

Dear Students,

19 November 2019

As a follow up to the Vice-Chancellor's email on 6 November I'm writing to provide you with some further information about the planned strike action and our commitment to ensure your academic outcomes are protected, and to carefully manage the impact this may have on you.

The dates for the planned strike action are set to be on:

- Monday 25 November – Friday 29 November (5 consecutive days)
- Monday 2 December – Wednesday 4 December (3 consecutive days)

The University and College Union (UCU) has also advised their members to begin action short of a strike (ASOS) from Monday 25 November.

Below is some guidance about what to do on the planned strike dates and where to go to access further information and support, which I hope you find helpful.

What can I expect to see on strike days, and during action short of a strike, and what should I do?

If colleagues are **striking** it means they are removing their labour for the day(s) they are on strike. This means striking colleagues will not come to work as usual which may result in some teaching activity being cancelled. It may also mean you do not receive a response to any questions you ask (i.e. via email) until striking colleagues have returned to work.

Colleagues who are on strike may also choose to participate in peaceful picketing. The pickets tend to be organised at the main entrances to the University campuses, however, all colleagues, students and visitors to the University campuses will be able to come onto campus as normal.

If colleagues are participating in taking **action short of a strike** it means they will come to work on their usual working days but may not carry out all of their regular duties. Colleagues participating in action short of a strike will carry out their scheduled teaching activities but you may experience a delay in receiving feedback on your assessments.

How might my timetable be affected?

Not all of our academic colleagues are members of the UCU and some UCU members may not participate in strike action. We would therefore ask you to continue to attend all of your timetabled sessions. Wherever possible, we will let you know in advance if any of your teaching sessions are likely to be affected, we will do this via text message and email. However, colleagues do not have to let us know if they are taking strike action so we will not always be able to provide you with an update.

We will be asking any UCU members who participate in the strike to provide teaching content to their students in an alternative format (digitally via ELE, recap, podcasts, directed reading material etc.) by the end of term 1 so we would ask you to please check ELE for any messages /content that has been posted.

Will the strike affect coursework / assignment submissions?

We would ask you to continue to submit your assignments by their due dates unless you are contacted by your College. All Colleges have considered the implications of strike activity on assessment deadlines and have established positions that aim to be fair and preserve the student experience, which remains of paramount importance. All Colleges will communicate any immediate changes to their coursework

positions before the strike commences. Further changes may be made at a later date if it becomes clear that students' ability to complete an assessment has been affected by strike action. You are advised to contact your Hub if you have any queries.

Will the strike action affect the January exams?

It is our intention that January exams will go ahead as planned. We aim to ensure that students are not disadvantaged by the questions set with regard to material that was disrupted during any strike action. It will not be mandatory for students to answer examination questions covering academic content where the delivery was disrupted during the strike.

Who can I contact if I need to speak to my tutor but they are on strike?

This will depend on the nature of your enquiry. If you need to ask a personal / academic tutor for any kind of welfare support you should contact the relevant [Education Support Advisor for Welfare](#) linked to your Hub. If you need to ask a query of an academic nature and your tutor is on strike, you may not receive an answer until after the industrial action period. However, a number of alternative sources of help and advice are available. Some Colleges are running breakfast clubs during the industrial action, which you will receive details of via email and, in Penryn, there will be daily drop-in sessions. Finally, you can access study skills support through the [Study Zone](#), which also includes online resources.

Further information

We have developed a [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page for you so we can answer any further queries that you might have, and we will keep this page updated throughout this period. We would also like to highlight the resources that are available to support you, if needed. This includes our self-help tool, [SilverCloud](#) and our Wellbeing Services at both the [Exeter](#) and [Cornwall](#) campuses.

We will keep you informed as the situation progresses, however, should you have any immediate concerns or queries, please do email industrialaction@exeter.ac.uk and we will answer your queries as soon as we can.

Finally, please let me reaffirm our commitment to do all we can to ensure the impact on your experience is minimised and that your academic outcomes are protected. We still very much hope that on-going national negotiations will resolve these disputes before the strike commences and we will continue to keep you informed as the situation progresses.

With best wishes,

Tim

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