

Workload Crisis Deepens

Unsustainable workloads are having an impact on the health of staff across the Higher Education sector.

According to a national UCU survey:

- 4 in 5 HE staff are struggling with workload
- 78% reported increased workloads during the pandemic
- 86% have needed support for mental health due to workload.

At the Open University, 44% of OU staff feel stressed at work, up 2% since 2020. In the 'pressure at work' category all questions demonstrate increased pressure since 2020. Only 51% are confident that flagged workload issues will get addressed (Staff Barometer Survey 2022).

As part of this strike action UCU is demanding employers, including the OU, sign up to:

- A standard 35-hour week for all HE contracts
- A UK-wide action plan to support the development of workload models agreed between institutions and their local union branches
- Workload models that take into account post-pandemic changes in working practices
- Improvements to job security that will ease workload pressures and anxiety.

We're also fighting for improved pay and conditions, including sector job security and action to close the equality pay gaps.

We're at breaking point – enough is enough!

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

At the OU we are pushing for management to take the health impact of overwork seriously and provide meaningful mitigation. Instead we get more change initiatives, more pressures and 'return to surplus' measures that seem to mean, yet again, more work for fewer people.

Open University Branch of UCU <http://ucu.open.ac.uk>

Facebook (openuniversityucu) and Twitter @oubucu (#ucurISING #USSmess #EnoughIsEnough)

Donate to or apply to the Hardship Fund: <http://ucu.open.ac.uk/branch-hardship-fund>

UCU
University and College Union

Huge pension cuts of 35% (average)

Pensions are deferred pay. The cuts last year, based on 2020's flawed valuation, are devastating. We know we are doing more for less, experiencing year-on-year real terms pay cuts, and now facing a much depleted retirement income for no good reason!

UCU continues to campaign for benefits to be restored and for a credible valuation approach. A reasonable solution could give us the same or similar benefits for lower cost to both workers and employers. The OU could make a difference in this fight as it has so many staff (across all grades) in the pension scheme.



We'll soon be re-balloting for further action. Want to make a difference, improve pay, pensions and working conditions?

- Join UCU: www.ucu.org.uk/join and join the strike
- Join our online rallies and events: <https://www.ucu.open.ac.uk/>
- Ask the Vice-Chancellor to reverse the USS cuts and support a pay rise that addresses equality, workload, job security and the cost of living crisis (vice-chancellor@open.ac.uk)
- Sign up as a supporter at <https://www.ucu.org.uk/supportthestrikes>
- Donate to support strikers: <https://www.ucu.org.uk/fightingfund>
- Post support on social media using #ucuRISING.
- Members: continue to take action short of a strike (ASOS). Do not work more than contracted hours or take on voluntary work. Do not cover for colleagues on strike.