

# Fight the neoliberal agenda

**A**s president of the Open University UCU branch in 2018 I led the fight against an extreme neoliberal agenda which included “many, many hundreds of redundancies”, and proposals for radical changes to OU Charter and Statutes, including removal of protection for academic freedom to make it easier to dismiss academics.

As often happens, faced with the prospect of resolute industrial action supported by the overwhelming majority, management began to back down.

Our actions also contributed significantly to the broader staff revolt which led to the resignation of our former VC.

We also succeeded in concluding negotiations (in which I was a lead negotiator) for making more than 4,000 casually employed Associate Lecturers permanent employees on fractional contracts, and initiated a serious campaign to bring excessive workloads under control.

I am a lifelong trade unionist who has worked for the Open University for over 20 years because I believe in its original ethos of opening higher education to those who would not otherwise have access to it.

As an OU Associate Lecturer I have witnessed first-hand the transformative power of higher education, and well as the destructive impact of marketisation and high fees in England.

In 2017 I also served on the Congress elected Commission for Effective Industrial Action whose recommendations shaped our strategy in the USS dispute.

The USS dispute showed that UCU could win industrial action ballots, even under the Tory anti-union laws.

We mobilised new layers of members and recruited new members to the union. We had effective strike action. We won the argument that there was no good case for detriment to the USS pension scheme.

On the picket lines and at the teachouts we linked the industrial dispute with all the other issues about escalating workloads, casualisation and the marketisation of education.

We are most effective when we link the educational and the industrial issues. This dispute has transformed our union, encouraging members in other sectors to fight back on pay and employment conditions.

I am a Labour Party member and UCU Left supporter. If re-elected will work for:-

- Equality and ending all forms of harassment in the workplace
- Mounting a serious campaign against attacks on trade union rights embodied in the Trade Union Act and other anti-union legislation
- Building and strengthening alliances with students, sister unions, the Labour Party and other campaigners in defence of education, and against cuts and privatisation
- Defending colleagues impacted by Brexit and all those affected by “hostile environment” policies



- Defending and improving pay and terms and conditions
- For research to be a proper career, not serial temporary contracts for the majority
- Permanent fractional contracts for hourly paid lecturers and other casually employed teaching staff

We can defeat attacks on education and trade union rights, but to do so we need a leadership that believes we can fight back and win. I have the background and experience to contribute to this.

## Other past service to the union

### National

- Anti-Casualisation Committee, 2015-present
- NEC member, 2009-15, 2017-present
- I have contributed to negotiating guidance currently in use at branch level, and served on the following NEC sub-committees:
  - Recruitment and Organisation Committee

Education Committee  
Stress and Bullying working group  
Strategy and Finance Committee

### Local

- Branch secretary (2008-2017)
- 10 years' experience on the OU Joint Negotiating Committee
- Health and Safety representative
- Caseworker

## STV voting system

Please note that all members can vote in the elections for Equality, Casually Employed members' and Trustees seats

To maximise votes for progressive candidates we ask you to do the following:

- Please use your votes to **first endorse all UCU Left candidates** and only after that use lower preferences for other progressive candidates in each relevant list
- Give your highest preferences in the UK-elected list to UCU Left candidate(s) **from your region**

## UCU Left is supporting the following candidates in the NEC elections

### Vice President HE

Jo McNeill

### Honorary Treasurer

Paul Anderson

### Midlands HE

Kirsten Forkert  
Nick Hardy

### Midlands FE

Allister Mactaggart

### South HE

Deepa Govindarajan  
Driver  
Lesley Kane  
Marian Mayer  
Jaya John John

### North West HE

Anthony O'Hanlon  
Saira Weiner

### North West FE

Carol Cody

### Honorary Secretary

UCU Scotland  
Marion Hersh

### President

UCU Scotland  
Carlo Morelli

### North East HE

Bruce Baker

### UK-elected HE

Maria Chondrogiani  
Marion Hersh  
Carlo Morelli  
Jo Grady

### UK-elected FE

Richard McEwan  
Saleem Rashid

### Disabled members HE

Ciara Doyle

### Black members

Naina Kent  
Dave Muritu

### For a lay leadership that will:

- Fight to defend post-16 education
- Defend members' pensions, pay and conditions
- Respect democratic mandates
- Seek to build a campaigning, member-led union

More election materials can be found at: [uculeft.org](http://uculeft.org)

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