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## EDUCATION SECTOR

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Our Ref: MJR/vt

19<sup>th</sup> June 2012

Ms Jocelyn Prudence  
Chief Executive  
UCEA  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Woburn House  
20 Tavistock Square  
London  
WC1H 9HU

Dear Jocelyn

### **UCEA pay offers 2011 and 2012**

As you will be aware UCEA made a pay offer for the 2011 pay round worth approximately 0.5% in total for the pay bill in UK HEI's for 2011. This offer was substantially below the prevailing inflation rate at the time and as such was in effect a real terms pay cut.

Unite members rejected that offer and Unite and UCEA entered into dispute level meetings on the matter assisted by ACAS in the latter stages.

Unite members supported a vote by formal ballot to apply industrial action namely work to rule industrial action as of 30th November 2011.

In March 2012 I wrote to you to advise that Unite was advising its members to suspend industrial action pending engagement on the outcome of Pay and other negotiations on the 2012 pay round. I made clear to you that Unite was looking for an offer that would include a measure of "catch up" for 2011 and the hope was this would be enough to resolve the outstanding disputed matters between UCEA subscribers and Unite for the 2011 pay round.

As you will now be aware UCEA made a final offer on pay for the 2012 pay round of 1% in total at the meeting on the 22nd May. This amount is once again substantially below the prevailing RPI inflation rate and is at a time when overall pay as a proportion of total higher education income has fallen to an all time low but at the same time UK higher education financial surpluses have risen to around £1 Billion.

The 1% for 2012 again is viewed by Unite as a real term pay cut when measured against the prevailing RPI inflation rate.

The Unite National Committee considered the position on the 2011 and 2012 pay and condition claims and offers separately last week.

With regard to the 2011 suspended action, the Committee considered that as there had been no improvement in the original offer, the action short of strike including an overtime ban, should be reapplied. I am in the process of advising Unite members of this decision this week and the action will be reapplied after that.

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Unite will also apply a boycott of meetings with UCEA. Currently this will include meetings in relation to the Pension Forum, Staff Development Forum and Pay and Data Committee. On the New JNCHES Review or any meetings offered by ACAS further decisions by Unite will be taken on these at the appropriate time.

In relation to the 1% offer on pay for 2012 the Committee rejected this offer as woefully inadequate. The Committee has agreed to hold a full consultative ballot of Unite members in higher education over the next 4-5 weeks. The recommendation from the Unite Committee is to reject the offer.

Depending on the outcome of the 2012 consultative ballot the Unite Committee will then consider whether to enter into the dispute procedure, as part of the New JNCHES agreement and the position of the other New JNCHES unions will also be considered.

Clearly Unite would urge UCEA subscribers to think again. In what would be a fourth successive year of below inflation offers and at a time when higher education is still regarded as one of the more positive aspects of the UK economy, Unite believes that subscribers can and should pay their staff a decent pay increase. In fact there are some HEI's that have made one off payments or additional settlements so there is more money available in some places and some responsible managements recognise the need to reward staff adequately for the extra effort that has been made.

The goodwill and hard work of Unite staff working in UK higher education has now been stretched to breaking point. Unless there is a serious change of heart by UCEA subscribers on the pay offers then it can only lead to deterioration in commitment and working practices as well as painting UK higher education in a bad light to its own employees and the new generation of students and their families.

As ever Unite negotiators are prepared to enter into further dialogue with UCEA but only if clear indication is made that the offer on the table can be improved.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Robinson".

**Mike Robinson**  
National Officer  
Education