

# A MESSAGE TO LAMBETH COLLEGE STUDENTS AND PARENTS FROM UCU

## **Dear friend,**

As many of you will know, University and College Union members are on indefinite strike at Lambeth College. I would like to apologise to students, their families and the wider community we serve for any adverse impact this strike is having upon you and to explain why my union is taking action.

## **Why is the strike happening?**

The reason for our strike action is the imposition by the College of a contract for new members of staff which has inferior working conditions, extra workloads, less holiday and reduced sick pay. The strike is an absolute last resort following the College's decision to ignore our objections and press ahead with these changes.

## **Is the union prepared to negotiate?**

UCU has made numerous attempts to negotiate with the College. Most recently we offered to suspend our proposed strike action if the College in turn suspends its implementation of the new contracts. The College's response has simply been to say that these detrimental new contracts are "non-negotiable".

## **Why is the union concerned about the new contracts?**

The new contracts will mean Lambeth teachers working some of the longest hours and with the worst conditions of any comparable London College. It is simply unfair that some staff should be paid less per hour than others for doing the same job. UCU is also concerned that with the creation of a two-tier workforce at Lambeth College there is a real prospect that existing staff may at some point soon also be forced onto the inferior new contracts.

## **But isn't the College suffering financial difficulties?**

UCU will work constructively with anyone to ensure the future of our College. But we have already seen teacher numbers fall by 15% at Lambeth since 2011. We believe that the Principal and the College needs to work with the staff to secure the future of our College rather than driving through change without negotiation.

## **Why the delay, let's talk today:**

UCU stands ready to resolve this damaging dispute today before students and staff suffer further damage. Real leadership is about listening to staff concerns and taking people with you rather than bulldozing your plans through. We hope the College thinks again about its decision to refuse to negotiate on the new contracts.

## **How you can help:**

If you care about what is happening at Lambeth College sign our petition here:

**[www.ucu.org.uk/defendlambethucu](http://www.ucu.org.uk/defendlambethucu)**

Thank you for taking the time to read this message.

Best wishes,

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