

Local City UCU FAQs for Strike Action November 2019

Important: These should be read alongside **National UCU FAQs:** www.ucu.org.uk/he-action-faqs

These are a first draft of our Local FAQs and reflect the questions that we've been getting so far. We will update and expand these as soon as possible, to respond to your questions. If you have further questions contact us: info@cityucu.org.uk

Who do I need to tell if I'm taking strike action?

You do not need to tell **your manager** in advance of taking strike action. This includes completing the form that HR circulates. You do need to tell your manager that you took strike action and give details of the date(s) of this action, when you return to work

If your work involves teaching, we encourage you to let **your students** know about any teaching that you will miss due to strike action. Telling our students that lectures and seminars will be cancelled both means that we can provide the information and support that as educators we want to, but is also an important opportunity to inform students about the dispute and how they can support us.

Similarly, if you work in other parts of City and have appointments booked during the strike period, with students or with externals, you may want to tell them that you will have to miss these. If possible discuss this with colleagues in your Group or Department so that you take a consistent approach.

It's the last week of term and the strike means I'm going to miss important material, what should I do?

Striking does mean missing material.

If you have flexibility you might be able to swap material between next week and the last two weeks (when you will be on strike).

The strike and ASOS means that you are asked not to reschedule missed material into new classes, nor to cover for colleagues' teaching. This is because when you are asked to reschedule you are effectively being asked to do the work for which you have already lost pay.

You may also want to remind students of your office hours or other opportunities to meet with you in person or virtually, in the run-up to the strike and week following it, however since ASOS means working to contract, make sure that this does not mean that you are taking on additional duties or working longer-than-usual hours.

Can I extend deadlines or change assessments so that students are not examined on material that is missed?

As far as CityUCU is concerned, we are happy for you to make local arrangements on this, working with your local teaching teams and with PARCs, as needed.

We are aware that some programmes have assessments regulated or set by professional bodies and these will be more complicated cases. If you have a particular problem on your courses, in the first

instance see if you can come up with a solution that works for you and colleagues in your division/group/department. But if you want some advice, get in touch: info@cityucu.org.uk

I'm going to be in financial need if I lose pay, are any funds available?

We asked HR to spread any deductions in a way to reduce hardship. Initially Mary Luckiram proposed that this be spread across January and February (4 days from each salary). She has now agreed that it be spread across three months (2 days from January; 3 days each from February/March). We have said that this remains unacceptable and have made the case that, in case of future strike action, no more than three days be deducted from any month and are pushing to delay the initial deductions to avoid January (which we know is a difficult month for many). But we hope that some spreading out of deductions makes it easier for members to participate in legally sanctioned strike action.

If you are in financial hardship there are ways that you can claim support both nationally and locally from Strike Funds (these are pots of money that have been collected/donated in order to support members in need during strike action).

- National Strike Fund Support: www.ucu.org.uk/article/10333/Strike-fund-support
- Local CityUCU Strike Fund Support: We will send round further information about how to claim locally by Tuesday next week. Money will be available insofar as possible for anyone who is in need (whether you are an hourly paid member of staff or a Senior Lecturer single parent with high childcare – we recognise that different people will be in need for different reasons). Claims will be simple to make and we will aim to provide confirmation of claims (pending deduction information) before the strike begins, so that you do not feel constrained by financial circumstances in deciding whether to take action.

Can I donate to support other people taking action who are in financial need?

Yes. You can donate to our local strike fund: The account details are as follows.

UCU City LA14 Hardship Fund
Account: 20324559
Sort code: 60-83-01

You can also donate to the national strike fund www.ucu.org.uk/article/10333/Strike-fund-support

I am an hourly paid Visiting Lecturer / GTA, what can I do?

You can still participate in strike action – and join the picket on any day – but you will have your pay deducted only for the day(s) you work. You will be able to claim from the Strike Fund like any other member of staff. We recognise the particular position of precarity that you are in and will prioritise claims from lower paid or casually employed workers

There is information for hourly-paid staff on the National Union FAQ and we recommend you look at that. www.ucu.org.uk/he-action-faqs. If you want more information about what we're doing at City, get in touch: info@cityucu.org.uk

I am a migrant worker/student on a visa, how will striking affect my right to remain in the UK?

UCU has published detailed advice for our members who are migrant workers. See here: www.ucu.org.uk/heaction-migrantworkers.