MEMBER BULLETIN

**COUNTDOWN TO 6 FEBRUARY 2014**

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| Unison is calling for members working in higher education to take a third day of strike action on 6 February 2014 over the employer’s measly 1% pay offer that condemns workers to another year of a real term pay cut. The walkout follows the decision by universities to shut down pay talks and forcibly impose a 1% offer. Since the last day of action on 3 December, the university employers have written to the trade unions telling them that they would not hold any further negotiations over pay and urging universities to impose the 1% offer.* Pay restraint hasn’t been a problem for Vice-chancellor’s. Figures released in January show that their pay increased by 8.1% in 2013.
* The higher education sector is an economic success story. It has seen massive surpluses of over £1 billion pounds per year over the last 2 years and is described as “sound overall” by HEFCE, with more surplus forecast for the year ahead.
* UK Universities are amongst the best in the world. They have seen their income increase whilst students have seen their fees increase to £9,000. Universities have invested in new buildings and public spaces – as well as the odd Picasso!

The trade unions want to see investment in the staff that provides services to students.Higher education workers are ‘missing’ anything from £667 - £3547 from their salaries and face a cost of living crisis, as their incomes are squeezed. * More than 4,000 employees are paid less than the Living Wage of £7.65 per hour (£8.80p in London).
* UK Vice Chancellors have seen their total pay bill increase from £30,116,314 in 2007/08 to £34,115,525 in 2011/12! An increase of 13%!

Across the UK, university workers are seeing their terms and conditions eroded and their salaries squeezed to breaking point. UNISON are calling on members to take strike action on 6 February to demonstrate their ongoing support for a decent pay rise and to bring pressure on the employers to return to negotiations - to make the kind of offer that members deserve.    **MESSAGE FROM CHAIR OF UNISON HIGHER EDUCATION SERVICE GROUP**Dear UNISON Member,Every one of us should be entitled to fair pay, earning at least the Living Wage.  Being paid fairly is not a gift from the employers, but our right. The cost of living continues to rise leaving many of us struggling to cope with day- to- day living.  We deserve the right to a decent pay award and to share in the success of higher education. We will remind employers of this by taking strike action on 6 February.Below inflation pay awards are unjust, especially when compared to salaries and bonuses received by some Vice Chancellors and Senior Management.  We deserve a decent and fair pay award for all our hard work and to make up for our pay falling in real terms over past few years and because “We’re Worth It”.Our message to our employers on 6 February is a simple one “We’re worth it!” That is why UNISON members will take industrial action to send a clear message to the employers that we demand a fair and decent pay settlement.My best wishes and support to you all,Denise Ward  |  |