

BIG CAL IS WATCHING YOU!



...and you could be next.

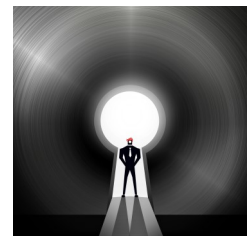
A new scheme in CAL sees staff being under constant surveillance from their line managers, who are taking on the role of Big Brother. The "Professionalism and Expectations Framework" means staff are rated by their managers every three months during formal meetings, not only on their job performance and skills, but also their clothes and body language. The rating system is much harsher than the PDR and could lead to up to 40% of staff being performance managed as a result.

The framework, which was not discussed or agreed with the unions, is a way of side-stepping the formal PDR and performance management processes, and places power in the hands of line managers to control every aspect of their staff's existence at work. UNISON are also worried that it is open to abuse. Many of the rated "capabilities" are vague, not measurable, and highly subjective, meaning that if your manager doesn't like the way you work, the way you dress, or the way you

'are', they can punish you via the scheme.

Some of the framework's criteria strongly resemble something out of George Orwell's *1984*: Not only does the scheme prevent staff from speaking out or criticizing managers' actions; even if you stay silent, you can be guilty of 'thought crime', as a manager may decide they don't like your body language. UNISON also believe that several of the capabilities, such as dress codes and body language, are potentially discriminatory under the Equality Act.

UNISON are seeking a meeting with the managers responsible for the scheme to discuss the significant concerns we have around the scheme. The framework currently only applies to Band 400 staff, but we are worried that it may be rolled out further to other bands and/or across Colleges if it goes unchallenged.



Branch meeting - Tuesday, 5 September 2017, 12 noon, Learning Centre Room UG07.

Keeping you updated - We send regular updates on campaigns, news and events by email. If you don't currently get branch emails, please email Lee on l.crutchley@bham.ac.uk. You can use a work or personal email.

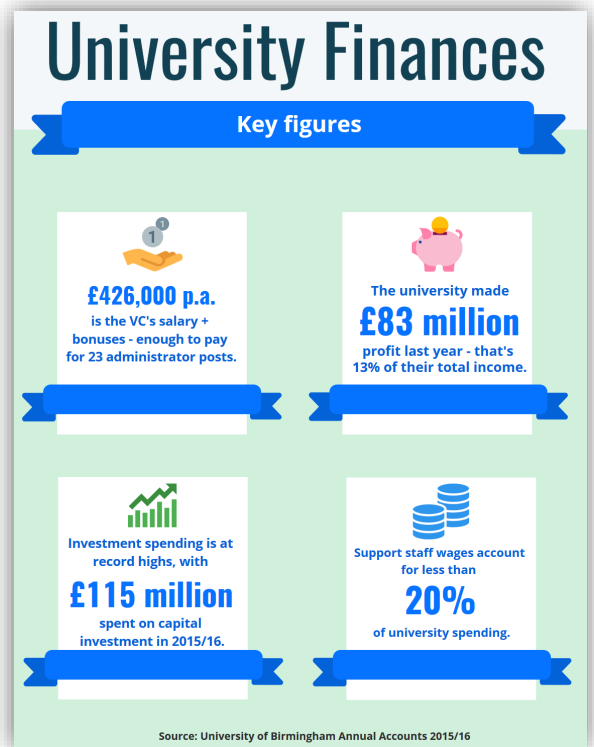
University continues to grow whilst they cut support staff pay

The University's income rose by 9% Living Wage employer. We will be last year to £650 million per year - launching our next pay campaign but despite this, staff pay is continuing to fall in real terms. As a result, a band 400 staff member is now 10% worse off than they were in 2010 – that's £1,880 each year. During the same time, the University income has gone up by a whopping 27%.

Matt Raine, UNISON branch secretary, commented: "Your hard work is generating massive successes for the University that we should all be proud of, but pride alone won't pay the bills..."

UNISON are committed to getting a better deal for support staff, as well as getting the University to sign up as a Real

"A band 400 staff member is now worse 10% worse off than they were in 2010 – that's £1,880 each year"



Recruit a friend for a £10 voucher

Fancy a £10 shopping voucher? Get a friend or colleague to join the branch and both of you will receive a £10 Love2Shop voucher, which is valid in most high street shops in Birmingham. Just get your friend to fill in the branch joining form and make sure they mention your name on it. Vouchers will then be sent out to both of you.

We are well on our way to 1,000 members and the more join us, the more influence we have on making the University a better place to work for everyone.



Health & Safety Matters: Update on building inspections & fire safety

Your UNISON representatives have continued to push for safety improvements over the last few months. This has included a number of inspections, including of University Security and the catering outlets in University Centre. These inspections have produced a number of important requests relating to the safety and wellbeing of staff, including ensuring that they have all the required equipment necessary for their role, and that the work staff are doing doesn't put them at risk. In catering, we are pushing for the counter space to be modified on the first floor to give more room for staff and reduce the chance of accidents caused by cramped conditions.

In general terms, your representatives are presently urgently looking to get some answers from the University on

fire safety. The University feels that it does not need to share essential fire risk assessment documentation with your representatives – essentially this means that they do not want to consult with you about your safety. In this area as in all others we are putting pressure on the University to improve safety and to consult with staff. We will be looking to get the advice of the HSE in relation to fire safety, as well as launching campaigns in coming months.

We always need more H&S representatives!

If you want to get involved and help make your area safer (and get time off to do so, as well as for training), then please contact Mike Moore on 07964926949.

University abandons car parking changes

The University has withdrawn proposed changes to car parking, which would have hit the lowest paid staff hardest, after being challenged by UNISON. The proposal involved extending the daily charging period for car parking to 8am to 6pm on weekdays. This would have a significant impact in particular on part-time cleaning staff, who often work 6am to 9am, and for whom public transport is often simply not an option.

The chargeable period for car parking will remain between 9.30am and

4.30pm on weekdays. UNISON are also looking into wider issues around transport and car parking, as we are aware that this is an issue for many staff with large number of building projects going on across campus.

Car parking information is available at <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/has/sustainable-travel/car-parking.aspx>.

If you have any particular concerns or issues regarding parking or other transport matters, please get in contact with one of the branch committee.

Confessions of a... *temp*

An anonymous writer reveals what it's like to be a temp and seen as expendable

It's **9.00am** on Monday and I slowly climb the stairs to the big office I visited last week to be 'interviewed'. The questions asked so firmly yet needily, 'So do you want the job?' made me uneasy, but the managers I chatted with seemed pleasant enough. The University is all green grass and trees across the campus from the train station, so it's got to be better than working in the grey concrete city centre...

9.15am.

Nobody is expecting me or knows why I am here, despite arrival instructions of "9am sharp". I'm propped in a corner with some student brochures to read, "so you can understand what we do here".

9.17am.

"You're the new temp? Your hair makes you look more intelligent than the last one..." someone tries to bond with me as they walk past with a mug in their hand. Not only is coffeemaking and chatting more desirable than whatever it is they do here, it's also the department where social skills are not necessary to do the job. I am not sure whether this works in my favour or not.

9.45am.

The Boss trundles in, having been to some kind of meeting. I'm told where the mugs and the tea are and given a list of the team's names and how they like their tea... I'm going to assume this is an initiation rite. I use up all the milk and then a bloke passing by helpfully lets me know that the person emptying the bottle gets to buy the next one. I don't drink hot drinks, so that's my good deed for the office done. Instead of 'Thanks', I'm handing out mugs while trying to work out who is who and answering barely concealed nosy questions.

10.00am.

I'm told to go to the Library and ask IT for a logon after getting an ID from Security. No map

or non-vague instructions (no point telling me a building's name if it isn't written on it) and it takes me half an hour to find Security. They have no idea who I am and won't make me a card. I eventually find the IT guys in the Library: ditto.

Back to the office.

The Boss looks sceptical, picks up the phone and bellows, before instructing me to go again. Another wasted half an hour, plus bonus squelch points because it's raining and campus is an entirely open space. IT Guy eventually takes pity on me and asks me to give my Boss a URL. Apparently this will mean they can fill a form in and I can do something more productive than make tea and walk around in the rain. I interpret the look from IT Guy to mean that The Boss should really know this by now.

Noon.

Uninitiated, I hover by the Boss until she looks up and asks why I haven't gone for my Lunch yet... I'm supposed to be on the counter at 1pm. Would have been nice to have been told...?

1.00pm.

I'm back in the office and led to the student facing counter, wondering why people are smiling at me. Now I know... it's hand in day. I have no idea what the procedure is, so I just take in items, stamp them and hand the growing pile to a scowly lady at the end of the counter every so often. If I'm not going to get any instructions, they're not going to get it done any differently. The woman next to me doesn't have time to answer questions. This goes on for the next three hours.

It's **4.00pm**, my arms ache and I have no idea whether I've been any help. I collect my things and exit the building, wondering if I dare come back tomorrow...

Stay tuned for next edition's confessions!

Did you know UNISON offer a wide range of training courses and workshops, and that you can often get paid time off for these?

Visit www.learninunisonwm.org.uk to find out more.