# ESD: A key enabler for the 2030 agenda for sustainable development

*Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) empowers learners to take informed decisions and responsible actions for environmental integrity, economic viability and a just society, for present and future generations, while respecting cultural diversity. It is about lifelong learning, and is an integral part of quality education. ESD is holistic and transformational education which addresses learning content and outcomes, pedagogy and the learning environment. UNESCO*



## ESD: A key enabler for the 2030 agenda for sustainable development

- The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030 were agreed by all UN member states in Paris, 2015.
- ESD is an integral component of SDG 4 (Quality Education) as well as being a key enabler for all other SDGs.
- Little commitment has been made for implementation in the UK.
- In 2020 UNESCO launched the ESD for 2030 Roadmap to help guide progress towards implementation of ESD internationally.

# Bargaining and negotiation toolkit: Campaigning for climate justice and Green New Deal

## MONITOR AND REVIEW

Has the employer met your claim in full? ● Review and then relaunch the claim. ● If there has been failure to agree consider escalation to a formal collective dispute.



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## REVIEW AND ORGANISE THE BRANCH

Is anyone leading on this issue for the branch? ● Have they attended green reps training? ● Put *Green New Deal* on the branch committee agenda. ● Review your institution position on the climate emergency.



# Preparing and Progressing a Green New Deal in your workplace

**Remember, at every step, advice and support is available** from your regional office and from UCU national Campaigns, and Bargaining & Negotiation teams.



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## DECIDE PRIORITIES

Discuss GND priorities at a branch meeting. ● Liaise with other trade unions + student groups. ● Convene a joint action group, survey the membership and conduct an environmental audit of your institution.



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## STEP UP THE PRESSURE

You need to avoid *green-wash* from the employer so build leverage for your campaign: ● Increase social media posts. ● Take part in joint action with student groups, eg school strikes. ● Write to local MPs. ● Write to governors/counsel/senate



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## NEGOTIATE AND PUBLICISE CLAIM

Now publicise your claim widely: ● Write an open letter and a blog. ● Post on social media ● Circulate a newsletter ● Put up UCU's *Climate is a Trade Union Issue* poster ● Design your own campaign materials. ● Review progress of negotiations.



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## SUBMIT YOUR CLAIM

Submit your green agenda claim in a formal letter to your employer. ● Request a date for a meeting and/or put on JNC agenda. ● Set a timeframe for a response.



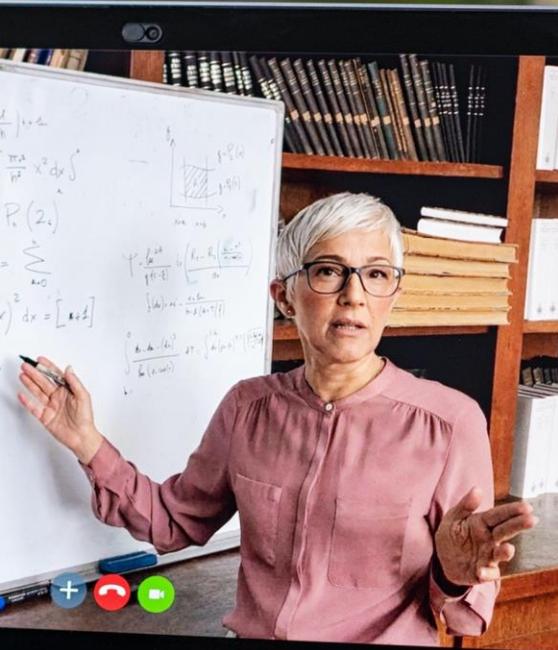


## Collective campaigning, negotiating and bargaining

Negotiating objectives and key demands from employers:

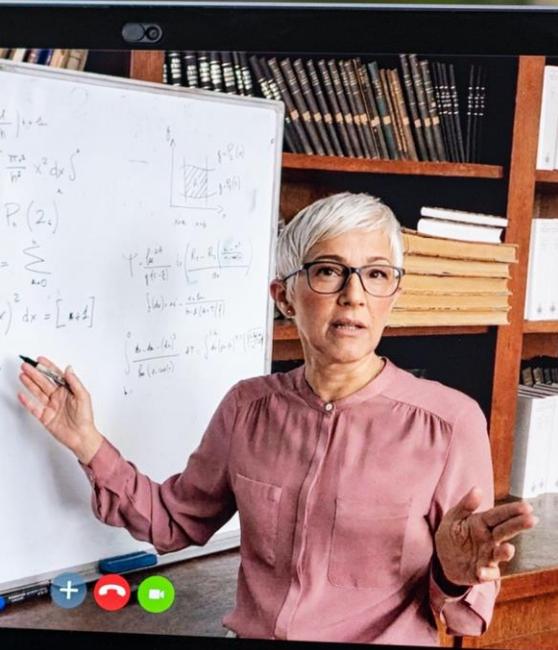
1. Teaching, learning and research
2. Representation, progression and achievement
3. Operations and estate
4. Ethical finance and banking

# 1. Teaching, learning and research – demands



- A whole institution approach (formal, informal and subliminal learning) across all aspects of institutional practice including research, funding, library, IT services, students union.
- Negotiate a policy for implementing ESD's across all of the curriculum by 2030 with a view to embedding democratic and participatory learning approaches across all disciplines at all levels.

## 1. Teaching, learning and research – demands



- **Staff training and support** - how to incorporate social justice, ethics and well-being into teaching learning and assessment. Negotiate an agreed action plan which sees development and implementation of quality CPD and training for staff to prepare them for climate proofing and decolonising their courses.
- **Agree a joint statement on staff resourcing and capacity** to make the necessary changes. Negotiate the requisite workload adjustments for work-planning purposes. Employers cannot expect staff to make major changes to their lesson plans and schemes of work without the necessary resources. If employers are serious about wanting buy-in from staff on ESD they must provide appropriate support and this should, therefore, also form part of the claim.



## 2. Representation, progression and achievement – demands

Establishment of a time-limited decolonising commission

Negotiate a time-limited action plan for resourcing a whole institution review of structures impacting diversity and inclusion, progression and awards

- Commission should have trade union, student union and local community involvement.
- Commission to conduct a systematic review of representation within the institution includes: **Governance** structures and **power relations** across the whole institution, staff, and students.
- Student/staff **progression pathways**: Identify and assess structural barriers and/or opportunities being upheld by the institution, addressing awarding gaps (attainment gap); needs to be done through a systematic review of staff and student progression rates to identify and assess structural barriers and/or opportunities being upheld by the institution.



### 3. Operations and estate – demands

- 1. Ask the employer to adopt (or if one is in place) review/update a carbon management and energy management plan.**
  - Plan should be inclusive of ethics and climate justice.
  - Key areas may need to be addressed within include Scope 3 emissions and supply chain/procurement management systems.
- 2. Agree a mechanism for tracking carbon reduction performance and an annual review of progress.**
  - Agree a mechanism for determining, measuring and evaluating the institution's handprint (positive sustainability impacts, inclusive of social and economic factors).
  - Develop or enhance a set of related policies including transport and travel policy that addresses carbon and justice for all.
  - Conduct a review on carbon footprint and handprint of supply chains.
  - Develop a mechanism for the consideration of carbon and ethics to be made within all procurement decisions.

## 4. Ethical finance and banking – demands

Negotiate or review an ethical investment policy with time-limited objectives

Negotiate an end to fossil fuel company sponsorship of research and related activities

### **Decarbonise and Decolonise**

Divestment from fossil fuels, arms and unethical investments are inextricably linked

Agree an ethical banking policy

Negotiate ethical investment policy and engagement strategy. Divestment from fossil fuels and decarbonisation of portfolio

## Call to action – COP 26 and beyond

### 1. Organise for power with a view to submitting Decarbonise & Decolonise 2030: Campaign and Model Claim

- Collaborate with your students' union and the student movement and local communities.
- Access UCU CPD for Decarbonise & Decolonise, sustainability, climate education and climate learning events (ask for more details about holding specific CPD in your branch).

<https://cpd.web.ucu.org.uk/about-ucus-cpd-programme>

### 2. Host a Climate-themed month of teaching and campaign activity leading up to COP-26

- Profile the importance of embedding climate justice and climate action across the entire curriculum.
- Demand that our schools, colleges and universities act to embed those changes as a matter of urgency.

## Resources

- UCU Decarbonise Decolonise 2030 - <https://www.ucu.org.uk/decarbonise+decolonise>
- UCU's Green New Deal Bargaining Guides [UCU - Green new deal](#)
- Climate Themed Learning Events Resources [Climate Learning Week \(ucu.org.uk\)](#)
- Future we choose wall chart [UCU - The future we choose](#)
- SOS-UK [Students Organising for Sustainability UK \(SOS-UK\) \(unioncloud.org\)](#)
- Mock COP26 <https://www.mockcop.org/>
- SOS-International [Home / Students Organizing for Sustainability International \(sos.earth\)](#)
- COP 26 Coalition [COP26 - COP26 Coalition](#)