



The University Strike!

University of Nottingham staff and members of the University and College Union (UCU) are currently taking strike action, along with workers from 60 other universities. This is over changes to their pensions (the Universities Superannuation Scheme - USS), and universities' failure to make improvements on pay, equality, workload and casualisation. UCU represents the majority of academics, teaching, support and administrative staff. A lot of the vital work done within the university is becoming casualised. This means that many workers do not have the same formal protections and conditions of permanent workers, such as a guaranteed living wage, holiday pay, and regular hours of work. Instead work is done on a casual basis: a teaching job that lasts a semester, or an admin role that lasts a matter of months.

The University doesn't employ these people directly, but outsources their employment to another company (UniTemps). This is so that the university is not responsible for their poor conditions and pay. It also means these outsourced workers cannot legally join the strike, as their employer is technically a separate company. This is a misguided attempt to drive down pay and working conditions to increase the university's profits. While work at the university is increasingly difficult, stretched, and poorly paid, students' education is damaged as tuition fees rise.

In 2017 alone, the University of Nottingham boasted a £646m total income, and a surplus of £33m. We are all being ripped off and exploited so that the university can turn education into a business raking in higher and higher profits.

This is a process that effects everyone who works and studies at the university. The UCU strike is one part of the fight back that we all need to engage in. There are various struggles across campus. Among them, PhD students and hourly paid staff struggling against outsourcing and the precarisation of their working conditions. Cleaners, caterers, and maintenance workers — job positions frequently occupied by a disproportionately high number of women, migrants and minority groups — who are indispensable to the university, have won a commitment to the Living Wage as the result of a brilliant campaign. But there is still a lot more to do. Today's strike represents a call for all across campus to take action. We support UCU members in their struggle, and also call for an end to all outsourcing at the university, as well as the guaranteed minimum of a Living Wage (£9.30 p/h) for anyone engaging in any work on campus.

Working conditions are learning conditions, we must fight for them now!



WHAT NEXT?

Join the picket line!

Standing together in solidarity with each other is an important way to show your support, but also to show the university the strength in numbers we have! On each day of the strike, from 25 November–4 December, UCU members will gather at the entrances to University Park and Jubilee campus. They will be also running a series of discussions and teach-outs. Join them!

Organise!

Many of us share similar issues, talk to your colleagues and friends, discuss what these issues are, and what we can collectively do to achieve change. What power do we have, and how can we collectively exercise it? Speak to others about action they have taken before, and what can be learned from it.

Take Action!

Joining the picket lines, speaking with friends and spreading information is very important. But we must also be prepared to take further steps. This can mean getting involved with your union to have your say, but also by helping to plan and taking part in further action, as well as standing alongside all other university workers.

Get involved!

Contact us: NottsUniWorker@gmail.com

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University of Nottingham UCU: <https://uonucu.org/>