



## Vote **YES** to protect your pension

All UNISON members employed by further education and sixth form colleges to be balloted for action.

If your employer operates the local government pension scheme, NHS pension scheme or civil service pension scheme then this month you'll receive a ballot paper asking you to take industrial action over your pension. All members employed by the college will be balloted and be entitled to participate in the action regardless of whether they are a member of these pension schemes or not.

I'm asking you to vote 'yes' because proposed changes to your pension schemes simply aren't fair. You pay into your pension throughout your career so that you can have security and dignity in retirement. Now, ministers want most of you to pay more, to work longer and at the end of your working life, to receive a worse pension.

Did you know that the ministers we're negotiating with, without agreement, have already changed for the worse the way in which those receiving a public sector pension get an increase each year to take account of inflation? They have stopped using the Retail Price Index which has been used for decades and, from this year, pensions will only increase in line with the Consumer

Price Index – a much worse index. This change alone has reduced the overall value of the pensions by over 10%.

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Now, they want to increase your pension contributions by around 50% if you earn above £15,000. It's the equivalent on average of a 3% pay cut.

Not a penny of this major increase in your contributions will go towards improving your pension schemes. Instead it will go to the Treasury. This is an additional unfair tax on public sector workers and is deliberately disguised as money for the pension schemes, which they falsely claim to be unaffordable. The truth is public sector pension funds are cash rich and affordable.

On top of this, they want most of you to work longer before you can take your pension in full. Even if you have a protected pensionable retirement age of 65, this will be torn up. You will be expected to work until 66, then to 67 and 68 as the state retirement age increases.

I want to assure you that we have negotiated with ministers in good faith and will continue to negotiate. But we also know that you are already enduring pay freezes, the threat of privatisation, reorganisation and cuts in services.

It's not fair to target you any further. You deserve the pension you are already entitled to. And so we have decided to ballot for industrial action. We only take strike action as a last resort. We will do everything in our power to ensure no harm occurs to students but we need to send a message that we will stand up to protect our pensions.

*(continued overleaf)*

# NG COLLEGES



**UNISON**  
Education Services

**Contact**

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Email  
education@unison.co.uk

## EMA – Pressure mounts

A committee of MPs has publically attacked the way the government brought in cuts to the Education Maintenance Allowance. The education select committee said the changes left this year's 15-16-year-olds unable to make informed choices.

In an ideological assault on the life chances of ordinary young people the careers service has been smashed and university tuition fees ramped up.

But in recent weeks the evidence against government policies has

mounted. According to a recent BBC report enrolments at some colleges in England have slowed in the wake of the scrapping of the EMA. The Association of Colleges is conducting a "super survey" of its 352 members to discover the scale of the problem with the results due in just a matter of weeks.

UNISON is determined to keep the pressure on government. You can help by emailing your MP and asking them to raise concerns about the axing of the EMA in parliament.

● Find your MP at:  
<http://www.theyworkforyou.com/>



## Members vote to accept AoC final pay offer

UNISON members in England have voted to accept the Association of Colleges (AoC) final pay recommendation offer for 2010/11.

The AoC final pay recommendation offer is:

- A consolidated salary increase of £200 per annum for all staff earning below £21,000.
- A consolidated salary increase of £125 per annum for staff earning £21,000 or above.

An Increase in the FE minimum hourly rate of pay to £7 20 an hour – this is the hourly amount that UNISON calculates to be the 'living wage' figure for outside of London. The living wage is meant to ensure every worker is paid enough to provide their family with the essentials of life.

### Next steps

The AoC will not send out the final pay recommendation to colleges until all six recognised unions have consulted their members. It is anticipated that this process will be completed by mid-October.

### What you can do

Once the AoC has sent out the pay recommendation please let us know if

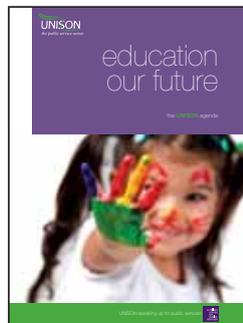
your college is refusing to implement the pay award by emailing:  
[education@unison.co.uk](mailto:education@unison.co.uk)

UNISON will be running a campaign for full implementation of the pay deal. Details will be available soon at:  
[unison.org.uk/education/further/](http://unison.org.uk/education/further/)

## Education – our future

UNISON believes that education is the engine of economic success, as well as a major vehicle for tackling inequality, delivering social justice and maintaining a stable and fulfilled society.

Order our new Education – our future manifesto online (free to UNISON members), stock number 3066.



## Sixth form colleges pay

The employers made no pay offer for 2011/12 at the July meeting of the sixth form college national negotiating committee.

UNISON members have been writing to principals asking them to reconsider their position, as this is grossly unfair

at a time of high inflation. It fails to meet even the minimum offer proposed by the government of £250 for staff earning less than £21,000.

We are meeting with the teaching unions to press our case for an improved offer and will be seeking a further meeting with the sixth form college forum.

Members are reminded that colleges should still pay the Support Staff Standards Award in December and the agreed increases in London weighting and fringe allowances.

*(continued from page 1)*

We need your support and your help to send this message. When you receive your ballot paper I urge you to vote 'yes'. Talk to your colleagues and get them to join UNISON to strengthen our voice.

Talk to your local branch and your local MP and for more information look at our website [unison.org.uk/protectourpensions](http://unison.org.uk/protectourpensions)

**Vote 'YES' and together we can send a powerful message to protect our pensions.**

## News from Scotland

### Funding

Scotland's colleges are under continuing funding pressure. In the last year alone total college funding was slashed by 10.4% leading to the loss of over 1,000 jobs – 7% of college staff. The Scottish government has also announced further funding cuts for the following three years. UNISON will fight to defend every job in every college.



### Regionalisation

The Scottish government has also outlined plans for much greater “regionalisation” of colleges. The full proposals are contained in a recently published consultation paper on post-16 education. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2011/09/14142913> UNISON is concerned that under the proposals the number of colleges in Scotland could be greatly reduced from the current 41. UNISON will be responding to the document and if you have any feedback contact Emma Phillips [e.phillips@unison.co.uk](mailto:e.phillips@unison.co.uk) by the end of October.

### Training

During the summer we held a two-day training course for FE reps in Scotland which was a great success. There are going to be further training days held in Scotland. If you are a UNISON member in one of Scotland's colleges and want to be on the FE contact email list for regular updates on training and our other work please email Emma Phillips at: [e.phillips@unison.co.uk](mailto:e.phillips@unison.co.uk)

## Pay update from Wales

As part of the pay talks UNISON secured a commitment from the national employers that they would work with us to address the inconsistencies in support staff pay across Wales. This means that over the coming year we will be working to try and agree a new national pay scale for all college staff in Wales.



***‘Now is the time for action to defend our pensions. I therefore urge all UNISON members to vote yes in the ballot’***

**Anne McCormack**

Chair of UNISON further education and sixth form committee

## IfL update

Following talks with UNISON, UCU, IfL and the AoC minister for further education issued the following statement:

Issues concerning Institute for learning (IfL) membership

“I am pleased to hear in regard to the issues arising on IfL membership that a basis has been proposed on which constructive discussions can be resumed. I am grateful to all parties for their agreement to suspend legal and other activity in respect of this issue. I am committed to do all that I can to help find a solution that is in the best, longer term interests of those who are served by the sector and those who work within it.

For my part, I am happy to confirm I am commissioning an independent review of professionalisation in the FE sector. This will look broadly at the arrangements for achieving a professionalised workforce. How this is facilitated by the Institute for Learning and other partners in delivering the regulations and initiatives to support a professional workforce. I am continuing to work with all parties to ensure their support for the terms of reference and confidence in the appointment of the independent chair.

When I announce the Chair of the review I will also publish the terms of reference for the review to ensure maximum transparency for the process. My aim is to commission this review as soon as possible.”

UNISON welcomes this review which we will use as an opportunity to raise the issue of the right to professional development for all college staff not just teachers. Keep an eye on the UNISON website over the coming weeks for more details.

## Promoting workplace learning



*College staff that responded to the learning needs survey were entered into a prize draw. Marie Taylor, chair of Wolverhampton, Bilston & District Trades Union Council, and Alan Marriot UNISON drew the lucky winners*

Alan Marriot, Union Learning Rep (ULR) at Wolverhampton college, is campaigning to promote the right of all staff to workplace learning. Below he sets out just some of his recent work.

UNISON and UCU, working with management recently sent out over 1,000 copies of a learning needs survey to all staff. We will use the results of the survey to design new courses specifically for college staff.

UNISON locally is supporting 15 college staff on an Open University taster course, and working with regional office we are also holding a return to learn course at the college.

Our campaign for learning doesn't stop at the college gates, we are looking to support the development of union education work in the wider community. This is likely to include putting on a mixture of IT, Skills for Life and personal development courses in an area of high unemployment. Some of the courses will be run at my College.

We are all busy fighting to defend jobs and pensions but we will always make time to defend and promote the rights of our people and the wider community to learning.

# Join UNISON – your friend at work

PLEASE FILL IN THIS FORM IN BLOCK CAPITALS USING BLACK INK AND GIVE IT TO YOUR UNISON REP OR SEND TO THE ADDRESS BELOW  
**FREEPOST RSKU-RRGA-HHSJ, EDUCATION, UNISONCENTRE, 130 EUSTON ROAD, LONDON NW1 2AY**

## 1. YOUR PERSONAL DETAILS

Please tick or fill in the boxes below

Mrs  Ms  Miss  Mr  Other

First name  Other initials(s)

Surname/Family name  Date of birth  /  /

Home address

Postcode

National insurance number (from your payslip)

### How would you describe your ethnic origin?

Bangladeshi  Asian Other  Black UK  
 Chinese  Black  Black Other  
 Indian  African  White UK  
 Pakistani  Black  Irish  
 Caribbean  White Other  
 Asian UK

Please tick this box if you require materials in a different format (eg large print or Braille) – be sure to supply contact details below

Please give a telephone number/voice/text/email address for UNISON to contact you – indicate if work or home

Contact tel/voice/text/email

## 2. YOUR EMPLOYMENT DETAILS

Employer's name

Your job title/occupation

Department/section

Workplace name and address

Postcode

Payroll number (from your payslip)

## 3. WHAT YOU WILL PAY – FROM 1 October 2003

Please tick the appropriate box for your earnings before deductions.

Weekly pay	Annual pay	YOUR SUBSCRIPTION—WHAT YOU PAY		Band	Please tick the appropriate box to indicate how often you are paid
		per week	per month		
Up to £38.47	Up to £2,000	£0.30	£1.30	A	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Fortnightly <input type="checkbox"/> Four Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly
£38.48–£96.16	£2,001–£5,000	£0.81	£3.50	B	<input type="checkbox"/> Please tick this box if you are a student member in full-time education (including student nurses or Modern Apprentices). Your subscription is £10 per year.
£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	
£673.08+	over £35,000	£5.19	£22.50	K	

## 4. POLITICAL FUND

UNISON's Affiliated Political Fund (APF) is used to campaign for and promote UNISON policy and the need for quality public services within the Labour Party, locally and nationally, in Parliament and Europe. UNISON APF affiliates to the Labour Party.

UNISON's General Political Fund (GPF) is used to pay for campaigning at branch, regional and national levels of the union and for research and lobbying in Parliament and Europe. It is independent of support for any political party.

It is important that you indicate a choice of fund by ticking one of the boxes below.  
 Your subscription shown above includes a political fund payment so you do not pay any more by being in one of the funds.

## 5. YOUR AUTHORISATION

- I wish to join UNISON and accept its rules and constitution.
- I authorise deduction of UNISON subscriptions from my salary/wages at the rate determined by UNISON in accordance with its rules to be paid over to them on my behalf and
- I authorise my employer to provide information to UNISON to keep my records up to date

- I authorise deduction of the following Political Fund payment as part of my subscription: Tick one box only
- Affiliated Political Fund  General Political Fund

### Now please sign and date below

Signature

Date

### OTHER WAYS TO PAY

direct debit  cheque

(please tick if appropriate)

If you have been a member of a trade union before, please state which one: .....

### DATA PROTECTION

UNISON will process your membership information together with other information for administration, statistical analysis, conducting ballots and other statutory requirement purposes. We may also send you newsletters, journals and surveys and let you know about educational and campaigning matters. We will disclose your information to our service providers and agents for these purposes.

If you do not want any mailings from UNISON besides those required by statute as shown in bold above, please tick this box.

We may share your information with organisations with whom we have a business relationship for your benefit. We, or they, may contact you by mail, telephone, SMS, fax or e-mail to let you know about goods, services or promotions which we think may be of interest to you.

If you do not wish to receive such information please tick this box.