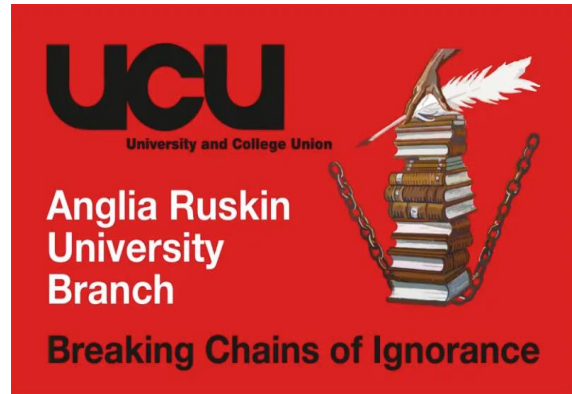




## JOINT STATEMENT FROM THE RECOGNISED TRADE UNIONS AT ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

Further to the address made by our Vice Chancellor Roderick Watkins to UNISON and UCU representatives at the Extraordinary Joint Consultative and Negotiating Group (JCNG) on March 18<sup>th</sup>, we note the following:

- The Vice Chancellor announced the need to search for efficiencies, with particular emphasis on Professional Services. Other efficiencies are planned in relation to rationalisation of the academic portfolio (serving to address areas of low recruitment for courses and modules), introducing teaching-only roles, inspecting how academics spend their time, streamlining procurement processes and scrutinising all staff vacancies. We also note that the VC has rejected the demand presented by UCU for a local pay uplift.
- UNISON and UCU note that the VC did not provide documentary evidence for Trade Union review that might support the plans to seek efficiencies, and no further evidence has been forthcoming since that meeting.
- UNISON and UCU have observed that in subsequent meetings and staff forums, the VC continues to emphasise the need for us all to tighten our belts; however, we have not seen the necessary data analysis to support the VC's position. Despite the university's commitment to staff wellbeing, the VC continues to push forward the efficiencies agenda, which is negatively impacting on the wellbeing of many colleagues, particularly in Professional Services, and also amongst academic staff running specialist courses with lower student numbers.
- UNISON and UCU reject the rationale provided for denying a local pay uplift. We believe that this is easily accommodated and that the university should continue negotiations with the Trade Unions on this point. It is somewhat surprising that our university states that a local pay uplift is unaffordable, in light of the significant pay uplift awarded to members of the Vice Chancellors Group in recent years. Considering the massive spend on the Creative Quarter, the costly Agents' Conferences being hosted in exotic locations, and the planned budget-busting staff party in June, these spending decisions can seem insensitive and confusing to ARU staff.
- UNISON and UCU represent ARU staff who tell us of their financial struggles during this cost-of-living crisis, while managing hugely increased workloads. This challenging context must be recognised by a modest reallocation of university funding to our hard-working staff.

- UNISON and UCU request a detailed return on investment analysis for every area of our University, that clearly sets out the business case for the efficiency savings.
- UNISON and UCU request a detailed Workforce Planning analysis to demonstrate that the VC's plan for our workforce is reasoned and supported by the evidence. This must be planned holistically to balance the internal and external factors, and should take effect over a reasonable timeframe, to protect the wellbeing of staff impacted by the efficiencies.
- UNISON and UCU recognise the issues in our sector and remain willing to work constructively with management in the spirit of collective bargaining and negotiation.

**UNISON Anglia Ruskin University Branch and UCU Anglia Ruskin University Branch, 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024**