

KCL UCU votes 200-0 to support 'status quo'...

DEMAND 'STATUS QUO' AND FIGHT TO WIN

IT HAS BEEN A MASSIVE WEEK in the history of our union. It was the week that the rank and file membership of UCU showed itself to be a force to be reckoned with.

The strength of our strikes, the refusal by the union to suspend strikes for talks, the subsequent #NoCapitulation revolt and the rejection of the rotten deal through a series of mass meetings and a lobby of the HEC at UCU's headquarters have rocked our campuses, the employers and the wider trade union movement.

Thousands of people joined the London #MarchForEducation2 on Wednesday including a number of delegations from outside London.

Ordinary, rank and file, members of UCU have shown that they're in control of this dispute. That mood was reflected at Wednesday's rally in Westminster Central Hall organised by London Region UCU. The meeting turned into one big activist meeting with strikers reporting successful initiatives.

Kings College London

Today is another big day in the dispute, with rallies and protests on campuses across the country. There is a call for "mass picket" photos at 11.30am. That would be a good way to show the continuing strength of this strike.

The fight now needs to be for status quo. The scheme is not in crisis, the deficit is a convenient fabrication—so why should we pay more to get less?

Every branch needs to vote for that position. Yesterday, a big emergency general meeting at Kings College London voted 200-0 for a motion backing that position. We need "status



Newcastle voted #NoCapitulation (183-0)

quo" to be the union's national position, most importantly that's what we need to strike for. UCL has already supported that position as has Ruskin UCU.

The union has 14 more days of strikes on the table. That's good. Strike dates are to be set in discussion with UCU branches. UCU needs to name the days to show UUK that we're determined to win this fight and we need to coordinate the strikes.

Marketisation and austerity

Our union leaders need to catch up. They have misjudged the mood just as much as the employers. A victory for UCU in this fight will be a victory not just for our pensions but against marketization and austerity.

The other part of the argument for "status quo" needs to be that the government should underwrite the scheme. This doesn't actually cost anything.

It is a guarantee against the apocalyptic scenario of universal bankruptcy of the sector. If that happens the government has bigger problems anyway!!

Government guarantee exists for the school teachers and NHS pension schemes—why not for ours? UCU needs to organise a national lobby over this.

Ratchet up the pressure

It has been brilliant to see Jeremy Corbyn, Richard Burgon and others posting supportively for UCU. But it would really ratchet up the pressure on the Tories if Corbyn and Labour came out to say they would underwrite USS.

Some Universities still have two strike days to go, as they didn't strike during their reading week. Strikers at those universities need to make the most of those strike days. But activity doesn't have to stop when this round of strikes ends.

Protests and meetings can still be held that ratchet up the pressure locally on the employers, to show that we won't back down.

Let's fight to win!

MARCH AGAINST RACISM

Assemble 12 noon, Sat 17 March,
Portland Place,
London W1A 1AA
Called by Stand Up to Racism
Supported by UCU