

From: [Northumbria Announcements](#)
Subject: A message from Professor Tom Lawson - Information on industrial action
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This message is being sent to all colleagues on behalf of Professor Tom Lawson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor

Dear Colleagues,

UCU, the trade union which represents academic staff at Northumbria, has notified the University of the Northumbria Branch's intention to commence continuous Action Short of a Strike (working to contract) from Monday 7 February and five days of Strike Action on Monday 21 and Tuesday 22 February, Monday 28 February, Tuesday 1 March and Wednesday 2 March.

The Northumbria UCU branch was unsuccessful in its first attempt to secure a mandate but on its second attempt 306 members (which include Associate Lecturers and Postgraduate Research students) voted in favour of strike action and 374 members for action short of a strike. The re-ballot turnout of 50.93% of the Northumbria UCU membership (above the 50% threshold) now allows the Branch to take part in the action.

Some institutions will also face industrial action in relation to USS pension scheme changes however there was no ballot for action on this issue at Northumbria. Most academic staff at Northumbria are in the Teachers' Pension Scheme and not USS.

I appreciate how challenging the past 22 months have been with the pandemic, and how hard you have worked to minimise the disruption to students, and ensure they receive the best experience possible. Any industrial action is deeply regrettable given the disruption faced by our students already and, as always, we want to do all we can to protect the interests and experience of our students at Northumbria as well as the 90% of our staff who will not be participating in the action.

The industrial action, taking place in 63 universities over the same period, is a national campaign and the local context is important for all colleagues to understand. I have set out [Northumbria University's position in relation to UCU's 'four fights' national campaign](#) of pay, equality related pay differentials, casualisation and job security, and workload. As you can see Northumbria's position is more positive than in most other universities.

The University will remain open during the period of action and where possible all teaching and learning will be covered. Colleagues must not engage directly with students about the action or cancel any planned sessions. The University will ask all colleagues to advise of their intention to take part in the action and will require that any action taken is notified.

As it isn't possible to know which colleagues are UCU members, and therefore may be participating, all communications about these issues will be shared with all academic staff. The method of notification of participation in the action will be shared with all academic colleagues later this week.

The University will exercise its right to withhold pay for each day of participation in strike action and for any action short of a strike where an individual's contractual duties are not being fulfilled.

All best,

Tom

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I do not expect others to keep the same work hours as I do, so please respond in your regular working hours

