



## **Joint Statement: Higher Education Unions to Launch Industrial Action Ballots over UCEA Offer**

The joint higher education unions (EIS, GMB, UCU, UNISON and Unite) have all consulted our respective memberships on UCEA's 1.4% pay offer for 2025/26 and the response across the board is clear: our members are united in rejecting this insulting offer in the strongest possible terms.

Higher education workers cannot continue to pay the heavy price of a failed market system through the continued erosion of their pay, their employment conditions, and threats to their jobs. This is a system that university employers and successive governments have championed at every turn, and the price for each failure has been paid solely by workers each year. We cannot accept an offer that does nothing to address the crisis in higher education by failing to protect jobs, nationally agreed employment terms, or pay.

Higher education unions stand together in our commitment to defending the pay, jobs, and working conditions of all university workers. As such, those who are mandated to move to a statutory ballot will do so shortly. Anticipating a mandate for industrial action, we will also look to coordinate this action as one collective.

UCEA can still pull the sector back from the brink and avoid disruption this academic year by returning to the negotiating table with a meaningful offer, and agreeing unequivocally to jointly lobby government for an alternative, stable funding system.

The five unions are committed to progressing the negotiating groups on contract types (casualisation), pay spine reform, workload, and equality pay gaps. We remain willing to negotiate on all aspects of the offer without pre-conditions, and we urge UCEA to do the same, for the sake of the sector.

**Joint statement agreed by all five HE trade unions, 9 September 2025**