

03 February 2011

Dear Principal

Regarding your recent message to staff on the UCU ballot for industrial action. You stated that it is the Trustees of USS who govern the pension scheme and not member Universities. This fails to recognise the role that Universities as the employer play within the joint negotiating framework.


As I am sure you are aware the proposed changes to USS would result in greatly reduced benefits for members. Increasing member contributions, removing redundancy protection and creating a two-tier scheme were all decided upon following a consultation of member Universities. The removal of the final salary scheme for new or returning members will, it is generally accepted, result in the closure of the final salary scheme for existing members in the near future.

The proposed changes to USS come against a background of improving performance for the scheme. The abolition of the mandatory pension age, changes to indexation arrangements and an increase in the value of assets to £4.5 billion indicate that USS is not in crisis. UCU negotiators have not turned their face against any change, indeed a full set of proposals has been put to the Joint Negotiating Committee of USS which would ensure the scheme's future viability. These are available from the UCU website:
http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/pdf/n/s/uss_ucu_counter_proposal_jun10.pdf

I would ask that you review the UCU proposals for USS. As a member institution the University of Glasgow has an opportunity to influence the USS Trustees. UCU Glasgow request that the University takes advantage of that position to instruct USS Trustees to review their proposals and to return to meaningful negotiations.

Personally I hope that industrial action can be avoided, and I would ask that as Principal you use what influence you can to protect the pensions and jobs of staff within Glasgow and the wider HE sector.

Yours Sincerely



Dave Anderson
UCUG President