

# INDUSTRIAL ACTION BY THE UNIVERSITY & COLLEGE UNION: STUDENT FAQs

## 1. EXAMS AND ASSESSMENTS

### **If my sessions were disrupted and not rescheduled, how can I be assessed on those topics in examinations or assessments?**

- Exams will commence on Monday 21 May with revision week commencing 14 May, and timetables will be issued w/c 26 March.
- For your assessments and exams, we will ensure that you are not disadvantaged if you have missed any learning due to the strikes, while of course maintaining the highest standards.
- Schools are taking steps to check that assessments, exams, coursework and other assignments reflect the learning that has taken place.
- Where a question or task requires learning that has been disrupted by strikes, you can expect this will be changed or replaced with an equivalent question or task covering material which has been delivered.
- Assessment methods will be maintained in the same proportions, for example, 10% presentation, 30% coursework, 60% exam.
- Importantly, we will maintain our quality and standards at all times, with full regard to the QAA and our Quality Manual, so that you can be assured that your exams assessments will be as robust as they always are.

### **What if the assessment cannot be changed?**

- On the limited occasions where an assessment cannot be changed, then Boards of Examiners will make overall adjustments to marks in recognition of the additional difficulties faced by the students on the affected module.
- The intention will be to ensure that the cancellation of teaching has no detrimental effect on any student in terms of the marks they receive. In such circumstances you should not be required to submit a claim for extenuating circumstances.

### **Will we be entitled to an extension for dissertations or other submission of work due to the industrial action?**

- You should assume that any deadlines set for submitting work, including dissertations, still apply as normal. Your Schools will aim to maintain assessment deadlines, but also look at where revised deadlines might be helpful for you.
- Unless you have been told of a change to a specific submission date, the stated deadline will stand, and you will not be automatically entitled to an extension if the submission or dissertation deadline fell within the period of industrial action.
- If the industrial action has had a specific detrimental impact on you personally, you might be able to make a request for [Extenuating Circumstances](#), which supports students with exceptional, unforeseeable, short-term circumstances which affect their ability to study or take assessments.

## 2. TEACHING AND LEARNING

### What happened to teaching and learning during industrial action?

- The University remained open throughout the industrial action. The majority of teaching and assessment took place as planned, although we appreciate the impact differed across Schools and Departments. More than 75% of our academic staff are not members of the University & College Union.
- Schools are working hard to reschedule lost sessions wherever possible, provide catch-up resources through Moodle and extend deadlines where helpful. Please keep in touch with your School for information specific to your circumstances
- Where sessions were likely to experience disruption, your School will have endeavoured to give you advance notice where at all possible. However, staff do not have to inform the University in advance that they intend to take industrial action, so this might not have been possible in every case.
- Unless a class was disrupted, normal attendance monitoring will have taken place. The student [Attendance Policy](#) means you must attend all activities to pursue your studies required by your School.

### What if my viva, oral examination or presentation was disrupted?

- The industrial action did not include a boycott of marking or assessment. Where oral examinations, assessments and vivas coincided with the industrial action they will have been rescheduled at the earliest opportunity.

## 3. COMPLAINTS AND COMPENSATION

### Can I request compensation or a refund of fees?

- Throughout the industrial action, our priority as a University has been to ensure that the industrial action - strikes or ASOS - did not adversely affect our students.
- The University was open as usual on strike days; the majority of teaching in most Schools proceeded; libraries, computer rooms, and services were and continue to be available to enable students to continue their studies and independent learning.
- Given the actions we took and are continuing to take to minimise disruption to students' learning, we feel that circumstances giving rise to a right to financial compensation are unlikely to arise.
- Fees cover a very wide range of services, not just tuition, and our focus remains on addressing any disruption where it occurs, rather than providing financial recompense.
- Of course, you can raise complaints through the recognised [Student Complaints Policy](#) - and can contact the Students' Union for advice - usually this will be when you have evidence in support of the complaint.

### Why did you deduct salary from staff who take strike action, and what will you do with it?

- It is common employment practice not to pay staff for the time they are not at work when on strike.
- We will continue to use this money specifically to ensure students are not adversely affected by the industrial action.

## 4. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

### How will the strikes have affected my Visa in terms of my attendance record?

- Your Tier 4 visa conditions were not affected by the industrial action. Unless you were specifically advised that a session was disrupted, you should have attend as normal, and the normal processes for attendance monitoring will have applied to sessions which were not disrupted.
- If a session was disrupted due to industrial action, this will have been recorded by the University as a cancelled session, and this will not have a detrimental impact on your attendance record for the purposes of your Tier 4 visa

## 5.THE INDUSTRIAL ACTION

### What is the University's position on the dispute?

- Above all we sincerely apologise for any disruption you may have experienced, and will continue to do all we can to ensure teaching, learning and assessment has not been adversely affected.
- The University supports the proposal - accepted by a 64% yes vote of UCU members - by Universities UK to maintain the USS pension scheme as it is until at least April 2019, while a jointly agreed independent panel of experts reviews the valuation of the scheme.
- The University has maintained throughout this dispute that no single Vice-Chancellor could resolve the situation and that continued negotiation and consultation were the best ways to achieve a fair solution for a national pension scheme of 400,000 members in universities across the country.
- To examine the different perspectives on the dispute, please go to [UUK](#) [USS](#) and [UCU](#).

### When was the industrial action?

- The University and College Union (UCU) has held a series of day-long strikes at Nottingham and more than 60 other universities across 22-23 and 26-28 February, and 5-8 and 12-16 March.
- Action short of a strike was to run from 22 February to 19 June 2018, where UCU members would work to contract and not to undertake specific duties.
- However, UCU has now confirmed it has suspended its industrial action plans.