

Post-school learning is vital for individual enhancement, a fairer society and a successful economy. Learning has benefits for people of all ages and abilities in terms of employability and, more broadly, for wellbeing and self-confidence.

Colleges and universities are also key economic contributors, both as local employers and because they provide the skilled workers upon which the economy depends.

To realise the full potential of learning for our society, education must be adequately resourced and fully accessible.

UCU's policy proposals are based on a set of guiding principles agreed at the UCU Congress in 2014, which state that policies and funding initiatives should:

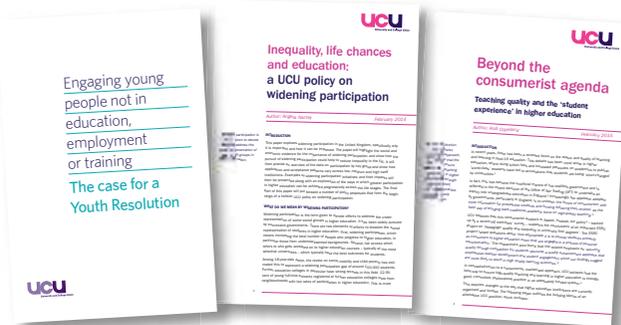
- **make it easier for people to reach their full potential**
- **increase the UK's academic capacity and research base**
- **make the UK a more attractive place for academic staff to work**
- **make it less costly for individuals to study, whether young or old**
- **broaden the range of subjects available for study, and**
- **lead to higher quality and reduced fragmentation in the sector.**

ABOUT UCU

UCU represents more than 110,000 academic and professional staff in universities, colleges, prisons, adult education and training organisations across the UK.

We campaign for greater public investment in post-school education as well as for fair pay and decent working conditions for our members.

For more information on UCU policy proposals and campaigns see: www.ucu.org.uk/policyhub or contact mwaddup@ucu.org.uk



www.ucu.org.uk



2015 and beyond

UCU'S VISION FOR THE UK'S KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

In preparation for the General Election in 2015, the University and College Union (UCU) has set out 15 policy proposals for post-school education. We are calling on politicians from all parties to recognise the value of further and higher education and support these proposals.



UCU's 15 ideas for the next government

1 Commit to increased public spending on the knowledge economy.

2 Redesign the way in which post-school education is funded.

3 Reinforce the importance of early years education as a determinant of life chances.

4 Ensure a real choice and balance between academic and vocational options for 14–19-year-olds.

5 Overhaul careers education to improve understanding of different educational pathways.

6 Enhance the apprenticeship brand by improving quality and ensuring that apprentices receive a rounded education.

7 Tackle youth unemployment using a kite-marked partnership model for local authorities, businesses and education providers.

8 Introduce greater incentives for collaboration between schools, colleges, universities and community learning partnerships to widen participation.

9 Launch a bespoke educational offer for those aged 25 and over wishing to upskill and retrain.

10 Undertake an in-depth review of the prison education system.

11 Increase transparency and accountability at education institutions.

12 Extend the statutory protection of academic freedom to all staff working in teaching and research.

13 Protect our global reputation and remove overseas students from the immigration cap.

14 Stop all public funding for profit-making education institutions.

15 Preserve the status and quality of academic teaching by ending exploitative working practices.



Tertiary education facts



Further education offers a 25% return on public investment. (BIS)



Students aged 19 and over in further education generate £75 billion for the economy over their lifetimes.



University graduates earn on average 40% more across their lifetime than non-graduates. (BIS)



Part-time adult learning is worth up to £1,100 per person because of benefits to health, social relationships and employability. (NIACE)



UK spending on tertiary education, at 0.7% of GDP, is lower than many global competitors. (OECD)