

# University and College Bosses Plan Job Cuts in Higher Education

The University and Colleges Union has revealed that higher education (HE) bosses will not be making them any new pay offer and that many are seeking job cuts. Following a recent meeting with Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) recently, the University and Colleges Union (UCU) and other trade unions were told that they would not be getting an initial pay offer and that jobs cuts could be expected across the higher education (HE) sector. Up to 100 HE institutions were making plans for collective redundancies

In a communication to members, UCU summarised the situation:

- no pay offer
- 100 institutions planning job cuts this year
- salary increases would need to be 'traded off' against job protection

UCU General Secretary said university bosses "were keen to state that they wanted trade union negotiators to keep job security in mind", and also reported that the job cuts across the sector could be substantial:

*"every worker whatever type of institution they work in, is potentially vulnerable as current proposals for cuts at institutions as varied as the universities of Liverpool, Reading, Hertfordshire, and London Metropolitan show.*

*In this situation of great uncertainty for staff across the UK, national negotiations are required to protect jobs. UCU has therefore asked UCEA to sit down with the unions now to reach a national agreement on the avoidance of redundancies by its member institutions."*

UCU is seeking an agreement from employers to sit down with trade unions and discuss the situation, and has said that if this does not happen, they will "consider balloting members for industrial action to secure an effective job protection agreement from the national employers."

*Choccy*

*and finally...*

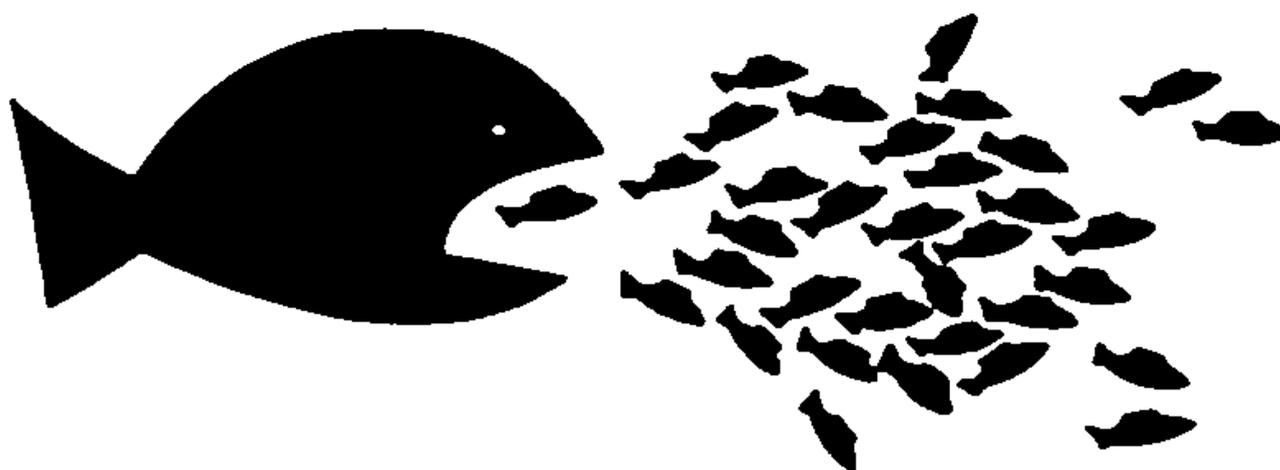
## Creationism in education

In Belfast, chair of the Education Committee, Mervyn Storey of the Democratic Unionist Party, threatened to sue the Ulster Museum when it re-opens with a Darwin exhibition later this year. Storey suggested he will consider legal action if the museum does not also include an exhibit on creationism, the religious belief that the world and life on it were created by the direct act of a supernatural being. This year marks 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of Charles Darwin's 'On the Origin of Species', and scientists have been asserting that the evidence for evolution, and against any form of creationism, has never been stronger.

Recently, West Sussex teachers were advised by their County Council that creationism shouldn't be taught alongside evolution in the science classroom: "It is acceptable to answer questions about creationism in science but not promote it". In Hampshire however, teachers were being told – that it *is* worth debating creationism alongside evolution in science, to encourage "reasoned enquiry and open discussion". This familiar tactic of 'open discussion' or 'teaching the controversy' does not wash. National Secular Society said: "There is a big difference between answering students' questions about creationism and actually introducing it into the lessons in the first place as part of the curriculum... If the teacher raises the topic, then it takes on an authority that it does not deserve". Perhaps Hampshire teachers will also have 'open discussion' on 'is the Earth flat?'

Whether it's the interests of religious zealots seeking to promote their brand of scripture to school kids, increasing private interference in education, or the government manipulating the school system for its own ends it's clear that under capitalism, education can never meet the real needs of working class people. We need an education system controlled by the people it affects - not managers, politicians, and religious lobbyists.

## Against our bosses, landlords, politicians...



### Solidarity is strength!

