

Motion on branch negotiating position on job safety, workloads and governance

Cardiff UCU notes

1. Escalating and serious concerns among all staff over the impacts of Academic Futures and the Professional Services transformation on essential business processes, staff workloads, and the business-critical events of exams, graduation, clearing and enrolment in 2026.
2. A major lack of consultation and evidence base around new Voluntary Redundancy schemes opening in CARBS, MATHS and COMSC; a lack of consultation of staff across ENCAP, SHARE, MUSIC and MLANG about the new Voluntary Redundancy scheme.
3. Continued uncertainty for future reviews and transformations, and how these connect with current processes, including of the English Language Programme and the University Secretary's Office.
4. That despite consistently asking for updated data on staff reductions through VR and VS schemes by Schools, and for information on the impacts on existing programmes and staff, this has still not been provided to date to the union.
5. Serious staff concerns over poorly-managed, untransparent, and repeatedly-changing processes within the transformations, including PS mapping using GenAI and rapid changes to the scope and timeline; the creation of an emergency clearing team; library and LTA staff being deployed to other areas for emergency cover; and continued last-minute academic programme changes for 2026/27 outside of university policy and without justificatory evidence.
6. Lack of transparency on terms, expectations, and future role definitions, especially under TNE and restructuring. Some members are particularly concerned about new contracts stating staff may be required to do TNE and be out of the UK for up to one month at a time.
7. There have been numerous operational communication failures including inconsistent messaging, unclear decision ownership, and late-stage changes as a governance failure mode (rather than a side effect).

Cardiff UCU believes

8. That the pace and scale of poorly managed change amounts to fundamental risks to service in 2026, and therefore to student recruitment, financial and legal management, and thus the immediate sustainability of the institution;
9. That any contingency plans, where they are understood to be in place, rely on staff committing emergency unpaid overtime, as with the 2025/26 SEM1 timetabling disaster;

10. That the new workload model is untested and undermines research time for REF2029 and grant bids;
11. That combined, these risks and pressures exacerbate the existing breakdown of staff trust in university management (evidenced by management's own wellbeing and staff surveys) and contribute to a growing staff health crisis.

Cardiff UCU resolves

To support the negotiating committee to demand from university management:

12. A guarantee of no compulsory redundancies in the calendar year 2027, and a commitment to not issue a precautionary S188 in 2027;
13. The pausing of reform programmes until an agreed timetable with unions and staff is in place that can secure business as usual and rebuild confidence in governance, with plans that account for year-on-year fluctuations in student demand rather than emergency cuts that generate a spiral of decline;
14. A commitment not to bring schools or teams into Voluntary Redundancy schemes without a proper 90-day consultation with staff and unions;
15. The provision of full, timely financial information to trade unions for proper scrutiny, and a town hall financial briefing from the Chief Financial Officer to all staff on a quarterly basis until business as usual is secured;
16. A commitment to maintaining education and employment standards, including through in-house provision of programmes and the end of expanding use of Study Group private outsourcing with significantly worse pay, conditions, and standards;
17. A dedicated mechanism for trade union scrutiny and negotiation over:
 - 17.1. The use of fixed term contracts, including their use to mitigate the impacts of redundancies or substitute permanent contracts;
 - 17.2. The contracting and secondment of staff for Transnational Education projects;
18. That all contracts will be changed from 'nominal hours' to a contracted working hours of 35 hours per week, and a commitment to co-develop a mechanism to develop a shared transparent process to for agreed individual workloads for the following academic year that do not measurably and/or routinely exceed the contracted 100%-workload working hours of 35 hours per week (pro rata), reflecting a commitment to the values developed by the UCU workload campaign;
19. The minimisation of use of external consultancies, and if used, full transparency on the costs and purpose of external consultancies.