



Dear student

With the start of the academic year now behind us, we hope that you have enjoyed meeting old friends and making new ones, and that your studies are progressing successfully.

The purpose of this email is to advise you that on 16 November, the University and College Union (UCU) announced the result of their recent ballot for industrial action. This means that some staff may choose to take industrial action. It will begin with strike action on 1, 2 and 3 December and they have threatened to escalate their action in the New Year.

From the 1 December some staff will also be undertaking continual action short of strike (ASOS); at this time we have been notified that this will mean working to contract. If the dispute is not resolved the action will continue until May as ASOS, which means staff will be working to contract until May. Leicester UCU members have received a mandate to take industrial action due to their objections to pay conditions in the sector. They are striking for more pay alongside a reduction in workload, the removal of casual contracts and to ask for more action to address pay inequalities.

We are disappointed by the decision to take action as we have been actively engaging with all our trade unions and we remain committed to continued dialogue. Over the coming days the SU will ask you to vote on whether or not you support UCU's action. As you consider your response please consider the following: -

1. Strike action and further action will mean **more disruption to teaching**. Many students have faced previous strike action in 2018, 2019 and 2020 and have also experienced significant disruption to teaching during the pandemic. We will work to minimise the impact on our students but inevitably strike action now, and more action in the New Year, will mean more missed teaching and more disruption.
2. Academic roles and workloads cover a number of activities such as teaching and research but this action by UCU is **targeting students** as their main focus and their action will have minimal impact on other areas.
3. A **higher pay award is not affordable**. To fund UCU's suggested pay award would cost the University approximately £14 million per annum. We simply cannot afford this without making large cuts to other expenditure such as some aspects of student services and

support. All staff in universities have had a pay award this year already, while many other Government funded sectors have had no pay award. The University is also committed to paying the voluntary living wage to our staff. For more information visit:

<https://www.ucea.ac.uk/library/infographics/pay-in-he/>

4. Data from the Office for National Statistics in the table below shows median earnings for higher education teaching professions compared to other professional occupations.

Profession	Average 2020 earnings
Medical Practitioners	£62,598
Higher Education Teaching Professionals	£53,358
IT Professionals	£49,072
Actuaries, Economists and Statisticians	£42,695
Solicitors	£41,970
Mechanical Engineers	£40,614
Accountants	£40,223
Librarians	£28,632

What does industrial action mean for you?

On the three strike days it means that your teaching may be cancelled. We ask all members of staff who are planning to strike to make students aware in advance if your teaching is going to be cancelled, and we also ask them to re-schedule the teaching wherever possible. Unfortunately it is likely that teaching for some of you will be disrupted for these three days in December.

The action short of strike (ASOS) involves working to contract, and it will not at this stage include a marking and assessment boycott. This means there won't be any significant disruption to your assessment, feedback, marks, or end of Semester outcomes.

Please be assured, we are working to minimise the impact of any action on our students. Your School will keep you updated as plans develop.

If there is a material impact on your studies resulting from the industrial action, you will be able to submit a formal complaint to the University at the end of the assessment period on 23 December 2021. You can find more details including when complaints will be eligible for consideration at <https://le.ac.uk/about/info/contact/student-complaints/industrial-action-formal-complaints>

A dedicated web area [with FAQs](#) and regular updates are available in order to keep everyone up to date. If you do have any questions then please contact your School office or email industrialaction@le.ac.uk.

With best wishes

Geoff Green

Registrar and Secretary

This email has been sent on behalf of the Registrar and Secretary by the Communications team.

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