

## FE colleges rocked by unjustified job cuts

Colleges have been hit by savage job cuts in recent months, with redundancies in over 50 colleges and more than 1,000 jobs cut or at risk.

UNISON is clear that despite the problems with Capital funding and Train to Gain the overall national funding picture for 2009/10 in no way justifies the scale of job losses we have seen.

Fearing that this year's job cuts are only the tip of the iceberg – with £240 million of adult funding cuts planned for 2010/11 and £100 million to be cut from the agencies – UNISON has committed to defending every job in every college.

### What we have done

- In coalition with the other FE unions we held a national day of action against job cuts in July (see page 5).
- We are about to begin negotiations with the Association of Colleges (AoC) on a new redundancy avoidance agreement, which

we aim to get finalised as soon as possible.

- We have produced specific negotiating and campaigning materials for college reps faced with proposed job cuts (see [www.unison.org.uk/furthereducation](http://www.unison.org.uk/furthereducation))

### What you can do

- Join the union. Strength in numbers is the key to protecting jobs: union strength at Stoke on Trent College forced the college to abandon plans to close its nursery.
- If you're in the union, encourage your colleagues to join UNISON. You can now join online at: [www.unison.org.uk](http://www.unison.org.uk)
- Sign the joint union petition on FE funding: [www.notofundingcuts.org.uk](http://www.notofundingcuts.org.uk)
- Keep us informed. We need to know urgently of proposed job and services cuts at your college.  
Email: [education@unison.co.uk](mailto:education@unison.co.uk)

### Defending FE jobs is our top priority.



### STOP PRESS:

UNISON members in England have voted by 88% to accept the Association of College's (AoC) 1.5% final pay recommendation for 2009/10.

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### Contact

Telephone:  
0845 355 0845

Email:  
[education@unison.co.uk](mailto:education@unison.co.uk)

# Unions fight nursery closures

A major joint campaign has been launched by the National Union of Students, UCU and UNISON in response to the growing number of nursery closures in further and higher education.

Some institutions are claiming that they are being forced to close their nurseries as a result of national funding cuts due in 2010/11. UNISON, UCU and NUS are however outraged that colleges and universities are rushing in to make unjustified cuts without even thinking through the consequences for their students and staff. It is not clear yet where the 2010/11 funding cuts will bite, so institutions should not be making knee-jerk decisions. We are absolutely opposed to the closure of nurseries based in colleges and universities.

Nursery closures will lead to unnecessary redundancies, and are happening at a time when the government is proposing to raise the participation age, which could increase the demand on nursery provision.

Chris Fabby, national officer at UNISON, said, "Nurseries are going to be a target. It's a short-sighted policy.



"Clearly, there is a potential impact on single parents, or those with limited funds for childcare, and their ability to study. There are people who couldn't have made it to college if they didn't have that service."

Closures would have an impact on student retention. If a student became pregnant while studying and had no access to affordable childcare, she might have to give up her studying. Cuts would also raise difficult questions about gender equality on campus.

"The whole outlook about improving the lives of students and staff is thoroughly undermined by closures," Mr Fabby said.

This joint campaign pack has been produced to help nursery staff, student parents, student officers and trade union

representatives to work together to prevent any proposed or future closures.

The toolkit is available from: [www.unison.org.uk/file/A9305.pdf](http://www.unison.org.uk/file/A9305.pdf)

and the poster from: [www.unison.org.uk/file/A9305i.pdf](http://www.unison.org.uk/file/A9305i.pdf)

If you are unable to print or download these documents then email [education@unison.co.uk](mailto:education@unison.co.uk) and we can arrange for them to be sent to you.

# UNISON slams hypocrisy on pay



UNISON has accused college heads of shameful hypocrisy on pay after figures revealed that 79 colleges across England had boosted their principals' salaries in 2008/9 but still refused to award their support staff the nationally agreed £550 minimum pay increase.

UNISON has also found that 18 of these colleges gave their senior post holders significant pay increases in 2008/09 while refusing to honour the national pay deal for college staff. For example West Suffolk College gave its senior post holders pay increases ranging between 15% - 24% on 1 August 2008.

Some of the 79 colleges that refused to honour the 2008/09 deal also operate minimum rates of pay well below the nationally agreed £6.91 an hour.

UNISON gathered this evidence by sending a Freedom of Information request on pay to those colleges in England refusing to honour the 2008/09 deal. We will be using this information to challenge hypocrisy and increase public pressure on colleges to implement all national deals.

For the full results of our survey visit [www.unison.org.uk/furthereducation](http://www.unison.org.uk/furthereducation) and look for the article headed 'named and shamed'. You will also find a list of the two-thirds of colleges in England that did honour the 2008/09 national pay deal.

## List of the shamed

These colleges did not honour the 2008/9 national deal of £550 increase for the lowest paid staff:

College	Pay increase to senior managers and/or post-holders 08/09	Principal's pay
Huntingdonshire Regional College	2% - 5%	£88,084
Dunstable College	2.5% - 7.03%	£101,284
Strode College	3.2% - 4.5%	£121,272
Selby College	3.2% - 11.9%	£100,000
Oaklands College	3.5% - 9%	£130,000
West Kent College	4.5% - 9%	£120,330
Otley College	Up to 4.95%	£95,500
South Devon College	4.9% - 6%	£133,000
Grantham College	5.40%	£96,985
Plumpton College	5.20%	£83,542
Bradford College	3% - 7%	£141,947
Bridgewater College	7.1% - 9.5%	£141,464 (07/08)
Northbrook College	3% - 7.3%	£124,629
Alton College	7.8% - 8.5%	£92,250
West Suffolk College	15% - 24%	£115,000
North Devon College	Up to 21%	£136,019

# A message from the chair

This coming academic year presents us with many challenges: Capital Funding, Machinery of Government changes and pay, to name just a few. This comes on top of all the changes, restructures, and redundancies we have endured since incorporation all those years ago.

These are difficult times but it never ceases to amaze me how dedicated and resilient our members are. The impact we have on the lives of people in our communities is immeasurable.

Each year the fantastic work our members do is recognised at the Star Awards. Workers in colleges and sixth forms have a tremendous influence on our students, helping them overcome immense difficulties, which enables them to complete their studies.

Now UNISON is hoping to form a stronger, bigger and more energetic service group so that we can be a true force to be reckoned with in our workplaces.

Following the consultation on new structures in UNISON

we are having discussions on the formation of a new service group to encompass workers in post-16 education.

To this end we have now entered discussions with our colleagues in higher education. The discussions are in their infancy, but with good will and comradeship from all parties, by this time next year we hope to be part of an improved service group in which all workers in our sector will be recognised and valued.

**Anne McCormack, chair of the FE and sixth form committee**



## Reasons to attend the FE and sixth form seminar 2010

### Sue Parry shares her thoughts.

I attended my first further education and sixth form seminar in March 2009, along with two other new reps from Hugh Baird College. We weren't sure what to expect, but decided it might be a good chance to make contact with reps at other colleges.

### Workshops

Robinson College in Cambridge was an inspirational location for the seminar. Everything was very well organised and there was an array of relevant workshops to sign up to, such as bullying and harassment, equality, health and safety, job evaluation and more.

### Contacts

There was also the very important task of getting to know the other reps from colleges across the UK. We've never met a bunch of nicer people, and feel we've made some very good friends out of it. It was also really good to meet people from national UNISON, who gave us strong advice and

encouragement with our pay campaign at the college.

### Networks

We came back from the seminar full of information and ideas and excited to put everything into practice. It has given us a huge boost in confidence and a network of people we can call on.

### Fun

The seminar is a must for any reps in FE and sixth form colleges, and you will have heaps of fun in the process. The other reps at Hugh Baird College and myself will be first in the queue for next year's seminar in Edinburgh, and hope to see lots of first timers there.

The next further education and sixth form seminar will take place on 9-11 April 2010 at the Edinburgh Conference Centre, Herriot Watt University.

To find out more contact [education@unison.co.uk](mailto:education@unison.co.uk) or if you would to come along then get in touch with your local branch.

## College under a spotlight

### UNISON rep Caroline Hennessy tells us what has been happening at her college.

At Aylesbury College, UNISON membership has grown over the last 12 months since I've become a rep. The members are becoming more active and responsive to the 'change initiatives' that senior management have brought in.

One of these in June 2009 was a restructure of five college departments, putting three UNISON members' jobs 'at risk of redundancy'. After a month-long consultation period all three UNISON members were redeployed within the college.

### Lucky 32 campaign

In January 2009 we decided to find out how much money in bonuses was awarded to the senior management team and principal. We sent in two Freedom of Information requests and found out that £32,000 was awarded in 'performance related' pay bonuses. We started a joint campaign with UCU called the 'Lucky 32' campaign. Every member of staff was given a 'Lucky 32' badge and leaflet entitled 'Don't be an April Fool Over Pay' explaining the campaign. We asked everyone to wear the badge on 1 April 2009.

It is more important than ever to be part of a union that will look after and support your interests within the workplace.

If you would like to put your college under the spotlight and let other members in the sector know what is going then email [education@unison.co.uk](mailto:education@unison.co.uk)

Lucky  
32

# Putting learning at the heart of FE and sixth forms

**Union Learn East Midlands is working with colleges to ensure they put their money where their mouth is on learning.**

Many colleges have signed up to the Union Learn kite mark to show they are keen to work with unions as deliverers of learning. So, we thought we should ask them to work with their union.

We set up a partnership with Union Learn, our regional lay lead for FE, Carol Warren, and began working with the colleges where we knew they deliver on behalf of unions. Union Learn project worker Graham Randle has taken the lead by getting in touch with UNISON contacts and learning co-ordinators.

At Castle College a union learning rep, Graham Warren, signed the region's first FE learning agreement. Graham

Warren and Carol did a brilliant job to draft the regional learning agreement model and get it agreed.

South Notts college quickly followed and promised release time for their staff to do Skills for Life. At Northampton College Graham and the learning co-ordinator recruited two new ULRs and a health & safety rep. Several other colleges are lining up to sign their agreement and we have advertised for an FE ULR course.



## Have you been JE'D?

UNISON is pressing all FE colleges to get on with Job Evaluation (JE) as soon as possible.

We recognise that some members may not be getting the right "rate for the job". JE is a way of correcting this by comparing every job in the college to ensure that everyone is getting Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value.

While JE won't give every UNISON member a pay rise, many will benefit and everyone can be sure their pay is fair in comparison with their workmates. Nationally, a lot of colleges are dragging their feet on JE, even though the Association of Colleges agrees that it should happen. The reality is that it won't, unless we insist on it. We hope this can be achieved through negotiation.

In Nottinghamshire, we have persuaded all but one of our six colleges – including a Sixth Form College – to move forward with JE. The results are looking good and the members are more than happy with the progress.

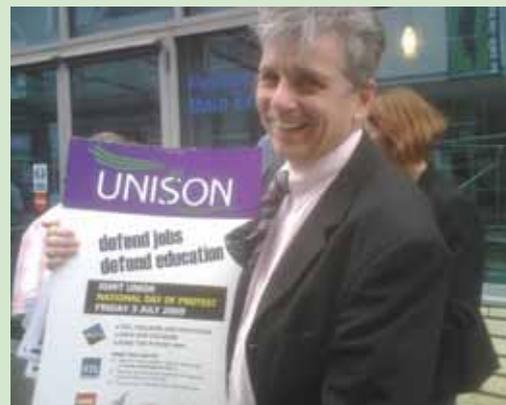
If you want to persuade your college to get on with JE, speak to your local UNISON rep, your branch secretary or your regional organiser.

Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College has been using the Gauge system for Job Evaluation to provide an equitable, consistent and transparent basis for valuing jobs that will remove some of the historical inaccuracies that could lead to equal pay claims.

As we are one of the first sixth form colleges to undertake the JE process it has been an interesting journey. Over the past 18 months we have negotiated the process with a very receptive college HR department and principal and will continue talks on aspects like back pay and protection.

The proposals are now with UNISON's national office, and we hope soon to be able to guide our members on the proposals and set an implementation date.

**Andy Jackson, theatre technician, Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College, North West region.**



Job Evaluation 

**Mike Scott, Notts UNISON branch organiser**

# Lunchtime protests

When 50 FE colleges announced redundancies this summer the unions responded with a series of lunchtime protests outside FE colleges in England.



On 3 July members took a stand in rain and shine to defend jobs and education.

Sue Parry, from Hugh Baird College in Merseyside shared her experience:

Despite the heavy rain and pressure from the college management to call off the protest, members from UNISON, Unite and UCU turned up to support the protest at Hugh Baird College in Bootle, Merseyside.

Free muffins and bottled water kept the hunger at bay, and trucks passing the college on their way to the ferry terminal cheerfully honked their support.

As well as showing support for our colleagues at other colleges who are facing redundancy, it was also a great chance to show our own college the strength of feeling amongst the staff. The day was a great success.



Pictures come from members in colleges in:  
Barnsley  
Hackney  
Merseyside  
Tower Hamlets and  
Poplar

*Thank you!*



# Adding my voice to change...

**Maggie Fordham, a rep at Richmond Upon Thames College, tells how she is adding her voice to UNISON's Million Voices for Change campaign.**

Having joined the support staff of the college where I was formerly a teacher, I felt the need to become a UNISON rep after experiencing some heavy-handed management tactics.

My new job involved some evening work. Management offered support staff time off in lieu for this work and were not allowing us to claim overtime. Checking our contracts, we found that we could choose whether to receive overtime or time off in lieu. To add insult to injury, management tried to change this clause in the contract on an individual basis without negotiation with the union! It felt like the union did not exist in management eyes – how could they so blatantly disregard our agreement and its terms?

This was too much to bear. I signed up as a rep and took myself off to the first UNISON training seminar for members in the education sector, excited and keen like a first year at a new school.

The first speaker, Jon Richards gave an enlightening talk on the future of FE funding for both young and adult learners. He urged us to get behind the recruitment challenge and make sure we face the coming difficulties with as many members recruited as possible.

Christine McAnea, national secretary for education services, took up the issue of contracts for support staff in FE; an issue that was close to my heart. She called for a common core contract and a national pay framework for all non-teaching FE staff.

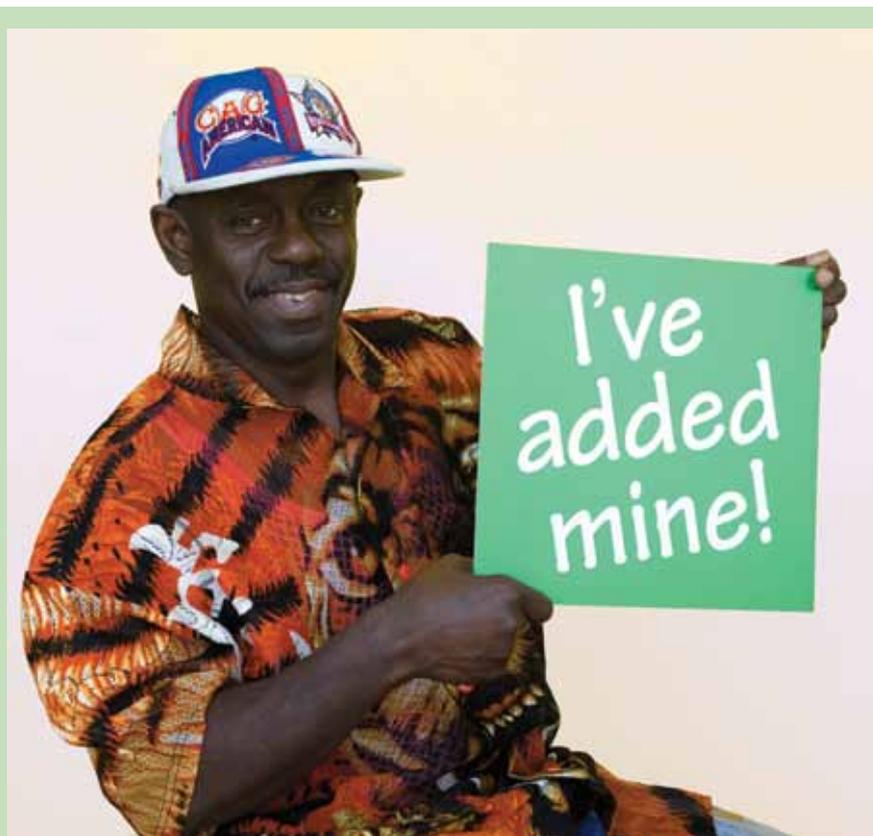
This sounds right and just, but in an economic climate that has worsened considerably since the seminar was held in March, is it feasible that management will agree to implement a just system?

Let's face it, we are increasingly seeing short-term contracts and agency staff and some colleges refusing to abide by any nationally agreed pay settlements for support staff. I don't hold out much hope, but will continue the struggle for what is right and just; that is why I am a trade union member.

The seminar gave me a gentle but firm initiation into the role of a UNISON rep. It made me feel motivated and channelled my enthusiasm into practical activities. I have already started a newsletter and a recruitment

drive, as well as negotiating to reinstate the UNISON slot in the new staff induction day. The UNISON noticeboard is looking more lively and I feel the profile of the union has been improved. UNISON and UCU have got together for some joint events. It is amazing how a problem with contracts has inspired me to get organised and to add my voice to change. I've added mine will you add yours?

To find out more about UNISON or how to become a rep go to [www.unison.co.uk](http://www.unison.co.uk)



**Add your voice at  
[www.unison.org.uk/million](http://www.unison.org.uk/million)**

*Continued from page 1.*

**GMB, UNITE, ATL & ACM members have also voted to accept the offer. UCU members attending a special conference have however, voted to reject the offer. At the time of publication we are awaiting the AoC response to these results. For the latest news go to [www.unison.org.uk/furthereducation](http://www.unison.org.uk/furthereducation).**

**Our aim is to try and resolve this issue as swiftly as possible so college staff can get their pay rise. The national pay deal when implemented should be backdated to the 1 August 2009 (unless your college has a different settlement date).**

# Minister's further education statement



At the Wales Labour Party Conference on 25 April 2009, UNISON's Mark Turner questioned whether, in light of the recent funding situation, the current governance of FE colleges is sufficient. Jane Hutt, Welsh Assembly government minister replied:

"The Further Education & Training Act 2007 included framework clauses, transferring to the assembly the ability to reform the governance arrangements of FE colleges in Wales. The deputy minister wishes to use those powers, as part of the government's general determination to transform the landscape of post 16 education in Wales in both FE colleges and schools.

"Building on from the Webb Review of the mission and purpose of further education in Wales (Promise and Performance: December 2007) the deputy minister intends to put in place governance arrangements to promote greater joint working and integration between schools and FEs and to ensure flexibility to accommodate collaboration across boundaries.

"The deputy minister intends to draw together a group to advise him on options for reform. The group will include representatives from the relevant trade unions, students,

Fforwm, college principals, current governing bodies, appropriate employer interests and the WLGA.

"Its remit will include an exploration of different models for future FE governance, within the parameters of the new legislative powers available to us, and to make recommendations."

Eddie Gabrielsen, speaking for UNISON, said: "We welcome this review. Further education needs collaboration and joined up thinking and not each college competing or going its own separate way. Hopefully, the review will find a stronger governance model and uniformity to drive this forward".

Since the minister's announcement UNISON has been invited by Welsh Assembly deputy minister for skills John Griffiths AM to sit on the Task and Finish working group. The first meeting took place on 30 July 2009 and it became apparent that the governance of higher education and schools may become a factor in the review.

UNISON is making preparations for a submission to the working party when a consultation announcement is made on this issue.

# Join UNISON — your friend at work

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**UNISON EDUCATION, FREEPOST WC5652, LONDON WC1H 9BR**

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£96.17–£153.84	£5,001–£8,000	£1.22	£5.30	C
£153.85–£211.53	£8,001–£11,000	£1.52	£6.60	D
£211.54–£269.23	£11,001–£14,000	£1.81	£7.85	E
£269.24–£326.92	£14,001–£17,000	£2.24	£9.70	F
£326.93–£384.61	£17,001–£20,000	£2.65	£11.50	G
£384.62–£480.76	£20,001–£25,000	£3.23	£14.00	H
£480.77–£576.92	£25,001–£30,000	£3.98	£17.25	I
£576.93–£673.08	£30,001–£35,000	£4.68	£20.30	J
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