

**Imperial College Union
Union Stance on Continuing Support for UCU Industrial Action
Union Council / 7 February 2022**

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Note that any information and background contained in the “Union Stance on UCU Industrial Action” paper¹ presented at Union Council on 22 November 2022 will not be repeated here. Please read this paper in conjunction with that paper for relevant information.

If you have any questions about this paper, please submit them in advance by emailing me at dpe@ic.ac.uk.

Union Notes

1. Impacts of strike action on the Disability Advisory Service:
 - During the three days of strike action in November 2022, a total of 22 appointments were disrupted. There were 437 total appointments during the Autumn Term. Any affected students were emailed on the day of their appointment by the team lead to ask them to inform her directly of any urgent or wellbeing issues arising from the cancellation of their appointment.
 - Diagnostic appointments for Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs) or autism are carried out almost entirely by external assessors. No such assessments were cancelled last term. The College does not anticipate that any of these assessments will be cancelled this term.
 - Students whose appointments were disrupted have either already been seen or have been encouraged to make an appointment. Only one student was identified as an urgent case and has already been seen.
 - DAS has contingency arrangements to cover urgent cases including assessments for exam arrangements, including reserved appointments each week for urgent cases, and signposting to their Department Disabilities Officer (DDOs). DDOs are authorised to put interim exam arrangements in place.
 - Students who have already sat exams without arrangements in place should be encouraged to approach their DDO or tutor about a mitigating circumstances claim.
 - Students with bookings on strike days will be emailed to encourage them to book a reserve slot in case the first one is cancelled.
 - The College has stated that they will ensure that a marking and assessment boycott will not extend to DAS assessments.
2. On the three days of strike action which took place in November 2022, a total of 224

¹ https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/how-were-run/committees/22-23/Union_Council/file/7216

staff took strike action, with a total of 409 staff days lost:

Strike Action	Business School	Engineering	Medicine	Natural Sciences	Support Services	College Total
24 Nov 2022 (UCU only)	1	18	24	58	23	124
25 Nov 2022 (UCU only)	1	17	50	58	16	112
30 Nov 2022 (UCU and Unite)	4	36	29	59	45	173
					Total staff taking strike action:	224
					Total days lost:	409

3. In addition to the strikes which took place in November 2022, the Imperial branches of UCU and Unite held a local strike on Monday 23 January regarding the College's pay negotiations for 2022-23.
4. UCU have called for a further 18 days of strike action nationwide on the following dates:
 - Wed 1 Feb
 - Thurs 9 Feb, Fri 10 Feb
 - Tues 14 Feb, Wed 15 Feb, Thurs 16 Feb
 - Tues 21 Feb, Wed 22 Feb, Thurs 23 Feb
 - Mon 27 Feb, Tues 28 Feb, Wed 1 March, Thurs 2 March
 - Thurs 16 March, Fri 17 March
 - Mon 20 March, Tues 21 March, Wed 22 March
5. If a staff member was to strike for all 18 days, this would be the equivalent of losing nearly four weeks of teaching this term.
6. The impact of strikes varies between departments as levels of UCU membership differ across the College. In total, approximately 850 out of 8500 staff are members of the Joint Trade Unions (JTUs).
7. ICU have continued to provide UCU/Unite with storage and meeting space for the strikes which took place on 23 January and 1 February.
8. UCU have called off their marking and assessment boycott which was originally supposed to begin in January 2023.
9. Pending the outcome of a re-ballot to renew their mandate to call industrial action, UCU is planning to hold a marking and assessment boycott from April 2023.
10. UCU have asked that ICU make Metric available from 10.45am to 3pm on each strike day with access to audio-visual facilities to allow people to join meetings remotely.
11. UCU have asked that ICU make tea and coffee available for approximately 20 people at 10.45am on each strike day.
12. The College has published the following guidance for students, including information on how the effects of industrial action will be minimised: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/pay-and-pensions/industrial-action/industrial-action-students/>

Union Believes

1. Students will have a better university experience if staff feel they are fairly compensated.
2. All College employees deserve a fair salary and fair pensions.
3. The USS pension scheme is one of the most generous pension schemes in the UK, however the pensions value has been eroded over time. In recent years, pensions for teachers, local government, and the NHS have become more generous in comparison. The UCU claims that the average union member will lose 35% of their future retirement income.²
4. People have the right to undertake industrial action.
5. Industrial action will be detrimental to students, as this means they may not be taught all module content.
6. The College may not be able to deliver all its learning outcomes due to industrial action.
7. Should a marking and assessment boycott take place, this may affect the ability of students to progress or graduate, and therefore could be significantly detrimental to students.

Union Resolves

1. To continue/withdraw support for UCU's strike action.
 - If ICU decides to support strike action, then the Officer Trustees shall discuss the operational feasibility of UCU's requests for support with ICU staff. This includes factors such as staff availability and resource to provide this support and other room bookings which have already been confirmed.
2. To continue not supporting/begin supporting UCU's marking and assessment boycott, should this take place from April.

² <https://inews.co.uk/news/education/university-strike-dates-when-ucu-strikes-planned-november-2022-how-many-universities-1959621>