

Oxford UCU Branch Motion

Passed at Branch General Meeting on 27th January 2026

Oxford HE and FE Workers United: Solidarity with UCU Members at Abingdon and Witney College

This branch notes that:

- Workers in Further Education (FE) continue to see falls in the real value of their pay, must manage excessive workloads, and suffer the consequences of failed national bargaining arrangements.
- UCU has built a national campaign “New Deal for FE”, to support every FE branch in engaging in intense local bargaining and to put pressure on college employers nationally.
- The Association of Colleges (AoC) has failed to recommend a pay rise that would close the gap between FE and schoolteachers, tackle increasingly unmanageable workloads, or repair a broken national bargaining system.
- During October and November 2025, members in over 60 FE college employers in England were balloted for industrial action following the inadequate offer for 2025-26 from employers' representatives. A large majority of UCU members voted in support of strike action, with 25 branches securing a mandate for action.
- The local UCU branch at Abingdon and Witney College secured a strike action mandate, with ~80% of members voting in favour of taking action.

This branch believes that:

- For too long FE has been the neglected sector in Post-16 education.
- FE staff deserve the same pay as schoolteachers, professional respect, decent terms and conditions, and manageable workloads.
- Colleges should also commit to nationally agreed limits on teaching hours, class sizes, and evening and weekend work, alongside commitments to recruit more support staff and set boundaries around when staff can be contacted outside of working hours.
- HE and FE staff suffer similar issues of continuing pay degradation, excessive workloads, and inequality in pay and conditions.

- Many of the causes of the crisis in the FE sector are the same as in HE. Decades of marketisation and underinvestment in staff have hollowed out the Post-16 education system, degrading its promise as a public good. In each sector, local and national solutions are needed, and the government must intervene.
- Coordination and solidarity between union members across HE and FE can strengthen local/national actions and campaigns for fair pay and working conditions.

This branch resolves to:

- Communicate local FE campaigns and initiatives to members.
- Work towards building coordination (including through regular joint meetings) between union members in both HE and FE across Oxfordshire.
- To donate £500 towards Abingdon and Witney College's strike fund, in support of their ongoing dispute.