

024 Lobbing the UEA Student Union to return to being a Living Wage Employer

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Union Notes

1. The National Minimum Wage (NMW) is £9.18 for those aged 21 or over; £9.50 for 23 and older.
2. The current Union rate of pay for Venues staff (which includes Bar Staff, Alcohol Impact, Crew and Box Office Staff) is £9.18 for all those above 18 and £9.50 for those above 23. Team Leaders after lobbying the SU over the previous academic year secured a pay rise of £9.60, this pay rate only applies during Team Leader shifts and is arguably still below average for those in a role of responsibility.
3. The Real Living Wage is £10.90 as of September 2022, £9.90 for the 2021/22 year. The Real Living Wage Foundation brought forward the announcement of the rates due to the Foundations Director, Katherine Chapman, stating:

"With living costs rising so rapidly, millions are facing an awful "heat or eat" choice this winter- that's why a real Living Wage is more vital than ever. Today's new rates will provide hundreds of thousands of workers and their families with greater security and stability during these incredibly difficult times."
4. The University of East Anglia is an accredited Real Living Wage Employer. Staff within their direct equivalent role of the UEASU venues team such as student Campus Kitchen (Zest) staff, Unio baristas and Shop at UEA staff are paid above the 2021/22 RLW at £10.03.
5. If the UEASU were to be accredited as a Living Wage Employer, they could immediately raise their hourly wage to £10.03, matching the UEA rate of pay for student staff and then over the year put measures in place to meet the deadline of £10.90 by 14th May 2023.

Union Believes

1. Student staff within the Union balance their degrees alongside part time work. As part of working within the Venues Team students are expected to work unsociable hours (up to 4am) with no extra pay incentive, in contrast to most employers which offer an unsociable hours pay level.
2. The Union should not be falling behind UEA in regard to paying its workers a fair wage. The Union should be striving to protect its own workers first and foremost.

3. Under the byelaws of the Union, clause 8.25.1 states the Union shall 'ensure that all employees receive equal treatment, and that, wherever possible, they are given the help needed to attain their full potential to the benefit of the individual and the Union.' I put to you that students are not currently receiving the help needed to attain their full potential as they are currently not being paid a wage which you can be expected to live on.
4. 26 other Student Unions are accredited Real Living Wage employers. This includes Aberdeen, Abertay, Aberystwyth, ARU, Bloomsbury, Cambridge, Dundee, Durham, Falmouth and Exeter SU, Goldsmiths, MET SU, Middlesex, Newcastle, Newman, NUS, Robert Gordon, SOAS, UCLU, Sunderland, UCB, Kingston, Bristol, Nottingham, Salford, USSA, York and UWS. This range of locations and size of Unions shows that the UEA Union is falling behind its peers and should be striving to catch up.

Union Resolves

1. The SU Officers will immediately open talks internally and to discuss at Management Committee returning to being a living wage employer and to do so in a timely manner given the Cost-of-Living Crisis.
2. Over the year the SU officers will ensure the Union is committed to being an accredited Real Living Wage employer, alongside UEA. They will do this both internally working with HR, Finance, and other necessary departments and externally through contacting the Real Living Wage Foundation.
3. If the Officers cannot pass an immediate pay rise for all staff on all hours, the Union shall instead agree to institute an anti-social hour's wage policy of £10.03, to be paid between the hours of 2300-0600, typical times for Venue staff to be working club nights. This also reflects the fact that club nights make the most profit for the SU compared to a normal shift.
4. In the spirit of supporting students to thrive, the Union shall open a conversation into instituting an anti-social hour's wage policy, between the hours of 2300-0600 (as defined as night workers by the Government).ⁱⁱ
5. The Officers shall ensure the Finance team regularly reviews the Union finances to see if living wage is possible. This will continue to be done until the Union is able to provide the RLW, and to update council on the results of these reviews regardless of the outcome until the SU is able to provide a RLW for students.

REFERENCES

- I.CIPP (2022) *Real living wage foundation announces new rates*, CIPP. Chartered Institute of Payroll Professionals. Available at: <https://www.cipp.org.uk/resources/news/real-living-wage-foundation-announces-new-rates.html> (Accessed: October 22, 2022).
- II.Service GD, "Night Working Hours" (GOV.UK September 4, 2015). Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/night-working-hours>; accessed October 22, 2022