

**VOTE UCU LEFT ★ For a campaigning, member-led union**

# Building equality through collective action

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

I have been active in UCU at branch, regional and national levels.

- UCU NEC 2009-15, 2017-21, 2024-present
- Anti-Casualisation Committee 2015-2019, Women's Committee 2024-present
- Open University Branch Secretary 2008-2017, 2019-present
- Open University Branch President 2018
- Local Negotiator for over 15 years
- Health and Safety Representative
- Caseworker
- Member of UCU Left

As a lecturer at the Open University, I have seen widening participation and access to educational opportunities change people's lives, including the lives of women returning to education after raising a family. I have also seen the damaging effect of marketisation, fees and grossly unfair funding models on the post-16 education system.

I have been involved in local disputes against redundancies and local negotiations for transfer of casualised staff to secure employment. At the OU we succeeded in moving over 4000 casually employed staff onto permanent fractional contracts in 2022. For many (including me) this came after decades of casualisation.

My involvement in anti-casualisation deepened my understanding of sex inequality, since there are often assumptions that women workers work for a second wage or even 'pin money', rather than needing a living wage.

**Vote Leslet Kane  
for NEC member  
Women**



**Associate Lecturer for the Open University, teaching Computing and Mathematics**

Precarious employment often links to other inequalities to disadvantage women and other oppressed groups.

UCU must defend the jobs and employment conditions of all staff and oppose any attempts by management to cut back on the equality agenda.

Achieving secure employment must be part of UCU's equality agenda because insecure employment makes it harder for staff to stand up for their rights, whether about unhealthy excessive workloads, bullying or sexual harassment.

Trade unions must support equality for women workers both

in the workplace and the wider society. We cannot be equal at work if women do not have reproductive rights, are at risk of domestic violence or have massively unequal responsibilities for domestic work and childcare. Equality issues must be at the bargaining table. For instance, tackling unfair work overload is necessary both for all workers in terms of health and safety and to ensure that paid work is compatible with having a life, raising a family and being an active citizen.

I support UCU's commitment to keeping equality issues at the heart of the union. UCU has an Annual Women's Conference and a Women Members' Standing Committee. This type of provision is vital for taking forward women's equality and ensuring that the issues are not forgotten.

If elected as a Women's Representative, I will continue to work for:

- Ensuring that women's equality issues are integrated into UCU's bargaining priorities;
- Raising awareness of the various aspects of gender inequality internationally
- Supporting the development of women members as union activists.



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

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

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