



***UCU and PGRs:  
Your right to unionise***

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# *What is the UCU?*

- The UCU is a trade union – it represents the interests of employees as a collective body on issues like pay, working conditions, disciplinary issues etc.
- Includes: lecturers, researchers, librarians, some administrative staff, professional staff, and postgraduates.
- It is a democratic institution where members guide the policy and decision-making of the union.

# *Joining the UCU*

- All postgraduates can join the UCU as postgraduate members
  - £1 a month
- If you are employed **in any capacity** by a university, you are eligible for full membership
  - free for first year, then monthly fee based on income.



# *Why you should join?*

- Membership provides legal protection and representation in employment issues.
- The UCU is a member-led union, and as the future of academia, we feel PGRs should be a key driving force in the union.
- Joining the UCU is a great way to get involved with the RHUL academic community.

# RHUL UCU PGR Leads



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Scan me to join!

Or go to <https://www.ucu.org.uk/join>

Who should I contact if I have a problem?

You are welcome to contact either or both of us with any questions, queries, or concerns, but you should email [rhulucu2018@gmail.com](mailto:rhulucu2018@gmail.com) in the first instance:

*Elizabeth Beacon (they/them) – [elizabeth.beacon@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:elizabeth.beacon@rhul.ac.uk)*

Elizabeth has experience with salaried, part-time, and/or fixed term contracts, including Graduate Teaching Associates/Assistants, and teaching + research studentships.

*Hugh Hammond (he/him) – [hughnhammond@gmail.com](mailto:hughnhammond@gmail.com)*

Hugh has experience with 'visiting' contracts and zero-hours contracts, as well as organising within union branches and negotiating with management.

## How much does it cost?

If you don't have an employment contract and join on the PGR membership, the fee is capped at the lowest rate - which is usually about £1 per month.

If you do have an employment contract, your first year of membership is free under the 'Future of the Profession' scheme. After the first year, the fee is dependent on your earnings, but is usually £1-5 a month. You can see the rates [here](#).

## Can the UCU help me with \_\_\_\_\_?

You can reach out to [rhulucu2018@gmail.com](mailto:rhulucu2018@gmail.com), but for any more complicated matters, we may refer you to a caseworker (this is when you will be assigned to someone who can help in detail with your specific case).

For issues related to being a student (e.g., if you didn't receive your PGR stipend), you should contact the Doctoral School or RHUL Students' Union in the first instance.

Can I be a member of the SU and the UCU at the same time?

Yes.

I am an international student, can I join?

Yes.

How can I get more involved in the union?

In the first instance, contact [rhulucu2018@gmail.com](mailto:rhulucu2018@gmail.com)

Where can I find more information?

You can visit the Royal Holloway UCU branch website

<https://royalhollowayucu.wordpress.com/>

Or the UCU national website

<https://www.ucu.org.uk/>