



The University Strikes Again!

Throughout February and March University of Nottingham staff and members of the University and College Union (UCU) will be taking 14 days of strike action, along with workers from 74 other UK universities. This is over increased contributions to their pensions (the Universities Superannuation Scheme - USS), and universities' failure to make improvements on pay, equality, workload and casualisation. Casualisation of work has been increasingly highlighted as a problem at the University of Nottingham. It refers to jobs where workers are often employed on a temporary basis, and do not have the same formal protections and conditions of permanent workers, such as a guaranteed living wage, holiday pay, paid compassionate leave or 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.

Increasing casualisation of work is a direct result of outsourcing. This is where the university doesn't employ people directly, but outsources their jobs to another company (UniTemps for example). This is so the university is not responsible for outsourced workers poor conditions and pay. Outsourced teaching, support and admin staff are also not legally able to join their colleagues in strike action, as their employer is not technically the university, while in reality of course it is.

Casualisation through outsourcing represents a deliberate attempt to divide the workforce, and drive down pay and conditions in a misguided attempt to boost the university's already vast profits. Education is being damaged as students' tuition fees and cost of living rises.

The UCU strike is one part of the fight back that we all need to engage in. Deteriorating conditions always hit workers at the bottom the hardest, and further widen inequalities which disproportionately effect women, migrants, BME and disabled people. But there have been various struggles across campus to fight back! Cleaners, caterers, and maintenance workers won a commitment to the Living Wage as the result of a brilliant campaign, and last year casual hourly-paid teaching staff forced the university to agree to new basic principles of employment. But there is still a lot more to do. For example, the university is currently in the process of outsourcing workers in IT services to an external company.

We support striking UCU members, and call for an end to all outsourcing at the university, and the guaranteed minimum of the Living Wage (£9.30 p/h) for all workers on campus.

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



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, 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! The strike dates are as follows:

Week one - Thursday 20 & Friday 21 February

Week two - Monday 24, Tuesday 25 & Wednesday 26 February

Week three - Monday 2, Tuesday 3, Wednesday 4 & Thursday 5 March

Week four - Monday 9, Tuesday 10, Wednesday 11, Thursday 12 & Friday 13 March

Organise!

The last UCU strike saw many new connections made and struggles broadened, most obviously the development of the Nottingham Student Solidarity campaign and occupation. 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.

Get involved!

Contact us: NottsUniWorker@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NottsUniWorkers> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/NottsUniWorkers>

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

Nottingham Student Solidarity: <https://www.facebook.com/Nottingham-Student-Solidarity-1615346261890381/>

Halt IT Outsourcing Campaign: <https://speakout.web.ucu.org.uk/halt-outsourcing-plans-at-the-university-of-nottingham/>