

# Our working conditions are students' learning conditions

**Election runs from 30 January -2 March**

A senior lecturer in Managerial Economics, at Royal Holloway, I've held multiple branch roles. I'm Branch Chair and spent four years on RHUL's Academic Board and governing body. We need sector-wide reform to strengthen worker and student voices in governance, currently drowned out by executives and often ill-informed directors

I became a UCW (CWU) postie rep decades ago. Working in HE is different and yet fighting for safe workloads, against casualisation and fair pay is the same. At RHUL we've developed sustainable branch capacity, working in teams. My priority is fighting dangerous workloads. I've designed surveys and more recently conducted stress risk assessments, generating the data needed to move management. Management have finally conceded Acas talks; we'll win this.

As a member of NEC and Solidarity Movement, I appreciate some branches may lack local capacity. We need a strong post-16 education union to win better working conditions for all. More progressive subs might attract members, but we cannot wait; whole disciplines are under attack. It isn't enough for branches to offer mutual support during local action, we need a better-funded, transparently governed fighting fund. I sit on NEC's Strategy and Finance Committee working to ensure implementation of these Congress policies. I'm also on the Conduct of Members' Committee, recognising unions must govern

**Vote Donna Brown for UK-wide HE seat**



**Senior lecturer, Dept Accounting & Financial Management, Royal Holloway**

themselves appropriately.

From 2023-25 I served on the USS Superannuation Working Group. During this time UCU achieved a great victory: Restoration of benefit accrual; a Recovery payment; and lower contribution Rates. I also worked on USS governance and believe that to safeguard decent pensions we need parity with employers on the USS Trustee Board. We must defend TPS for post-92 colleagues too.

UCU should be consistent, not drop campaigns such as "PGRs are staff" when equality has been

promised. UCU should conduct awaited racism reviews, with the support of the Black Members' Standing Committee. As the UK drifts towards the right-wing populism we see in the States, UCU should be vocal in defending the academic freedom of university workers to teach and research what they deem pedagogically appropriate and important. UCU should defend workers' freedom to speak out on organisational matters of concern, such as profligacy on overseas campuses, and on (inter) national issues such as the rise of the anti-intellectual, transphobic, anti-migrant far right.

UCU must profess the value of HE to multiple stakeholders. Along with Solidarity Movement colleagues, I submitted evidence to the government on threats from universities' insolvency. Cuts to jobs and disciplines worsen students' prospects and prevent "good growth" across the UK. Marketisation limits institutions' contribution as local anchors, another dimension of universities' value. We have so many reasons to fight for HE.

**Please support Sean Wallis, Regi Pilling, me and other UCU Left candidates.**



**For more information about the UCU Left platform and candidates**

<https://uculeft.org/nec-elections-2026/>