

UNISON *news*

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HIGHER EDUCATION PAY — “THE GLOVES ARE OFF”

UNISON Chair of Higher Education, Denise Ward, has declared that “the gloves are off” as members voted to push for fairer pay for all staff.

With average pay for University Principals now approaching £300,000, delegates at last month's HE Conference responded by setting out your union's position on pay.

UNISON negotiators will now work with the other HE unions- UCU, EIS, GMB and Unite- to try to reach a common position and put a pay proposal to the employers.

They called for:

- * A pay rise of £1,500 or 7.5%, whichever is greater;
- * All employers to pay the real Living Wage and work towards a minimum £10 per hour across the sector;
- * Eradicating the gender pay gap by 2020;
- * An end to zero hours contracts.

The current UCU pensions dispute at 61 universities (including The University of Aberdeen) over pension cuts, which affect some UNISON members, may add

some complexity to this year's pay negotiations. However, conference was clear that the time has come for university workers to claim their fair share after years of pay restraint.

To keep in touch with developments go online to: bit.ly/unisonHE



BRANCH AGM 2018 DATES — PLEASE COME ALONG!

Dates for the branch Annual General Meeting have been set, and this year we're doing things a bit differently, so we

hope you'll be able to come along. The AGM will be held on two different days at lunchtimes, with one meeting at RGU and the other at UofA. Please make every effort to come along to one of them!

University of Aberdeen
Monday 5th March
12 noon – 1.30pm
Rm KCG7, Kings College

Robert Gordon Univ.
Tuesday 6th March
12 noon – 1.30pm
Room H230, Health & Social Care Building



Valuing public services and the people who provide them

ATTRACTION & RETENTION PREMIA — DISASTER AVERTED?

UNISON stepped in to avert a disastrous situation recently at the Robert Gordon University, after a review of A&RP for dozens of staff looked to see them lose many £1,000s from their pay.

In some roles at the university A&RP payments are made due to limitations in the grading scheme which make it impossible to employ people in the roles on the salary at that grade. This process is a recognized part of pay systems and allows the employer to pay an appropriate salary whilst still being in line with equal pay legislation. However, as these payments are reviewable it leaves staff in these roles at risk of losing significant proportions

of their pay at any time, as it is not covered by normal legislation protecting pay from being removed.

UNISON worked with RGU at the time of the HERA job evaluation implementation back in 2006, to put in place a process around this, however after a recent review of staff in receipt of A&RP payments, it became apparent that significant failings had occurred, when staff were informed across the board that their salaries would be cut, starting in October.

UNISON immediately took action on behalf of our affected members, and were able to call a halt to the changes pointing

out that the process had failed on a number of counts. The University agreed with us, reversed the decisions, and entered into negotiations to remedy the situation and put in place a more robust policy.

We've now almost concluded those negotiations and the University has reviewed all the previous outcomes. We should shortly be at the stage where staff will be given the results of the new review.

UNISON will of course be watching these results carefully and will continue to work to protect our members in this area.



GRAMPIAN PRIDE AND OUR NEW BRANCH LGBT BRANCH OFFICER!



This year sees the first ever "Grampian Pride" march in Aberdeen and UNISON is proud to be one of the supporters of the event. The march takes place **on 26th May 2018 at 10.30am** and there'll be lot of supporters from the local and wider community. The event will also have a "village" at the Queens Links and will be welcoming

everyone from the North East of Scotland, the rest of the UK, and international communities with stalls, information about LGBT+ organisations and services, entertainment, key speakers, safe spaces, and a family area.

The event has the full support of Aberdeen City Council too and without their backing none of this would be possible. We're hoping that the branch will be able to fly the UNISON banner on the march, so if you're interested in getting involved please

do let us know!

For more information about the event see:

grampianpride.org



The branch is also very pleased to be able to welcome Hamish Walker from RGU as our new LGBT Branch Officer. Hamish has already been very involved in the RGU

LGBT+ Staff Network and UNISON has a long history of fighting discrimination and prejudice in the workplace on behalf of its lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members, so we're very excited that Hamish will be a key part of that locally.

If you'd like to get in touch to discuss any issues at work, please contact your local steward, and if you have thoughts on things we might do as a branch drop Hamish a line!

Join online at **joinunison.org** or call free on **0800 171 2193**

FOCUS ON WORKPLACE STRESS — UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

One of UNISON's highest priorities is to support our members' health and wellbeing—including managing workplace stress. As workplaces become ever more results and finance orientated, pressure increases on staff members to produce the goods and with these high pressure situations, comes the risk of ill health, worries, stress and breakdowns.

Many employers claim proudly to support their staff with wellbeing initiatives. UNISON welcomes this focus, but sometimes these are merely platitudes to placate both the workforce and the relevant governing authorities.

Recently there was a Webinar (see it at bit.ly/uni18a) presented by Hugh Robertson of the TUC, who talked in detail about tackling stress in the workplace as part of their Health and Safety programme.

Hugh outlined the standards that employers should live up to and employees should expect in their workplace.

He acknowledged 3 workplaces that have shown statistically that their practices are helping staff members and reducing the amount of absenteeism by applying at least some of these standards: Blackpool NHS trust, Scottish Power and the University of Aberdeen.

UNISON would like to congratulate the University of Aberdeen on its success in supporting staff members through their various challenges.

Some of the support offered is a 24 hour help line run by People

Asset Management, Counselling Services, the Chaplaincy and Niteline.

There are also Health and Wellbeing days with many different activities and stalls offering free off-peak membership to the Sports Village and reduced full membership fees, sessions on mindfulness and how it works, advice from experts in health and nutrition, workshops on relaxation and various physical challenges to stimulate a bit of competition.

They also provide Mental Health first aid training and have an online training package that has modules on stress and wellbeing as part of the curriculum.

I am sure that the University would acknowledge the part that

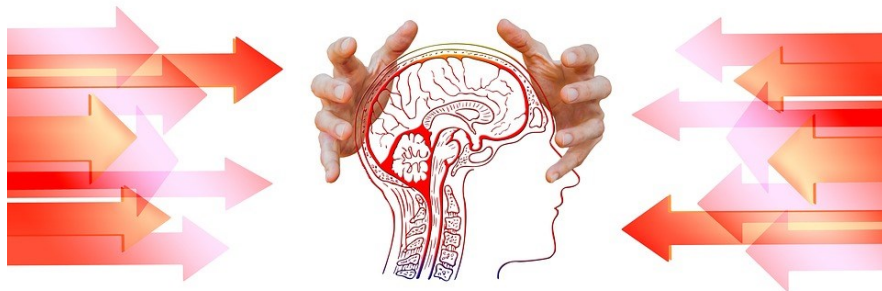
UNISON and our sister trade unions have played in realising the success of this initiative. It is through consultation and engagement from both the University and the trade unions that good ideas have been put forward and not so good ones have been dismissed.

There was recently a working group formed at the University with the specific intention of reducing work place stress by continuing to use the HSE standards for managing stress in the workplace.

The University are also looking at revising the appropriate policies and guidance with regards to this subject and acknowledge this area as a priority, inviting a wide spectrum of participants, including representatives of Unison alongside all of our sister unions, which we welcome and are looking forward to taking part in.

If you have any comments or concerns about your own health and wellbeing or that of your colleagues, please contact your UNISON steward

Owen Cox
Unison Branch Secretary



Three simple ways to join UNISON today:



Join online at
joinunison.org



Call us on
0800 171 2193



Ask your UNISON rep
for an application form

GET INVOLVED

Christmas Competition Winners

Our competition this year was a pile of presents spot the difference and members were asked to say how many there were. The correct answer was **FIVE**.



First prize was an amazing Panasonic 49" Smart TV. Our two second prizes were our ever popular Dinner and a Show for Two vouchers, and our third prizes were our fantastic Christmas hampers.

Congratulations to our winners:

- 1st: Will Ritchie
2nd: Carol-Ann McKerron,
Colin Shearer
3rd: Liz Law, Mary Murray

WE NEED YOU!

We still want to hear from members who would be able to get more involved in the branch.

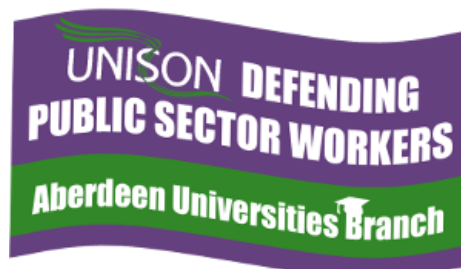
We really need you to join the team!

You can choose how much or how little you want to do, depending on the amount of time you can spare, or the type of practical assistance you can give.

Drop us an email for more information or to have a chat!

uni@aub-unison.org.uk

Find us online:
www.aub-unison.org.uk



Here are a few ways you can help:

- ⇒ Hand out recruitment material
- ⇒ Help at our recruitment stalls
- ⇒ Train as a workplace rep
- ⇒ Attend conferences and events
- ⇒ Put up posters and newsletters
- ⇒ Contribute to the local newsletter



For as little as **£1.30 a month** (depending on salary) you get a range of services including:

- advice, support and help when you need it at work;
- a helpline that is open until midnight (on weekdays, 4pm Saturday);
- legal help for you at work and you and your family at home;
- financial assistance and debt advice in times of need;
- compensation for accidents and injuries at work;
- a range of exclusive member discounts that can save you and your family money when you are shopping, buying insurance or looking for a holiday;
- access to training and education courses;
- a members magazine sent to your home address four times a year;
- discounts for members and their families at Croyde Bay, the union's holiday resort on the North Devon coast.

YOUR BRANCH STEWARDS

ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY

Name	Location	Telephone
Julie Yackiminie (Chair)	Nursing & Midwifery, Garthdee	01224 262950
Colin Jones (Treasurer)	IT Services, ICRGU, Garthdee	01224 262178
Iain McLenan (H&S)	Janitorial Group, Garthdee	01224 263444
Anne Campbell	Gray's School of Art	01224 263675
Jim Florence	IT Services, ICRGU, Garthdee	01224 262763
Hamish Walker (LGBT Rep)	Sr. Business Operations	01224 263754

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

Name	Location	Telephone
Owen Cox (Br. Secretary)	Security Officer, Estates	07387 729537
Elizabeth Robertson (H&S)	School of Education	01224 274507
Kenneth Sadler	Helpdesk Co-ordinator, Infohub	01224 273040
Ralph Magadzire	Security Officer, Estates	01224 273327

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