

# University and College Union Higher Education

Carlow Street, London NW1 7LH, Tel. 020 7756 2500, [www.ucu.org.uk](http://www.ucu.org.uk)

**To** HE Branch and local association secretaries

**Topic** **Industrial action update**

**Action** note and circulate to members

**Summary** this circular updates branches on the decisions taken at the Higher Education Committee meeting on 11 October, the date industrial action will begin, the position of the other HE unions and the ongoing campaign.

**Contact** Paul Bridge Deputy Head of HE [pbridge@ucu.org.uk](mailto:pbridge@ucu.org.uk)

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## HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The HEC met on 11 October and considered the industrial action ballot result. HEC agreed that members have given UCU a mandate to call industrial action. The national committee voted unanimously for the following next steps:

- Contact UCEA and seek urgent dispute resolution talks prior to the first day of action;
- Seek to coordinate strike action with the other HE unions where possible;
- That the first phase of strike action will be up to 3 days between now and the end of November, supported with ASOS in the form of working-to-contract;
- Issue working-to-contract guidance to branches;
- Branches to be encouraged to develop a range of campaigning activities;
- The HEC will meet to review the progress of talks with the employer, to evaluate the impact of the action to date, and to consider the next phase of action (including a paper on marking/assessment options and the development of an equivalent escalation of ASOS for staff who do not have marking duties).

## INDUSTRIAL ACTION

Further to discussion with our sister unions, **the HE officers have agreed to call a day of joint strike action with UNISON and UNITE members on Thursday 31 October.**

**UCU members are also to be asked to work-to-contract with effect from 1 November.** Guidelines for branches are in the process of being finalised.

Please find attached the statutory notice (Appendix 1) sent to those employers listed in Appendix 2. A copy of our letter to UCEA is attached as Appendix 3.

**note:** Notice letters sent to Northern Ireland HEIs will refer to the appropriate legislation.

## **OTHER UNIONS**

As reported, UNISON and Unite are taking action with us. EIS has served notice of its intention to ballot their members in Scottish HE institutions. The ballot closes in early November.

## **CAMPAIGN**

Branches are encouraged to organise member meetings and invite national speakers to discuss the first phase of action. Branches should now start to plan for joint campaign activities with their counterparts in UNISON and Unite.

Strike and picket materials are being produced and will be distributed directly to branches.

Further details of campaigning activities and resources will follow – the Campaigns Team will be in touch soon.

## **REMUNERATION COMMITTEES**

Branches are reminded that around this time of year, some institutions' Remuneration Committees (or equivalent), which report on senior staff pay and benefits, produce an annual report. You are encouraged to enquire about this report and if it is clear that senior staff are receiving increases in excess of 1%, please let us and your members know.

Branches will be kept informed of developments.

**Michael MacNeil**  
**National Head of Higher Education**

**Notice of Action Letter**

**BY SPECIAL DELIVERY**

[Name  
Address  
Address  
Address  
Postcode]

16 October 2013

Dear [name]

**National Claim 2013/14 Dispute**

**Notice of Industrial Action – s 234A TULR(C)A 1992**

As required by Section 234A of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, I am giving you notice that UCU reasonably believes that those of our members whose categories and workplaces are listed in the attached matrix and who are employed by your institution ('the affected employees') will be induced by the union to take part in the industrial action specified in this letter.

Attached is a matrix which provides:

1. a list of the categories of employee to which the affected employees belong
2. a list of the workplaces at which the affected employees work;
3. figures giving the total number of the affected employees;
4. figures giving the number of the affected employees in each of the categories identified in 1. above;
5. figures giving the number of the affected employees who work at each of the workplaces identified in 2. above.

By way of explanation, the figures given above have been taken from the union's central membership database in Head Office. The union constantly seeks to update its membership records. In anticipation that industrial action might be called the union began a process of checking and updating membership records in February 2013. Branches were sent a copy of the records held on the union's central membership database and were asked to check the records against locally held information and to carry out a specific ballot preparation updating exercise. The check included verifying the workplaces where union members worked and their employment category.

Members are also regularly asked to inform the union of any changes to their circumstances and these changes are made on the union's central database. The union has, therefore, over a period of some months received information from a variety of sources including our branches and

individual members themselves using all available media including postal mailings, our web site, and individual email communications to inform and update the union's central membership records.

Any differences between this matrix and the one which accompanied the ballot notification letter may also be attributable to general membership movements, that is individuals leaving or joining the union, or whose employment circumstances have materially changed.

The union has, therefore, over an extended period received information from a variety of sources including our branches and individual members themselves using all available media including postal mailings, our web site, and individual email communications to inform and update the union's central membership records.

Any difference in the total numbers of members shown on the matrices and the total numbers of members known to you because they pay their subscription by "check-off" is due to the fact that members can also pay their union subscription annually by cheque or monthly by bank direct debit.

In formulating the categories of employees used in the matrices the union has had regard to paragraph 15 of the Code of Practice: Industrial Action Ballots and Notice to the Employers (2005). Specifically, the terms "academic" and "academic related" are terms which reflect the nature of the employee's work.

In the matrix you will also note that we may identify postgraduates as an employment category. The members identified in this category are individuals who have identified to us that they are postgraduate students at your institution who also have an employment contract under which they deliver teaching or other paid for services.

The matrix attached was generated on 10 October 2013 specifically for the purpose of this industrial action notification letter.

The industrial action is intended to be discontinuous in the form of a one day strike and the intended date for the affected employees to take part in the action is Thursday 31 October 2013.

The industrial action is also intended to be continuous action short of a strike in the form of working to contract. The intended start date for the affected employees to take part in the action is Friday 1 November.

In the event this dispute is not resolved to UCU's satisfaction the union may notify you of further industrial action.

Yours sincerely

**Michael MacNeil**  
**Head of Higher Education**

**Higher Education Institutions sent notice of action letter**

University of Aberdeen	City University London
Aberystwyth University	The Courtauld Institute of Art
University of Abertay Dundee	Coventry University
Anglia Ruskin University	The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama
University of the Arts London	University of Cumbria
Aston University	University of Derby
Bangor University	De Montfort University
University of Bath	University of Dundee
Bath Spa University	Durham University
Birkbeck, University of London	Edge Hill University
University of Bedfordshire	University of Edinburgh
University of Birmingham	University of Essex
Bishop Grosseteste University	University of Exeter
University of Bolton	Falmouth University
Bournemouth University	Glasgow Caledonian University
University of Bradford	University of Glasgow
University of Brighton	University of Gloucestershire
University of Bristol	Glyndwr University
Oxford Brookes University	Goldsmiths, University of London
Rose Bruford College	University of Greenwich
Brunel University	The Glasgow School of Art
Bucks New University	Harper Adams University
University of Cambridge	University of Hertfordshire
Canterbury Christ Church University	Heythrop College, University of London
Cardiff University	Liverpool Hope University
Cardiff Metropolitan University	University of Huddersfield
University of Chester	University of Hull
University of Chichester	

Heriot-Watt University  
Institute of Education  
King's College London  
Keele University  
University of Kent  
Kingston University  
Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance  
Lancaster University  
Loughborough University  
Leeds College of Art  
University of Leeds  
Leeds Metropolitan University  
Leeds Trinity University  
University of Leicester  
University of Lincoln  
The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts  
University of Liverpool  
Liverpool John Moores University  
University of London (Senate)  
London Metropolitan University  
London South Bank University  
London School of Economics  
London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine  
Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine  
The University of Manchester  
University of St Mark & St John  
Middlesex University  
Manchester Metropolitan University  
Edinburgh Napier University  
Newcastle University  
Newman University  
University of Northampton  
Northumbria University  
The University of Nottingham  
Nottingham Trent University  
Norwich University of the Arts  
The Open University  
University of Oxford  
Plymouth University  
University of Portsmouth  
Queen Margaret University  
Queen Mary University of London  
Queen's University Belfast  
Royal Agricultural University  
Royal Academy of Music  
Royal College of Art  
Royal College of Music  
University of Reading  
The Robert Gordon University  
Royal Holloway, University of London  
Royal Northern College of Music  
University of Roehampton  
Royal Veterinary College  
University of Salford  
St George's, University of London  
University of Sheffield  
Sheffield Hallam University  
St Mary's University College, Twickenham  
School of African and Oriental Studies  
Southampton Solent University  
University of Southampton

University of South Wales  
Staffordshire University  
University of St Andrews  
Stranmillis University College  
University of Stirling  
St Mary's University College  
University of Strathclyde  
University of Sunderland  
University of Surrey  
Swansea University  
Swansea Metropolitan University /  
University of Wales, Trinity St David  
Teesside University  
University College Birmingham  
University of Central Lancashire  
University College London  
University for the Creative Arts  
University of East Anglia  
University of East London  
University of Ulster  
University Campus Suffolk  
University of Sussex  
University of the West of England  
University of the West of Scotland  
University of Wales  
University of Warwick  
University of West London  
University of Winchester  
University of Wolverhampton  
University of Westminster  
University of Worcester

Writtle College  
University of York  
York St John University

**Sent via email and post**

Ms Helen Fairfoul  
UCEA Chief Executive

16 October 2013

Dear Helen

**Dispute resolution talks**

You are aware of our industrial action ballot results and those of other unions.

I write to update you on the recent decisions taken at last Friday's meeting of the UCU Higher Education Committee (HEC). The HEC was unanimous in the view that that UCU has a mandate to call industrial action; both strike action and action short of a strike (ASOS). We have discussed a plan of escalating action and authority was delegated to the relevant Officers of the union to authorise the action.

It is the view of UCU that the last four years of below inflation pay increases has resulted in a cumulative loss in members' salary of around 13%; this trend cannot continue. It is our view that the sector can afford to offer more than 1%.

We are keen to find a resolution to the dispute. I am prepared to clear my diary over the coming weeks so we can meet and attempt to resolve this dispute without the need for our members to take industrial action.

In the event that this does not prove possible, then the first phase of our action will commence with a one-day strike on 31 October. Our members will also be asked to take part in action short of a strike in the form of continuous working to contract. In the event that the dispute is not resolved then we anticipate seeking authorisation for further strikes over the autumn months. If it proves necessary, we shall discuss further escalation of industrial action in the New Year.

I take no pleasure in writing in these terms but UCEA and your subscribers should be in no doubt about the level of anger that has been growing in the sector concerning the lack of meaningful negotiations through national bargaining and at a series of below-inflation increases.

Yours sincerely

**Paul Bridge**  
**UCU Deputy Head of HE**