**Subject:** An update on Industrial Action from Professor Tom Lawson

*This message is being sent to all academic staff on behalf of Professor Tom Lawson, Deputy Vice- Chancellor.*

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|  Dear Colleagues, Tomorrow marks the start of six consecutive days of industrial action called by UCU, the union representing academic staff at Northumbria. While participation in industrial action at Northumbria has been declining, with around 100 colleagues notifying us of participation in the most recent day of action, we still anticipate there will be some disruption affecting 10-15% of our students.  Our primary aim remains minimising the impact of strike action on our students, so I am writing to remind colleagues planning to take part how they can notify the University of their participation.  **Colleagues who intend to participate.**  *Notifying the University*  Colleagues are required to advise the University on their first day back at work following each period of action via this [mandatory online notification](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fforms.office.com%2Fpages%2Fresponsepage.aspx%3Fid%3D3c9X5zUfV0Svj3ycaxQ349I-pQMP2WJLpruHqY6aI51UQkw2NU9ZRUtWQVBSMENVTFNXVFlYUVRYWCQlQCN0PWcu&data=05%7C01%7Cjackie.rose%40northumbria.ac.uk%7C5db6ebd6134e4e085aae08db2568140a%7Ce757cfdd1f354457af8f7c9c6b1437e3%7C0%7C0%7C638144901154914074%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=SRCrGGlfjhePQPBDLA4x%2FdScIVSrppnwbLGzt57KlAA%3D&reserved=0). For example, if you participate in the strike days on 15, 16, 17, 20, 21 and 22 March, you should complete it on 23 March (or your first day back at work). It is the University’s responsibility to identify and implement suitable arrangements to manage the industrial action and this is a reasonable management instruction. Failure to engage with this process, as requested, is likely to be considered as Action Short of a Strike. Some colleagues have previously shared in advance their intention to participate and how they have mitigated, or will mitigate, the impact on their students. There is no requirement to complete it but advance notification via our [optional online notification](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fforms.office.com%2Fpages%2Fresponsepage.aspx%3Fid%3D3c9X5zUfV0Svj3ycaxQ349I-pQMP2WJLpruHqY6aI51UQzFQTkY4NVJZSldOODhaTzdUM0E5VDNMRSQlQCN0PWcu&data=05%7C01%7Cjackie.rose%40northumbria.ac.uk%7C5db6ebd6134e4e085aae08db2568140a%7Ce757cfdd1f354457af8f7c9c6b1437e3%7C0%7C0%7C638144901154914074%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=rZmhQWPXqKfldXy43JuTyUOJhU%2BWPGFKSwzcjkklIsU%3D&reserved=0) is welcome and helps in the overall planning and management of the action.  *Minimising the impact*  Minimising the impact on student learning is the University’s priority when managing industrial action and the potential disruption of six days of strike action over the next two weeks is considerable. The University requires colleagues, as appropriate to their role, to set aside other activities on the days following strike action in order to prioritise student learning, for example, by rescheduling sessions to these days and ensuring dissertation supervision takes place. It is for this reason that colleagues who participate in the industrial action are required to be on campus on the non-strike days in the same week. This is important as a means of providing visible on-campus support to our students. The requirement to mitigate the impact as close to the date of any missed sessions is not negotiable, and is considered to be a reasonable management instruction. *Action Short of a Strike (ASOS)* Mitigations have been put in place by colleagues for the majority of sessions impacted by strike action so far, and we really appreciate this cooperation. However, I would reiterate that refusal to carry out reasonable management instructions about attendance on campus and the prioritisation of specific work is a breach of contract and will be considered as partial performance of duties. As the University does not accept partial performance, we reserve the right to withhold pay for each day impacted by partial performance.  *Industrial Action FAQs* Please continue to review the [online FAQs](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.northumbria.ac.uk%2Fabout-us%2Findustrial-action&data=05%7C01%7Cjackie.rose%40northumbria.ac.uk%7C5db6ebd6134e4e085aae08db2568140a%7Ce757cfdd1f354457af8f7c9c6b1437e3%7C0%7C0%7C638144901154914074%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=YFlTRaL8Jtg%2FvT0vyCy7wL55vHnF4fAnAt9MA%2BauT2w%3D&reserved=0) which contain operational arrangements including how, and when pay will be withheld, what constitutes action short of a strike and the implications of this, and what you may and may not say to students.   I would also like to once again thank those colleagues who have provided additional support on previous strike days. Your help in covering sessions and providing direct support to students has been, and continues to be, appreciated.  National negotiations continue and we remain hopeful of a positive outcome to the dispute, in the meantime we know all colleagues will continue to work hard to prioritise our students and their learning at this time.  If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your Head of Department, Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor, or me.   Best wishes,  **Professor Tom Lawson, FRHistS**  (he/him)   *Deputy Vice-Chancellor*   |
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