

# News Release

## Association of Teachers and Lecturers

Annual Conference • 21 - 24 March 2005 • Torquay

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**Wednesday 23 March 2005**

*For education correspondents / newsdesks*

### **ATL President to rally the troops at Conference**

Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) President, Brian Waggett, will tomorrow address Conference with a rousing “state of the Association” speech.

Mr Waggett will issue a rallying cry to the Association to rise to the challenges of these turbulent times.

What is imperative, the President will assert, is that ATL continues to negotiate in the best interests of its members, and to work with the Government rather than lose its voice through a stubborn refusal to talk. “We are an independent trade union but we do not carry independence before us as a mantra that precludes partnership and beneficial gain,” he will say.

However the President will have some harsh words for Ofsted and for some of the government policies, which he will unequivocally describe as “barmy”.

Mr Waggett will urge Conference to seize the opportunities of this period of turmoil. “Now is not the time to sit back and helplessly shrug,” he says. “You have nothing to lose but your chains. The hour is right, the trumpets are sounding and you are here! By being here, you help to change and shape one organisation but you also may, by your actions and decisions, start the gentle beat of the butterfly’s wings.”

The President will speak directly to policy makers, claiming ownership of the profession and demanding that government listens closely to teachers and lecturers and allows them to influence and shape the new profession as the experts they are.

He will describe the relationship between teachers and their profession as a love affair, one that may have gone sour but a passion that may yet, with the energies of our excellent workforce and the efforts of government, unions and employers, be rekindled.

Ends

1. The Association of Teachers and Lecturers' Annual Conference is taking place at the Riviera International Conference Centre, in Torquay, from Monday 21 March to Thursday 24 March 2005.
2. The ATL Annual Conference will be broadcast live on the internet at: [www.atl.org.uk](http://www.atl.org.uk)
3. The Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) is an independent, registered trade union and professional association, representing approximately 160,000 teachers, lecturers and support staff in maintained and independent schools, sixth form, tertiary and further education colleges in the United Kingdom.
4. ATL exists to protect and improve the status of teachers, lecturers and other professionals involved in delivering education to further their legitimate professional interests.
5. ATL is affiliated to the Trades Union Congress (TUC). It is unaffiliated to any political party and seeks to work constructively with all the main political parties.
6. ATL members receive a regular magazine (Report) reflecting ATL policy and other issues affecting the education sector. If you would like to receive a copy of this please call 020 7782 1589.
7. Further information and all press releases are available on ATL's website: [www.atl.org.uk](http://www.atl.org.uk)