

## **Consultation Questions - HE Pay Dispute and Industrial Action**

*1. What would be the optimal date in September or October at your institution to start the setting, marking and assessment boycott?*

The end of October. This assumes that the most effective start time for a boycott of this kind is around the same time as marking starts, the refusal to mark and handle assessment offering the most leverage.

September and early October, the opening few weeks of teaching on units at the University of Bristol, do not offer that opportunity.

*2. Do you think there should be a common start date across the UK or should we facilitate staggered start dates to maximise local impact?*

A common start date is probably best in order to guarantee national publicity and not leave some local branches isolated.

*3. When would be the most effective week in November or December to take rolling and coordinated strike action?*

In terms of making a national impact, strike action in the same week as the joint UCU/NUS national demonstration on Saturday, 19th November would make the most sense.

*4. What is the view of your branch's capability of escalating the action if the employers fail to improve the offer?*

Low. Although our industrial action has been relatively well supported by members – particularly when compared with other South West branches and institutions – members have expressed no appetite to escalate the strike.

While there may be members who do wish to escalate, and are committed to what will ensue, in the judgment of branch officers and with regard to formal representations made to the branch in the form of contributions at branch meetings, we cannot say with any great confidence that we are ready to back up any escalation with the type of mass labour withdrawal that will really 'hurt' our employer.

Also: it is hard to say with any great confidence that Bristol UCU members are prepared for the challenges of a *programme* of industrial action; that is to say, there is no conclusive evidence that there is currently such a groundswell of popular support for industrial action amongst our members that it will sustain the branch in arguably its most challenging period of industrial relations.