

UCU STRIKE INFO FOR EDINBURGH UNI STUDENTS

What is happening?

University workers are striking – this includes lecturers, tutors, librarians, technicians, administrators and other university staff. This means classes will be cancelled and other university functions will be shut down.

When is this happening?

Full strike action: November 24th, 25th, 30th
Action short of a strike (ASOS): November 23rd
More dates in semester 2.

What is the UCU?

What is their role in the strike action?

The University and College Union (or UCU) is the trade union that represents me alongside over 130,000 university workers in the UK.

On 24 October, the UCU announced the results of a nationwide ballot of members on possible future industrial action. Members voted to support strike action by an overwhelming majority, based on a historically high voter turnout. This gives the UCU a mandate to deliver strike action across the UK.

The UCU have now called on vice chancellors to immediately enter negotiations and make improved offers to avoid strike action, which is a measure of last resort.

We recognise that the quality of the student learning experience is already badly affected by the problems the strike aims to address such as low pay, overwork and precarity. Since we have not been able to achieve meaningful dialogue or change any other way, we now believe that industrial action is the best path to make lasting improvements to both staff working conditions and student learning conditions.

WHY ARE STAFF STRIKING?

PAY – In real terms, University staff pay has dropped 25% since 2009. We are asking for a pay rise that reflects inflation.

PAY EQUALITY – We want the University of Edinburgh, and the wider university sector, to commit to action to tackle gender, race and disability pay gaps.

Did you know the gender pay gap at the University of Edinburgh is 16%*



*Based on average pay. For more info see [Equal Pay Audit 2021](#).

Adapted from <https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/12469/FAQs>

PENSIONS – Our pension benefits were massively reduced in 2020. An independent review now shows our pensions could be restored while keeping the pension fund in surplus.

WORKLOAD - Overwork is endemic across higher education. On average academic staff work 51.3 FTE hours per week, equal to working 2 unpaid days every week. Staff on fractional contracts can be working 2-3x the hours they are paid for each week. (See [UCU's 2021 workload survey](#) June 2022)

CASUALISATION - 50% of all academic staff at Edinburgh Uni are on fixed-term contracts*, so non-permanent positions. UCU's research shows 42% of staff on casual contracts struggled to pay household bills. Casualisation exacerbates gender and race inequality as women and BAME academics are more likely to be on fixed-term contracts. (See UCU [Precarious Work Report](#), Oct 2021.)

You can find lots more information about UCU's disputes on working conditions and pensions [here](#).

HOW CAN STUDENTS SUPPORT THE STRIKE?

- 1) Come to our picket lines! Details will be on our Twitter [@ucuedinburgh](https://twitter.com/ucuedinburgh)
- 2) Contact university management (principal@ed.ac.uk) to tell them you support staff and their demands.
- 3) Follow the Student Staff Solidarity Network ([SSSN](#)) and attend their strikes talk on Tues 22 Nov at 5-7pm, LG.11 40 George Square.
- 4) Talk to your UCU local contact – there's one for almost every subject area in Edinburgh Uni, you can get a full list [here](#).

For more information on how to support, check out:
www.ucu.org.uk/supportthestrikes