

## Members' Apple discounts are back

London Freelance Branch Committee member Nicci Talbot has, with the Freelance Office, negotiated to reinstate discounts for NUJ members on Apple products. These range from 6 per cent to 10 per cent depending on what you're buying. For more details see [www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1903disc.html](http://www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1903disc.html)



### The Gong

THE GONG is awarded to publishers who need a wake-up call on late payments. This month's award goes to women's lifestyle website The Pool. To be fair, we should say that The Pool have themselves woken up to a late payments problem. They announced that they are suspending commissions while they work through a "backlog" of late payments to freelancers. They were as of mid-January already in touch with freelancers owed money, according to *Press Gazette*. This is an example of best practice in dealing with of late payments issues compared to some clients previously featured in The Gong. By contrast, some of these have been so chaotic they seem unaware that they owe money in the first place. We remind freelancers: you may not even be legally owed money until the client becomes aware of your invoice. So invoice promptly, to avoid – as recently happened to one NUJ freelance – ending up being owed £1800 by one client as a result of invoicing procrastination.

# The Rate for the Job

THIS MONTH'S rates include writing for record labels as well as work proofreading and editing books, in which a freelance was able to negotiate higher fees once the need for heavy rewrites became apparent.

Thinking about work for a company you've not dealt with before? Look at the Rate for the Job to find out what companies in similar niches have paid. Then aim higher. You can submit rates online at [www.londonfreelance.org/rates](http://www.londonfreelance.org/rates)

– please give not only the basic rate (e.g. for First British Serial rights) but extra payments negotiated for extra uses, like the Web. These are shown as (eg) £400+100. Rates marked **X** are, in the editor's fallible opinion, below par. Treat all rates as minima, even perhaps the happy ☺ few.

**Broadcasting:** Podcasts – various titles, £240 each; CTVC for BBC Radio 4, 10-hour fixer shift, £150 **X**.

**Photography:** BBC world news Europe, photo £75; *New Internationalist*, photo £65; Mail online, 30-second video £60 **XXX**.

**Proofreading non-fiction books:** Ghost-written autobiography, renegotiated for massive rewrite £6000; non-fiction, originally £3000, renegotiated for heavy edit and rewrite £4750; edit 90,000 words, renegotiated after unexpected extra work £1500, more if rush job.

**Shifts:** DW.com, data journalist day €330; AP Video, 11-hour video editing day £250; small drinks

company, brand consultancy, per day £250; *Best Practice In Nursing*, day conference reporting, £175.00 + travel and accommodation; *Africa Confidential*, subbing day £150.00; *Sun*, consumer finance reporting, 9 hours, £120 **XXXX**.

**Teaching:** Richmond VWS (what's that?), day teaching PR & writing £350.

**Words, per 1000:** Album box set booklets: middle rank artist, shortish £250; small record label, (obscure artist) £100 **XX**; middle-rank artist, enormous booklet, total £3000 = £150; major record label, US\$1000, *FT Weekend*, review £460; *Private Eye*, "Letter from..." 750 words @ £200 = £266.66; BBC3 online short feature £187.50 **X**; *The Register*, column £160 **X**; *Independent IndyBest*, reviews up to 1000 words £80 **XX**.

**Words, other:** pop promoter, tour programme note £1500; *Mirror* entertainment section, feature £800 **X**; *Songlines* review £15 **XXXX**.

## Seek redress for Universal Credit woes

**MANY freelancers have relied on assistance such as Working Tax Credit to get through lean times and have had problems being moved to Universal Credit – see the December Freelance. Leigh Day solicitors write:**

Tessa Gregory's team at Leigh Day represent an individual who is self-employed and finds herself in significant financial hardship due to the application of the Minimum Income Floor (MIF) since she first had to claim Universal Credit in October 2017. She has brought a legal challenge against the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions challenging

the lawfulness of the application of the MIF on the basis that it discriminates against self-employed individuals and is irrational.

We have now reached the stage of the challenge in which we need to collate and prepare supportive evidence.

It would be helpful for the court to be provided with other examples which show the broad and varied range of situations in which individuals are caught by the UC provisions, as well as the different ways in which the application of the MIF has affected peoples' lives.

If you are self-employed, have been moved on to UC and have had the MIF recently applied, earn roughly

the National Minimum Wage across the year, but experience significant fluctuations in income on a monthly basis, we would be grateful if you could provide a short summary of your situation which sets out how you came to be on UC and how the MIF is affecting you.

We would of course discuss your situation with you before sharing any information with the court and if requested by you we would anonymise the information.

If you are affected by the MIF and are interested in hearing more about our challenge, please do not hesitate to contact us with any queries at [universalcreditqueries@leighday.co.uk](mailto:universalcreditqueries@leighday.co.uk)

## Watch for news of strikes at Newsquest and INM

NUJ MEMBERS working at Newsquest titles in Cumbria held a one-day strike in December over a pay freeze, staffing cuts and the company's attitude to journalistic standards. Staff at the *Cumberland News* then reported their own newspaper to press regulator IPSO, over its

article that included the views of Newsquest management but made no attempt to put the views of the strikers or the NUJ.

At Independent News and Media titles *Belfast Telegraph* and *Sunday Life*, NUJ members recently voted for industrial action – including possible

strikes – over pay and rates.

Watch the NUJ website's news page [www.nuj.org.uk/news](http://www.nuj.org.uk/news) and its Twitter feed [www.twitter.com/nujofficial](http://www.twitter.com/nujofficial) for possible (further) strike dates at these workplaces, on which freelancers may discover that they are suddenly unavailable.

## Freelancers remembered in house agreement

THE NUJ Trinity Mirror Chapel on Merseyside recently concluded a house agreement with Reach (it owns Trinity Mirror and *Express* titles) that includes freelancers and recognition of their copyright. In it is a commitment to raise freelance

shift rates in line with staff pay rises.

Northern Organiser Chris Morley said; "It was pleasing to be able to include those elements in the new agreement but of course we would wish for more... employers are often fiercely hostile to inclu-

sion of any reference to freelancers in house agreements... Fortunately we did have something in the old agreement to build on and it was thanks to the Chapel's insistence that it was retained and improved that we got what has now been concluded."