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## 2009 Pay Offer: Your Time to Decide

### 2009 Pay Offer

In June the Association of Colleges (AoC) increased their final pay offer for this year to 1.5% on all scales and allowances. All the FE trade unions undertook to consult their members on whether to accept or reject this offer.

The UCU Further Education Committee (FEC) of the National Executive has decided to consult branches through a Special FE Sector conference to be held on 19 September in London.

Branches will therefore be meeting in the next two weeks to determine their view on whether the union should accept or reject the revised pay offer. Branches should send representatives to contribute accordingly at the special conference and may submit amendments or motions.

**Please look out for details of your local meeting so you can make your voice heard on this important issue.**

The FEC is recommending that the offer is rejected and that members are balloted for a programme of national strike action (see copy of motion below). The conference will also discuss how the union should tackle continuing job cuts in the sector.

### FEC Motion:

***"Sector conference rejects the 1.5% pay offer from the AOC for 2009/10. It instructs the FEC to conduct an industrial action ballot of members for a programme of national strike action in order to secure an improved pay offer from the employers".***

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### Striking to defend jobs at Tower Hamlets College

At the time of publication, members at Tower Hamlets College who are on indefinite strike action have taken over 5 days of action in their battle to save 13 jobs at the college.

The college does not need to make these cuts as it has substantial financial reserves. Management are hell bent on making a surplus and are cutting jobs to do this.

### What you can do:

Messages of support can be passed on to the branch by emailing:

[jstephens@ucu.org.uk](mailto:jstephens@ucu.org.uk)

**Continued...**

Financial contributions to support our members on strike can be made by sending a cheque payable to UCU and marked "Strike Fund" on the reverse to:

**UCU, FE Department, Carlow Street, London NW1 7LH**

or by handing the cheque in to your branch secretary. Please sign the online petition against the cuts at Tower Hamlets:

<http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/>

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### **And at Manchester...**

Manchester College was brought to a near standstill on Thursday (27 August) as members went on strike in protest at the sacking of 15 staff members.

UCU is furious that the college, which is a result of a merger between MANCAT and City College Manchester, targeted union activists in a round of redundancies it described as punishing and unnecessary. Some of the courses now forced to close include the most basic level English classes and the union is concerned about the impact that the cuts will have on the most vulnerable people in the local community. The college is also closing all its sign language courses and has already closed a crèche.

Further strikes are being planned. Messages of support can be passed on to the branch by emailing:

[jstephens@ucu.org.uk](mailto:jstephens@ucu.org.uk)

## **Labour Party Conference Lobby**



As part of the union's enhanced political campaigning in the run up to the election, UCU members will be joining a coalition of trade unions and pressure groups to lobby the Labour Party's conference in Brighton on 27 September.

**Sunday 27 September from 12:30**  
**Assemble: Madeira Drive**

UCU has teamed up with other trade unions and pressure groups to lobby for a change in direction from the current government. Ministers say that they are committed to investing more in education to help us out of recession, yet their actions tell a different story.

As thousands of jobs are threatened across the sector, the protest will call on the government to "Defend Jobs and Defend Education".

Regional committees will be responsible for arranging coaches to the protest, so if you can make it, please contact your regional committee secretary. You can find their contact details here:

<http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=3084>

You can also download posters and leaflets to promote the lobby.