

UCU strike action in Wales

The Open University branch of UCU and Swansea University, with support from Cardiff University, Cardiff Metropolitan and Cardiff & Vale College, have already generated strong cross-party support on picket lines and through a lobby of Senedd during our strike this year.

We have now been invited by Members of the Senedd on 23rd March 2022 to explain our disputes on pensions, pay and conditions.

In contrast to the Westminster government, the Welsh nation focuses on social justice. It gives substantial funding to the Open University and the numbers studying through the OU in Wales/OU Cymru have gone up significantly in the last few years. Members of Senedd have therefore asked the Minister for Education to exert influence over pay and conditions in universities in Wales, and have also expressed specific support for Open University staff.

In addition to the fact that we have lost 25% of salary against inflation since 2009, OU staff are facing cuts of 35% on average to our pensions. Younger staff and those who have small pensions because of years of part-time or casualised work for the university will be hit harder. These cuts are being forced through as the result of a discredited pension valuation which was undertaken in March 2020, at the worst point in the pandemic. Since that time the 'deficit' has largely disappeared, even under the most pessimistic projections.

These are unacceptable and unnecessary cuts that will devastate Open University staff in retirement.

Jenny Rathbone
Talking to @UCUWales picket outside @OpenUniversity
@ANILecturer @oubcu
£3,000 pa pension after 25 years in higher education totally unjust



Open University Branch of UCU email: ucu@open.ac.uk

Facebook (openuniversityucu) and Twitter @oubcu (#OneOfUsAllOfUs #UCUStrike #USSMess)

See our website for strike day activities: <http://ucu.open.ac.uk>

Donate to or apply to the Hardship Fund: <http://ucu.open.ac.uk/branch-hardship-fund>



Support the Strikes



External examiners are showing solidarity by resigning across the Higher Education sector, including at the Open University.

The President of the National Union of Students (NUS) in Wales has visited our Cardiff picket line and the NUS across the Four Nations supports these strikes.

Open University students continue to email notes of support to their tutors and to visit OU picket lines.

Want to help improve pay and working conditions, and fight for your pension? After this strike we're balloting for further action.

- Join UCU: www.ucu.org.uk/join and join the strike
- Sign our petition and circulate it on social media. <https://speakout.web.ucu.org.uk/urgent-we-call-upon-open-university-to-resolve-pension-and-pay-disputes>
- Attend our open strike rallies and teach-outs: www.ucu.open.ac.uk
- **Members:** update your personal information on [MyUCU](#) for the new ballot **and vote YES**
- **Members:** continue to observe and to respect action short of a strike (ASOS). Do not work more than contracted hours or take on voluntary work. Do not cover for colleagues on strike. Do not move meetings to accommodate strike dates.



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