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SHATTOCK, Michael

Title

The machinery for determining academic pay : illusion and reality in a 'nationalised industry'

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Abstract

It is generally recognised that academic pay in the UK is no longer in line with market conditions. Although recent Government decisions have recognised the problem of uncompetitive salaries for a small number of internationally leading academics, there is no sign that the situation of the profession as a whole is likely to be tackled at Government level. The paper analyses the history of pay bargaining in the university sector since the Second World War, and argues that although national pay scales and national negotiating mechanisms may have worked to the benefit of the profession until the 1960s, during the last 20 years or more they have neither persuaded governments to reward the profession adequately, nor assisted the higher education system to manage salaries effectively with the limited resources available. The paper highlights the ambiguous role of the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals (CVCP), and more recently of the Universities and Colleges Employers' Association (UCEA), as both the employer of academic staff and their representative in salary negotiations with government; and

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identifies a basic failure on the part of universities and their representatives to come to terms with the consequences brought about by expansion and differentiation of the system and economic change.

The paper argues that there is a need for much greater flexibility and the ending of the national bargaining machinery in order to take proper account of both institutional and disciplinary differences, and to uncouple academic and non-academic salaries. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)