

## News

### Lecturers vote unanimously to throw out government spying plans

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**University and college lecturers this morning voted unanimously to reject government plans to instruct university staff to report students for 'extremism'.**

The controversial proposals, first mooted last year, were universally panned by delegates at the inaugural congress of the University and College Union (UCU) in Bournemouth.

The motion calls for members to 'resist attempts by government to engage colleges and universities in activities which amount to increased surveillance of Muslim or other minority students and to the use of members of staff for such witch-hunts.'

The unanimous vote is a ringing endorsement of the position adopted by the union at the end of last year opposing the plans.

Commenting immediately after the vote, UCU general secretary, Sally Hunt, said: "UCU delegates in Bournemouth have made it clear this morning that they will oppose government attempts to restrict academic freedom or free speech on campus. Lecturers want to teach students, if they wanted to police them they would have joined the force.

'Lecturers have a pivotal role in building trust. These proposals, if implemented, would make that all but impossible. Universities must remain safe spaces for lecturers and students to discuss and debate all sorts of ideas, including those that some people may consider challenging, offensive and even extreme.

'The last thing we need is people too frightened to discuss an issue because they fear some quasi-secret service will turn them in.'

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