Dear students

The University and College Union has called a strike from Wednesday 1st to Friday 3rd December 2021.

You will have already heard about the strike from the Vice Chancellor. Here is the view from the staff actually affected by and involved in this industrial action.

The background to this industrial action is summed up by these points: In higher education in the UK…

* the pay gap between Black and white staff is 17%
* women are paid on average 15.1% less than men
* the disability pay gap is 9%
* salaries have fallen against inflation by over 20% since 2009
* academic staff work over 50 hours during a typical week
* four fifths of staff report struggling with workload and poor mental health
* a third of all academic staff are on fixed-term contracts

This is unacceptable.

Vice Chancellors will try to ‘divide and conquer’ students and staff, often by claiming to be disappointed by the action and the impact it will have on students. Strike action will undoubtedly have an impact on you. But *things staying as they are now* will have a worse and longer-term impact than any strike action.

That is why the National Union of Students [supports](https://www.nus.org.uk/articles/student-views-on-ucu-strikes-revealed-by-nus) this strike action, with 73% of students surveyed saying they supported university staff taking part in this campaign and strike action. 69% of students have said they would be willing to take part in some sort of action (a walk-out, a demonstration or a teach-in) to campaign for funded, accessible, lifelong and democratised education. As NUS President Larissa Kennedy [put it](https://twitter.com/Larissa_Ken/status/1460666495118319628?s=20):

“our struggles are intertwined … solidarity [to UCU] for taking on a broken education system that harms us all”.

The industrial action is intended to force the employers who run higher education to improve the situation in four specific areas:

•                     Inequalities

•                     Casualization

•                     Workload

•                     Salaries

To show your support for this strike against ‘a broken education system that harms us all’, sign the National Union of Students’ [petition](https://email-nus.org.uk/p/5BGA-9DB/strike-letter). Join us and enjoy the party atmosphere on the picket line outside your campus every morning of the strike. Make some noise on social media #OneOfUsAllOfUs #FourFights #FourFightsBrighton [@ucu](https://twitter.com/ucu) [@BrightonUCU](https://twitter.com/BrightonUCU).

Never forget that my colleagues and I really do care for your education. That’s why we will go on strike to defend it.

For more information, please visit <http://blogs.brighton.ac.uk/ucu/>