



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY BRANCH NEWSLETTER October 2010

Pay and Grading

Pay Ballot result: the closing date for the ballot on pay and related issues was Monday 20 September at 12.00 noon. Unite negotiators were asking members to reject the 0.4% pay award. Of the Branch ballot papers returned, a slim majority voted to reject the offer. The results of the local ballot have been forwarded to the Unite National Officer.

Cambridge University: Britain's richest university

We would like to congratulate the University in being recognised as one of the richest universities in the world. As noted by the *Financial Times*, Cambridge is by far the richest university in Britain and if it were in America would be 7th on the university rich list (Oxford only ranks 15th).

The FT writes "The University of Cambridge is now comfortably Britain's richest university, confirming its place in the global top 10 of academic endowments with £4bn, after a strong investment performance and a billion-pound fundraising drive."

The Cambridge University Endowment Fund posted a return of 19 per cent over the year to June. The university, has also recently completed a push to raise £1bn in fresh donations. The CUEF manages about £1bn of assets. The pool, which is run centrally by the university, is distinct from the endowments of the university's 31 independent colleges, which have investment assets worth £3bn. Two of the colleges invest in the CUEF. More are expected to follow."

Read the complete *Financial Times* article at: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/f1126d04-c0fc-11df-99c4-00144feab49a.html> or request a paper copy from Will.

Pensions

This will be on the agenda at the PWG early in October.

Review of payments to First Aiders?

Unite representatives have asked university management to reconsider the recent Safety Division's decision to cease paying University first aiders an honorarium. This decision, which has been made without meaningful consultation, came as a complete surprise to many who feel they are being unfairly penalised. More news after October's PWG.

Local Trades Council

The Branch is affiliated to the local Trades Council. Will Smith and Sara Bennett are representatives. Other members are welcome to attend but without voting rights.

Against education cuts

The National Union of Students and UCU are organising a protest against education cuts to take place on in London **Wednesday 10 November**. UCU are organising coaches for those who would like to attend. Details to follow.

Goodbye

We are very sorry indeed to say goodbye to John Baldwin who has been a stalwart member and branch official for many years. While we are extremely sorry to see him go, we are pleased that John will be enjoying a well-earned retirement. (Note on retirement: the pay is just as bad but the hours are better!)

Election for Unite General Secretary

Nominations for general Secretary is now closed. The Branch nomination was Gail Cartmail. Both she and Jerry Hicks are among the four candidates through to the next round when individual voting will take place.

The Ballot period runs from

25 October – 19 November 2010

Count: 20 – 21 November 2010

Declaration: 24 November 2010

New equality rights in the workplace

New rules aimed at banning discrimination by employers, covering areas such as age, disability and pay, came into force on 1 October. The Equality Act covers many workplace areas and draws nine separate pieces of legislation into a single Act.

The new law restricts the circumstances in which employers can ask job applicants questions about disability or health prior to offering them a position, making it more difficult for disabled people to be unfairly screened out.

There are also new powers for employment tribunals.

Employees will also now be able to file discrimination claims on two grounds, rather than one. For example, under the previous rules, a woman from an ethnic minority could not file a claim on counts of both gender and race discrimination - an employment tribunal would have to consider the claims separately. Under the new rules, an employee can file claims on two counts, but no more.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission said: "Everyone is protected by the new law: "It [the Act] covers age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex (meaning gender) and sexual orientation.

"Under the act people are not allowed to discriminate, harass or victimise another person because they belong to a group that the Act protects, they are thought to belong to one of those groups or are associated with someone who does."

Key changes in brief :

Associative discrimination extended to cover age, disability, gender reassignment and sex

Perceptive discrimination extended to cover disability, gender reassignment and sex

Indirect discrimination extended to cover disability

Situations in which individuals can complain of harassment are extended

The need for a comparator in victimisation claims is removed

New protection from discrimination arising from a disability

New definition of gender reassignment
Extension of the powers of Employment Tribunals (ETs)

Removal of the need for a comparator in direct pay discrimination cases

New provision on pay secrecy

Introduction of a public sector single equality duty

The Act brings together nine strands of equality law i.e. race, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age - these are now known as '*protected characteristics*':

Associative discrimination is treating a person less favourably because they associate with someone with protected characteristic e.g. someone is excluded from a work-related activity because they have a partner who has a history of mental illness; can apply equally to race, religion, belief or sexual orientation

Perceived discrimination is direct discrimination against someone because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic e.g. treating a colleague less favourably because you believe they are gay; applies equally to age, race, religion, belief, sexual orientation

Indirect discrimination is having a condition, policy or practice that particularly disadvantages people with a protected characteristic; applies to age, race, religion, belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage, civil partnership

The government is still considering a number of other provisions

ACAS provides a guide for employers at: <http://www.acas.org.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=2833&p=0>

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has a range of publications available at: <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/guidance-equality-act-2010/equality-act-2010-guidance/>

The Equality Challenge Unit has published a guidance document aimed at HE institutions: <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/equality-act-2010> or you can contact Will Smith for paper copies.

Protect public services in the Eastern Region, Mass Lobby of Parliament Tuesday 19 October

Some 487,000 people are employed in the public sector in the Eastern region, giving work to almost one in four, in services as diverse as schools, hospitals, highway maintenance, libraries, meals on wheels, social care, neighbourhood services, housing, youth support and much more. Wealth created by the public sector is therefore crucially important to the vitality of the private sector in the region.

The government is threatening to cut public spending by 25%. On the eve of the Comprehensive Spending Review when Chancellor George Osborne looks likely to unveil the deepest budgetary cuts in living memory, Unite is calling upon the government to think again about the speed and depth of threatened cuts, warning that an aggressive reduction in public spending will shrink the economy, reverse the prospect of recovery and see many, many jobs lost in the private sector too.

The rally takes place at Westminster Central Hall, London followed by a lobby of Parliament. Unite is working with other unions in the Eastern region to bring those who want to appeal directly to ministers and MPs. Free buses are being provided *but you must book your place*. A bus from Peterborough (dep 09.00) runs via Huntingdon Bus Station (09.30) and Cambridge Madingley Road Park & Ride (10.00). Please book via Unite Peterborough office tel: 01733 562152 or email Mick.Doherty@uniteunion.org. Another bus travels from Great Yarmouth via Norwich, Ipswich and Chelmsford: please tel Unite Norwich office on 0845 6052196 or email: Belinda.Thorn@unitetheunion.org. Remember that once public services are cut they are likely to be gone forever.

European Health and Safety Week 25-29 October

The theme for this year's health and safety week is maintenance in the workplace, and safety reps are encouraged to inspect their workplaces on National Inspection Day, Wednesday 27 October.

A new TUC document reveals that more than 20,000 people in the UK are killed prematurely at their work every year. Workplace safety is still as crucial as it has always been.

If you are interested in becoming a H & S rep please contact Robbie or Will.

Branch Training

The follow-up course on redundancy, "*Compromise Agreements*" was held on Thursday 30 September and eight reps attended. This will be a valuable tool for reps in the future as jobs are lost within the University.

The next training session will be on Health and Safety and will take place on a Friday towards the end of October. It will be a two-hour session over a lunchtime.

Reps Briefing Meetings

A Reps briefing Meeting took place on Monday 20 September at the USC. It is hoped to have regular briefing meetings for reps in addition to monthly Branch meetings. These will be held at roughly 6-8 week intervals so that workplace reps are updated in what is happening.

Cambridge University Press

CUP is currently preparing for their pay claim to be submitted at the beginning of next year. This is among items being discussed at a general meeting on 9 October.

CUP representatives are Sara Bennett and Daniel Perrett

Right To Work Campaign National Protest on 3 October

Two Branch members went along to the national protest and demonstration at the Tory Party Conference in Birmingham on Sunday 3 October, which was shown on *BBC News* at 10.00 pm that evening

Made in Dagenham

In 1968 the female workers at the Ford car plant in Dagenham walked out in protest when their demand to receive equal pay with men was refused. The women worked stitching together seat covers, intricate work carried out in sweltering conditions. Their action eventually led to the introduction of the Equal Pay Act in 1970. Now a film of the same title celebrates their struggle against discrimination and their fight for equality in the workplace. The film's theme song is performed by Sandie Shaw, herself a former Dagenham Ford worker. Now on general release and well worth seeing.

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For national news and issues please visit
the *Unite the Union* website at:
<http://www.unitetheunion.com/>

Minimum wage rises

The national minimum wage has risen to £5.93 an hour from £5.80 and for the first time people aged 21 will benefit from the rate. Previously the full rate applied to employees aged 22 and older.

There are also corresponding increases for younger workers, with 16 and 17-year-olds seeing a rise from £3.57 an hour to £3.64, for 18 to 20-year-olds from £4.83 to £4.92 an hour. The government has also introduced a minimum wage for apprentices for the first time, of £2.50 an hour for those under 19 years
BBC News website

UNITE Cambridge Website

The Unite / Amicus web pages are now on line at: <http://www.amicus.cam.ac.uk>
Website co-ordinator(s) : Steve Laurie and Cathy Salkield. Items for inclusion please contact: webmaster@amicus.cam.ac.uk

Use your website: copies of draft Minutes from monthly Branch meetings can be downloaded from the website and taken along to Branch meetings: this will help cut down on photocopying costs for the Branch.

Branch Newsletter

Please display a copies of Newsletter in your workplace. If you need additional copies please contact Will who will also be arranging for those members without email to receive their copies of the Newsletter via UMS. Please pass copies of your Newsletter to colleagues who may not be union members to show them what Unite can do for them.

Branch Meetings

Branch meetings take place on the first Monday of the month (except when a Bank Holiday occurs) at 12.45 pm in the Bramwell Lounge, University Sports and Social Centre (USC)

Branch officials and organisation: contact details

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Will Smith <i>Branch Secretary Health & Safety Recruitment & Organisation</i>	secretary@amicus.cam.ac.uk health-safety@amicus.cam.ac.uk
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