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# LOW-PAY UNIS TO BE NAMED AND SHAMED

## Unions join forces to scrutinise treatment of workers who keep ivory towers standing

by Tony Patey  
Industrial Reporter

UNIVERSITIES and colleges are going to be examined and marked over their pay and treatment policies for general workers — with failures being named and shamed.

The National Union of Students and Unison launched a campaign yesterday calling on colleges, universities, students' unions and private contractors on campuses to pay staff at least a living wage.

They will be drawing up a league table of the worst offenders with the biggest gaps between the lowest and highest paid staff.

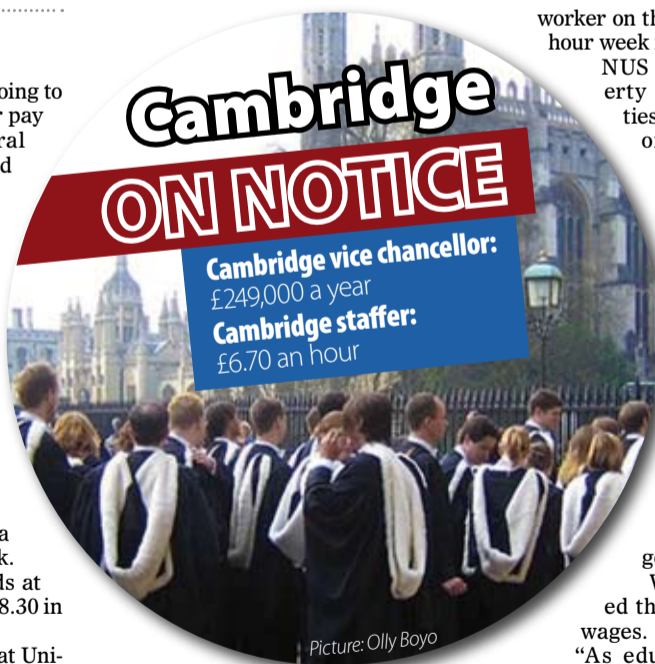
However, the unions will also reward colleges and universities that do the decent thing by paying a living wage, giving them a kite mark.

The living wage currently stands at £7.20 per hour outside London and £8.30 in the city itself.

The campaign was set in motion at Unison's higher education conference in Brighton.

In a joint statement the unions said that even some of Britain's most prestigious institutions are hiring workers at poverty pay levels. "At Cambridge University and its colleges — where local union officials estimate that over 1,000 employees receive less than the living wage — the vice-chancellor earns £249,000 a year.

"This is almost 20 times the salary of



Picture: Olly Boyo

the lowest-paid worker who earns an hourly wage of just £6.70 per hour."

The average yearly income of a university vice-chancellor in 2009/10, the last year for which complete figures are available, was £218,813. For a college principal it was £115,872 — though some earn significantly more than that.

This compares to just £12,334 for a

worker on the minimum wage doing a 40-hour week in 2009/10.

NUS vice-president Dannie Grufferty said: "Colleges and universities are a community and everyone within that community needs to be treated with dignity and that means paying them a wage they can live on for their work."

He warned: "Employers at colleges and universities have six-months to get their house in order before we name and shame those that allow such shocking disparities to continue."

Unison national secretary for education and children's services Jon Richards said: "It is time universities got their houses in order."

While top pay has skyrocketed the lowest paid are on poverty wages.

"As educational institutions, they should know better. Low pay and inequality are at the heart of the huge problems that we face as a society today. We are determined that this disgraceful pay gap be closed."

He added: "We will name and shame the colleges that shirk their responsibilities to their staff and pay poverty wages. It is now time for university leaders to do the right thing."

tonyp@peoples-press.com



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