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# Taking Action Matters

In November and December 2019, thousands of UCU members took eight days of national strike action in furtherance of two disputes. RUCU had vibrant, fun-splashed, autumn pickets. Although we made some gains, it was not enough, and UCU called strike action in both disputes for a total of 14 working days during February and March 2020. RUCU members took action over (i) falling pay, the gender and ethnic pay gap, precarious employment practices, and unsafe workloads, as well as (ii) changes to our pension, the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS), as University employers are ignoring pension experts and want us to pay more based on a flawed way of assessing the scheme. So RUCU shook maracas, attended marches, flew balloons, harnessed the power of picket dogs, sang, played guitars, held teach outs, and gained as many car beeps as humanly possible with the aid of a cardboard sign...



The deductions are based on a 1/366 calculation of your gross pay: so once the deductions go through in the March payroll, check the amount. As soon as you have received your payslip which shows the deductions, you can make a claim on the **Fighting Fund**, and we will also be opening our Hardship fund as necessary. To make a claim, log into My UCU, check that you're paying the right subs etc, then follow the link on the top banner to Fighting Fund: <https://www.ucu.org.uk/fightingfund>

“...although UCEA kept insisting for years that they did not have a mandate to negotiate on casualisation, equalities or workload, our negotiators have brought them to the stage where they are talking about signing up to concrete actions to end casualisation and to institutionalise a more reasonable workload. These are HUGE steps forward for our most vulnerable colleagues at a time when even those in supposedly secure jobs feel very insecure...”





## CAPTION COMPETITION



## Dispute Updates



## TAKING ACTION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

'On the 4Fights dispute, although UCEA kept insisting for years that they did not have a mandate to negotiate on casualisation, equalities or workload, our negotiators have brought them to the stage where they are talking about signing up to concrete actions to end casualisation and to institutionalise a more reasonable workload. These are HUGE steps forward for our most vulnerable colleagues at a time when even those in supposedly secure jobs feel very insecure, everyone (negotiators included) is working long hours for little praise leave alone pay and there are broader anti-trade union moves at a macro-political level. From the leaked document [https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/10760/RG\\_casualisation\\_meeting\\_minutes\\_March\\_2020/pdf/RGcasualisationmeetingminutesmarch2020](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/10760/RG_casualisation_meeting_minutes_March_2020/pdf/RGcasualisationmeetingminutesmarch2020), it is clear that employers are afraid of the reputational damage that our pickets and public efforts have done to them in revealing the scourge of casualisation. It's nice to know that even if they don't care about casualisation, they know they have to engage with us to end this atrocious practice.'

'On the USS dispute, we are about to finalise a document cementing agreement to actually abandon the mathematically flawed test 1 and to end the spurious de-risking that has the ability to lose us £75 mn each time £1bn is moved using this faulty strategy & therefore causes us to cross-subsidise their idiocy with increased contributions. This is a huge step given that employers knew about these issues a year ago with JEP1, agreed to the JEP and yet sat on their hands when it came to joining us to end this.'

It is also important that this happened in a context where we were already on the back foot having little access to the data and with the witch-hunt against our trustee Prof Jane Hutton ongoing. See here for the leaked summary into why Jane was sacked <https://academicfreedom.watch/node/51>

Please see the HE Action centre for more information: <https://www.ucu.org.uk/heaction>



## Teach Outs and Events!

Education  
  
Unlimited







## Visitor's Corner...



Our Labour MP Matt Rodda!



Our local Trades Council!



## Portrait Gallery: Our picketers—beautiful inside and out.



Look after yourselves Reading UCU - and all your family members - at this critical time

