

# UCU INDUSTRIAL ACTION

University and College Union (UCU) has announced strike action at 68 universities

## **Week one**

- Mon 14 to Fri 18 February

## **Week two**

- Mon 21 and Tue 22 February

## **Week three**

- Mon 28 Feb to Wed 2 March

## **NUS Student strike**

- Wednesday 2 March

**UCU**  
University and College Union

**FOUR FIGHTS  
ONE VOICE**

- Equality • Job security
- Fair workloads • Fair pay

**SUPPORT  
THE STRIKES**

[www.ucu.org.uk](http://www.ucu.org.uk)

# WHAT THIS MEANS FOR TEACHING

- Teaching (lectures, seminars etc.) during strike action may not happen
- Any cancelled teaching will not be rescheduled for a later date
- Lecturers and other staff will be less available
- Marking and assessment may not be completed to schedule
- Other roles (administration, research, scholarship etc.) will be impacted in other ways

## Notes:

Staff do not have to inform in advance if they are taking part in industrial action

**Staff do not get paid when they go on strike**

# WHY?

## Casualisation & Job security

- Many staff are employed precariously
  - Extensive use by UK Universities of zero hours contracts and nine-month fixed term contracts

## Equality

- Ongoing pay inequality based on gender, ethnicity and disability that universities are not addressing

## Workload

- Staff are struggling with hugely excessive workloads.
  - The mental health epidemic in Universities is shared by staff and students

## Falling pay

- 17% pay cut since 2009

## Pension changes

- Based upon faulty evaluations

**Strike action is the last resort after employers have continually ignored these long standing problems**

## Newcastle Workload Report 2021

Staff are working **120% of their contracted hours** to meet the demands of their jobs

- Over 50 hours per week on average.
- (We do not get 'overtime')
- 80% of staff report workloads are "unmanageable".
- Workload models do not reflect the time needed to provide quality teaching & feedback
- The pandemic has made an already long standing problem worse: Workloads are causing a mental health crisis amongst staff

## Casualisation in UK Universities

67% of university researchers are on fixed-term contracts  
49% of 'teaching only' contracts are on casual contracts (many only hourly paid)

## Inequality at Newcastle Uni

17% gender pay gap at Newcastle  
14.5% pay gap between BAME and white academic staff

# WHERE DO YOUR TUITION FEES GO?

## Universities are making more money than ever!

Since 2010, 'pre-92' universities' income has increased by 38%

- Yet the proportion of expenses spent on staff costs has dropped by 5% (Source: HESA data)

**£1.10**

Per student will cover the lecturer's wages for a one-hour lecture.<sup>1</sup>

**£1.67**

Per student will go to the hourly-paid teacher for a one-hour seminar.<sup>2</sup>

**ONLY BETWEEN 40% AND 45% OF STUDENTS' FEES END UP BEING SPENT ON THE DIRECT COSTS OF EDUCATION.<sup>3</sup>**

1. Based upon basic lecturer's salary (£35,210), 100 students, and four hours to write the lecture (Often much less than this is allocated for preparation)
2. Based upon a class size of 20, and two-hours pay (delivery & prep.) at the £16.76/hr teaching rate.
3. Higher Education Policy Institute (2018) *Where do student fees really go?*

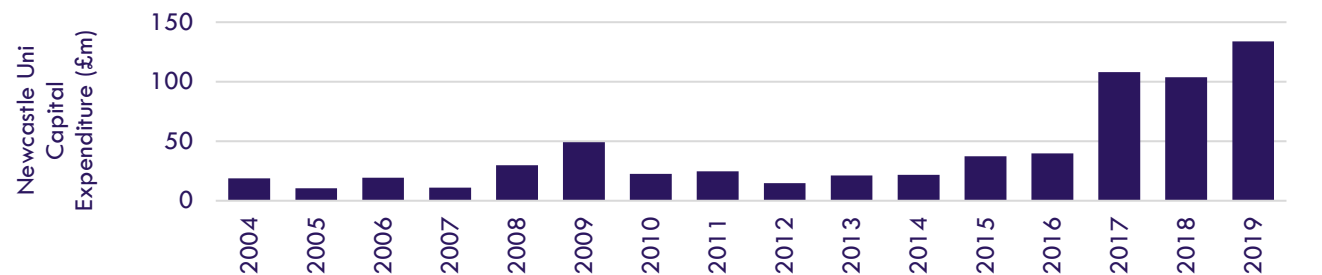
According to the most recent annual report (2019-20):

## Executive Pay

- Newcastle University Vice-Chancellor salary = £340,066.
  - 20.6% increase since 2015
- Newcastle Uni employs 124 staff on salaries over £100k.

## Capital Expenditure

- Universities borrowing money for new buildings, and using income from fees to service this debt.



## Marketing

- Large universities, such as Newcastle, regularly spend millions of pounds per year on marketing.

STAFF  
WORKING  
CONDITIONS  
=  
STUDENT  
LEARNING  
EXPERIENCE

# The conditions of employment for staff determine the quality of your experience

**Statements from hourly paid teachers at Newcastle University**

Because payments are so tight, I set my timer for 10 minutes to mark an essay, so that my pay doesn't fall below the minimum wage."

"I can't see a student in distress and say "sorry, I won't help you; because I am hourly paid and it's not in my job description" ... I remember how difficult it was when I was their age ... I can't ignore my students the way the university ignores me"

# WHAT YOU CAN DO

Follow the local branch on social media: @NewcastleUniUCU

Write to Chris Day the VC

Speak to staff on the picket lines

Attend "Teach-outs"

- Striking staff will offer public lectures on a variety of topics