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Special points of interest:

- Car parking—don't say we never towed you
- HE Pay 2015/16 Update
- Elf and Safety— Don't let stress make you sick
- Get more active with UNISON

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM UNISON EDINBURGH NAPIER BRANCH

Edinburgh Napier UNISON Branch would like to wish its members seasons greetings and a happy new year!

In the past year some of our members have had to turn to UNISON for support in workplace disputes. We have been able to help these members when they have called upon their union to represent them at various meetings and hearings over the past 12 months.

2016 will bring many challenges, however, everyone working with the branch will rest and recharge their batteries during the festive season in order to meet these challenges head-on.



Branch Secretary, Stephen McLellan at the new UNISON Office space located in Sighthill Campus (7B35). The branch has secured this space to meet with members confidentially. Stephen will be based there Wednesday to Friday. For contact details for Stephen and all other active reps, please turn to page 6.

Our New Year's resolution is to increase our presence at the institution and communicate with members on a more regular basis so you can see what your union is doing for you.

The branch welcomes any member that would like to get active with UNISON.

Best wishes for the festive season. See you in 2016.

BRANCH AGM PLANNING—2016

It is nearly that time of year again, for the branch Annual General Meeting!

This is a very important meeting as it allows mem-

bers to have a say on who is standing on the committee—also, it allows you to get more involved in the decision making process.

The AGM allows us to keep you up-to-date with what is

The branch is currently in the process of organising the 2016 AGM so keep an eye out for further communications.

All members are urged to attend.

NEW BRANCH FIGHTING FUND ORGANISER

Dear Santa,

This year for Christmas we would like...

1. Trade Union Rights
2. A Living Wage
3. Respect & Dignity in the workplace

We've worked really hard this year!

The Workers
XOXO



The branch have been busy in recent weeks with the appointment of a new fighting fund local organiser.

Greig Kelbie has been brought in to work with Higher Education institutions across Edinburgh and Stirling.

UNISON's fighting fund organisers have a range of roles, depending on need, but recruiting is an important part of their job description.

"One thing I do when talking to people in the workplace is ask them to name two or three things they would change in their work place. That is when people really start talking," Greig says.

"Their issue may not be about pay, it can vary from holiday entitlement to car parking facilities.

"With recruitment you have to make the discussion specific to the person in the workplace, the day-to-day issues that



Greig Kelbie (right) with a new recruit at a recent drop in session.

members have, while making sure you involve them in dealing with those issues."

If you want to get involved with campaigning or recruitment activities, please do not hesitate to contact Greig Kelbie g.kelbie@unioson.co.uk

"Even if you are too young to retire in 10 years' time, it is still worth having the certificate ..."

PROTECTED SALARY: IMPORTANT INFORMATION

If you are currently on protected pay following a reduction in your grade, you are normally entitled to a certificate which will protect the value of your pension under certain circumstances.

In order to receive this pension protection certificate, you must request one from payroll within 12 months of your salary reduction.

For example, if your role is downgraded in No-

vember 2015 your pay will normally be frozen until November 2018, before falling to the top of the grade below.

However, if you have a certificate of pension protection, the value of your pension will be preserved as though you were still being paid at the higher salary if you retire within 10 years of your pay being frozen. So, in this example, you would receive a better pension (all things being equal) if you retired before November 2025.

Even if you are too young to retire in 10 years' time, it is still worth having the certificate in case of unexpected retirement through ill-health, retirement through redundancy and potentially other circumstances too.

The certificate may also apply if you have cut your hours for health reasons. This is not something most employers publicise as it can potentially cost them money.

If you need assistance in this matter please contact the branch.



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HE PAY 2015/16 CLAIM UPDATE

UNISON and GMB members have accepted the 2015/16 pay offer, with UCU and Unite concluding their dispute with the employer therefore only EIS remain in dispute with the employer.

This essentially means that the pay negotiations have concluded in England and Wales. The pay claim deals with key issues that have an impact on UNISON members working on university campuses across the UK.

In Scotland, arrangements will mirror those that occurred previously when EIS were the only union involved in a pay dispute. Discussions will take place locally in institutions where EIS has members in relation to whether payment will take place. In areas where they don't have members we would expect the employer to move to implement the pay rise.



CAR PARKING: DON'T SAY WE NEVER TOWED YOU!

UNISON and the academic union, Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) representatives recently met with management from Property & Facilities to discuss issues with the new parking arrangements.

We have previously raised a number of concerns with the Principal, including:

- Inadequate consultation in advance of implementation of the scheme
- Inadequate business cases presented for elements of the changes, particularly the huge uplift in car parking charges for most permit holders

- Lack of transparency during the tendering process, including first inviting unions to observe the presentations then withdrawing the invitation

- Failure to reveal key information, thus requiring us to make FOI requests

- Failure on the part of the Assistant Director, Property & Facilities to disclose the University's pecuniary interest in car parking fines despite direct face to face questions on this matter

- Failure to consult on how this income might be spent for the good of the University community

The branch have also passed on concerns raised by individual members (anonymously) and have been promised a response to these in due course.

There are still a number of matters which are not fully resolved and we are seeking further information, particularly in relation to how the University spends the money raised by parking permits.

We will await further information before taking any further action.

Please feel free to contact us if you have concerns in relation to parking.



“... we are seeking further information, particularly in relation to how the University spends the money raised by parking permits.”

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Reps at the HE Service Group Committee.

SCOTTISH HE SERVICE GROUP COMMITTEE

In October, the UNISON HE Service Group Committee met in Edinburgh. The aim of the committee is to ensure direct representation from each branch who is responsible for raising all relevant matters across the various sectors within HE. The committee's remit includes:

- Campaign for and assist the protection and improvement of pay, terms and conditions of employment of Higher Education members in Scotland.
- Share good practice across the University sector and co-ordinate branch activity.
- Influence the Scottish Government and associated employers.
- Set policy and UNISON strategy for Higher Education in Scotland.
- Engage and represent Scotland in UK wide campaigns, issues and conferences.
- Maximise the number of UNISON members and activists working within Higher Education.

SCOTTISH YOUNG MEMBERS DEVELOPMENT WEEKEND

This year's annual Scottish Young Members Development Weekend will be held in Stirling at the Stirling Court Hotel on 4–6 March.

This is a great weekend for young activists that provides valuable insight into the union and gives new young members a platform to go back to their branches and get more involved, whilst more experienced members advance their knowledge as they move forward towards eventually leaving the young members. The weekend will consist of:



- A Brief History of Trade Unions, How UNISON Works/Structures, The Role of the Young Member's Officer, Women in Union's and Organising in Your Workplace.
- Workshops offered including – Critical Thinking, Planning for a Future in UNISON, Other Branch Roles and Report Writing.
- A workshop run by UNISON Legal Officer Suzanne Craig introducing Employment Law, plus Effective Lobbying & Campaigning - using the Trade Union Bill as an example to research and learn the journey a Bill takes through parliament and at what stages we as a union can effectively influence it.

To qualify as a UNISON Young Member you have to be under 27 years old.

Please contact the branch for more information.

*Scottish Young
Members
Development
Weekend*

4–6 March 2016

Stirling Court Hotel

*Contact the branch for
more information.*



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ELF AND SAFETY

Work related stress is the adverse reaction (including ill health) people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them at work.

There is a clear distinction between pressure which can be a motivating factor, and stress, which can occur when this pressure becomes excessive.

UNISON members are safer and healthier in workplaces with active safety reps and where hazards are risk assessed.

Health and safety is important to workers, it's important to UNISON, and it's important to members of our local communities.

Because a safe and health workplace and job, is also a safe and health school, nurse, hospital, or home care assistant.

Get involved:

Become a UNISON H&S Rep – if you are interested in Health and Safety and would like to become more involved in the branch please contact - Greig Kelbie g.kelbie@unison.co.uk

Achieve on health and safety – make the workplace healthier for you and others.

Safety reps – meet and speak with your members and potential members.

Members and potential members – raise your concerns about workplace stress or other health and safety hazards.

Recruit and organise against austerity and the cuts, and the attack on jobs and health and safety – there is safety in numbers!



CAMPAIGN AGAINST TU BILL

let us
work for
a better
future
drop the
Trade
Union Bill

Our members should be given the respect they deserve for the vital jobs they do instead of having their right to be represented and supported by their trade union taken away.

The trade Union Bill, currently being discussed at Westminster, will have serious implications for every-

one working in the UK today, not just members of trade unions.

The Bill will:

- Undermine the right to strike, allowing employers to use agency workers to break strikes and with participation thresholds for ballots.
- Damage union activities through restrictions on facility time, which enables our reps to help members, and changes to the way members pay their union subscriptions.
- Damage UNISON's ability to campaign—from big issues like fair pay and local campaigns.
- Undermine our right to peaceful protest when taking industrial action, with the threat of ASBOs for workers on picket lines and the requirement of 14 days notice on all plans and materials, including use of social media.

If you would like to be part of UNISON's campaign against the Bill please go to unison.org.uk/tradeunionbill and sign up.

*Let us work for a better future—
drop the Trade Union Bill*

Join online at joinunison.org or call free on 0800 171 2193

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YOUR BRANCH NEEDS YOU!

For as little as £1.30 a month (depending on salary) you get a range of services including:

- Advice, support and help when you need it at work;
- A helpline that is open until midnight;
- Legal help for you at work and you and your family at home;
- Financial assistance and debt advice in times of need;
- Compensation for accidents and injuries at work;
- Access to training and education courses;
- A members magazine sent to your home address four times a year;
- A range of exclusive member discounts that can save you and your family money when you are shopping, buying insurance or looking for a holiday;

Have you ever considered becoming more active in UNISON?

A strong UNISON Branch is vital to fight cuts to jobs and services. Being active in your union can be a very rewarding experience, there's lots of training available and you are entitled to paid time off from your employer to carry out your trade union duties.

For further information, please contact your local branch organiser, Greig Kelbie. E: g.kelbie@unison.co.uk M: 07415 709746

BRANCH CONTACT DETAILS

Branch Secretary: Stephen McLellan

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Steward / H&S Officer: Malcolm Mackay (Merchiston)

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Steward: Gary Britton (Merchiston)

E: g.britton@napier.ac.uk

Steward: Alan Boyce (Merchiston)

E: a.boyce@napier.ac.uk

Steward: John Wood (Sighthill)

E: j.wood@napier.ac.uk

Education Officer: Maxine Wood (Merchiston)

E: m.wood@napier.ac.uk

Branch Tel: 0131 455 3218

E: unison@napier.ac.uk

Trade Union Office—Sighthill Campus 7B35
(Wed—Fri)

HE GOVERNANCE BILL

Have you read the stories about Coatbridge College? The big bosses were given bumper bonus pay-offs whilst the rest of the staff got little or nothing? Why was this allowed to happen? The answer is because the governing body that deals with the college, did not hold the senior management to account.

University Courts are supposed to be Scottish Universities supreme governing body. Edinburgh Napier court is supposed to make sure that Edinburgh Napier is running properly and accountable for what it does. In many University Courts across Scotland, there is the feeling that the Court members are often seen as the buddies of senior management. There is the impression they nod through proposals and plans without proper scrutiny.

The Scottish Government is planning to change the way that University Courts work. The main changes are that there will be an elected chair of court. UNISON wants staff and students to elect the chair. The elected chair will be in some way accountable to the staff and students. There will also be two additional seats of court for trade union representatives. This will be to try and ensure that good practice is followed properly with the support and advice available from their trade union.

There are a lot of scare stories in the press that the changes the Scottish Government are bringing in will lead to disaster for Universities. UNISON believes this is nonsense, and the changes will simply mean there is a little more accountability. Why are the senior figures in Universities so frightened of improved accountability?

Three simple ways to join UNISON today:



Join online at
joinunison.org



Call us on
0800 171 2193



Ask your UNISON rep
for an application form