

Against unfair redundancies, breach of academic freedom and autocratic management

STRIKE BEGINS TOMORROW!

While a global boycott and other forms of industrial action continue, academics and support staff will be picketing on 9, 10 and 11 June



Protesting against the intransigence they face, as University management refuse to hold a substantial and meaningful negotiation with the University of Leicester Branch of University and College Union (UCU), the Union declared a three-day strike, taking place on 9, 10 and 11 June.

Lecturers, researchers and academic-related support staff will be picketing, in a socially distanced way, around the University campus, in order to communicate their demands more widely and more loudly, hoping that the Executive Board will hear their voice and will finally react to it in a more positive spirit.

Leicester UCU officers express their disappointment from the man-

agement's actions, including arbitrary and poorly justified 'restructuring' moves and unfair compulsory redundancies of staff with very positive contribution to the achievements of the University.

They note that the management insists on the redundancies despite the fact that the number of staff who were recently forced to resign or accept to depart via a 'voluntary' severance scheme, is already more than double the one previously stated as 'maximum'.

They also note that Union officers and activists are disproportionately targeted for redundancy, in an obvious attempt by the University management to frighten and silence their staff, so that they proceed unopposed with further phas-

es of their questionable 'restructuring' plan.

Other forms of industrial action that continue (implemented since 4 May) are a global academic boycott, during which academics from around the UK and internationally, in solidarity with their protesting colleagues, refuse to collaborate with the University of Leicester and cancel events that had already been scheduled.

It is expected that, during the three days of the strike and picketing, University of Leicester students, staff from other universities, local politicians, trade unionists, artists and members of the wider Leicestershire community will join the picket lines and express their solidarity to the striking workers.

HOW WOULD YOU FEEL IF YOU RECEIVED A LETTER LIKE THAT?



UNIVERSITY OF
LEICESTER

11 May 2021

University of Leicester
University Road
Leicester
LE1 7RH

Personal and Confidential

Sent via e-mail only

Dear [REDACTED]

Confirmation of Notice of Redundancy

Further to the second individual consultation meeting held on 22 April 2021, I am writing to provide you with confirmation of the discussion regarding your dismissal by reason of redundancy. This letter also sets

COME TO THE PICKET LINE AND ASK YOUR 26 COLLEAGUES HOW THEY FEEL

Employee Support

I do not underestimate that this is a very difficult time for you and the University will continue to support you during this time.

The Organisational Development and Recruitment Teams offer a [number of workshops](#), which you can access for support during your notice period. The workshops are optional, and [further details](#) are available on-line.

I would also like to remind you of the support that is available through our confidential Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), and [staff counselling](#) provider, Validium. To access the 24/7 helpline and counselling services, please call 0800 358 45 68. Please also take a look at our on-line [Support Toolkit](#) to [support your emotional wellbeing](#) at this time.

THE MANAGEMENT IS COURTEOUS AND OFFERS... COUNSELLING!

THREE DAYS OF SOLIDARITY AND POSITIVE SPIRIT

Dear colleagues,

It is truly a remarkable thing to witness your creativity and formidable organisation skills springing into rapid action to plan activities for the strikes on 9, 10 and 11 June. You have organised a mixture of physical pickets, adapted to maximise COVID safety, and virtual picket activities in incredibly short order, and there are

still so many ways to get involved to make your industrial action count.

A full [schedule of strike activities – themes, teach-outs, speakers, rallies, both physical and virtual – is available here](#) and [FAQs about the strike action here](#).

Here are some highlights:

• **9 June: Solidarity Wednesday.** Celebrating solidarity with other branches in dispute and who are supporting your dispute; celebrating your solidarity that has rejected divisions the Executive Board have tried to create between ‘affected’ and ‘non-affected’, ‘phase 1’ and ‘phase 2’ staff. [Teach-out:](#) Education for Emancipation.

• **10 June: Governance Thursday.** Protesting the failures of institutional governance that has seen the Executive Board violate their ordinances, ignore an outpouring of criticism, and engage in union-busting. [Teach-out:](#) Alternative models of Higher Education.

• **11 June: Academic Freedom Friday.** Protesting the unprecedented breach of academic freedom in selecting candidates for redundancy because of the intellectual approaches attributed to their research.

[Speeches:](#) Local MPs **Jon Ashworth** and **Claudia Webbe**.

[Virtual Rally:](#) Joint Virtual Rally with **Liverpool UCU** and **Leicester UCU**.

PHYSICAL PICKETS AND COVID SAFETY

From 7am report to Victoria Park (Attenborough Entrance) on arrival. Your Health & Safety Officers have conducted a risk assessment, and in consultation with campus security, we have adopted a range of measures to make our picket lines as safe as possible. There will be a maximum of 30 people at all picket line locations, except at Victoria Park entrance, where the

open space of the park will be used to maintain social distancing in groups of no more than 30.

Please report to the Victoria Park entrance in the first instance, and the picket supervisors may direct you to another picket line based on an assessment of the numbers. A track and trace register will be maintained at all picket locations.

Additional safety measures we recommend (a COVID risk briefing will take place daily):

- Wear a mask or face covering at all times, even though we'll be outside.

- Take a lateral flow test the night before joining the picket line and do not attend the picket lines if you test positive (rest, and get well soon).

- Do not attend the physical picket if you have experienced COVID symptoms in the previous 7 days. Do not attend the physical picket if you are classed as clinically vulnerable to COVID.

- Hand sanitiser will be available at all picket locations, but please bring your own as well.

- Avoid shouting and singing. No whistles or wind instruments. We'll have music and microphones (sanitised between every use).

- Label any placards with your name and stick to carrying the same one throughout the strike.

- Invite people to pick up a leaflet from a stack on our table or scan the QR code from our posters to find out more information about the strike. This will be safer than handing out leaflets.

- Maintain social distancing. To check you're at an appropriate distance from others, you should be able to hold out your arms (helicopter style) without touching anyone.

VIRTUAL PICKETS:

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

If you are unable to make it to campus, you can still make your voice and the impact of your action heard!

- You can join the virtual rally each day and participate in virtual teach-outs. Full details of the schedule can be found [here](#).

- Share your participation on social media, using the hashtags **#NoOnesRedundant**, **#BoycottLeicester** and **#LeicesterStrikesBack**. You might like to post something relevant to the strike themes on each day.

Don't post or promote any posts that discuss anything work-related: this is part of observing the virtual picket line.

- Volunteer to write a reflective commentary of about 300 words to be included in the newsletter/blog we'll be publishing daily during the strike, and as our ASOS continues afterwards. This might expand on the strike themes for each day, or other aspects of the dispute that you're interested in. It can be eponymous or anonymous- up to you! To volunteer, or offer other suggestions, please email to cara@uculeicester.org.uk or anastasiou.andreas@gmail.com.

In solidarity,
Leicester UCU



LEICESTER UCU

LOVE
Leicester University

HATE
the way it's being managed

They shaped for excellence and....



LEICESTER UCU
IN EXCELLENT SHAPE!