

## **065                    Zero redundancies at UEA**

**Proposer:** Joseph Williams (PG Committee member)

**Second:** Pdraig Smead (Non-Portfolio Officer)

### **Summary**

This motion seeks to mandate the SU to take greater action in opposing the planned mass redundancies at UEA.

### **Union Notes**

1. An email sent on 22nd February 2023 from Acting Vice Chancellor, Christine Bovis-Crossen admits that UEA now has 'a revised budget deficit of £30m for 2023/2024 rising to £45m in three years' time.' This will mean '13% savings' need to be made across the university. The email continues: 'we don't believe we can make all the savings without compulsory redundancies.' [1]
2. The outgoing Vice Chancellor, David Richardson, told the HUM Professoriate on 15th February 2023 that the HUM faculty alone could face staff cuts of up to 30%. [2] This is just one example of the scale of redundancies UEA could see before the next academic year.
3. The SU is now mandated by motion 051, passed at the previous Union Council meeting, to support 'UEA UCU's, Unison's, and Unite's demand of zero redundancies' and 'to support the building of a strike assembly consisting of staff and students'.
4. The student representatives sitting on University Council are now mandated by motion 052, passed at the previous Union Council meeting, 'to lobby the university to minimise cuts' to student services.

### **Union Believes**

1. Even 1% staff cuts would drastically affect UEA, the experience of our students, and the social, economic, and cultural life of the region as a whole. But 13 or 30% staff cuts would be an act of cultural vandalism – and this must be opposed.
2. Mass redundancies will disrupt the entire functioning of the university and drastically impact the specific mandates of each of the full-time officers (undergraduate education, postgraduate education, campaigns and democracy, welfare, community and diversity, activities and opportunities).
3. Should UEA's three campus trade unions (UCU, Unite, and Unison) enter into a local dispute with the university management about the planned mass redundancies, the SU staff and officers should work to support these

trade unions throughout that dispute.

4. Time is of the essence: the acting Vice-Chancellor plans to have made any redundancies by September 2023.
5. This financial crisis is, and always has been, a local issue. The £45m budget deficit is due to financial mismanagement rather than external factors. The University of Leicester is a non-Russel Group institution comparable to UEA in size, provision, geographical region (and kWh), and they are nowhere near a financial crisis of this scale.

### **Union Resolves**

1. To take an explicit 'zero redundancies' position and oppose the planned mass redundancies at every opportunity.
2. To work with the three campus trade unions (UCU, Unite, and Unison) in their fight against the proposed mass redundancies.
3. To mandate the full- and part-time officers to take the first steps to form a strike assembly, or a zero redundancies assembly, together with representatives from the three campus trade unions, before the next Union Council meeting.
4. To organise a series of demonstrations in protest of the planned mass redundancies outside any in-person University Council meetings where those mass redundancies are due to be discussed.

### **References**

1. All staff email: Strategic Review Programme – important update, sent by communications@uea.ac.uk, 22nd February 2023, 14:31.
2. Meeting between HUM Professoriate and Vice Chancellor, 15th February 2023.