

EDUCATION IS NOT A COMMODITY

Education is a process.

You don't purchase an education like a washing machine or a pair of shoes.

The outcome of an educational process is not a piece of paper, but a different person.



In the past decades (especially with the imposition of high tuition fees in England) Higher Education has been seen as a personal benefit. In this view students are 'consumers'. But that's wrong.

Students don't purchase learning. It's a dynamic, social and active process that is shaped by students and teachers together.

Higher Education doesn't just benefit the individual. An educated workforce is a public good like the NHS, roads and other services. Education brings broader benefit cultural, social and economic benefits to the whole of society. That's why UCU has always been against tuition fees and student debt.

The staff who provide the teaching and learning environment are not machines.

To do their best for students, staff need:

REASONABLE WORKLOADS, JOB SECURITY AND FAIR PAY.

Staff Working Conditions Are Student Learning Conditions.

Open University Branch of UCU

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Casual contracts are now a key feature of Higher Education, which for many staff means insecurity and precarious work. The sector relies on fixed-term and hourly-paid staff for teaching, and for many support services as well.

- Some universities have created separate temp agencies and non-university companies for teaching and professional services staff, who therefore no longer have the same benefits as their university colleagues
- Hourly rates for teaching and marking rarely cover the time spent by any conscientious lecturer
- It is impossible to build a career and raise a family on precarious contracts.

This video explains why the National Union of Students (NUS) backs the strikes: <https://youtu.be/cnVe-aXan8Y>

If you care about job security, workload, fair pay and pensions, please help:

- Chat to colleagues about the strike and make sure there are leaflets around the office
- Make a donation to the local UCU Hardship Fund for strikers: <http://ucu.open.ac.uk/campaigns>
- If you're academic or academic-related (G7 or above) you can join UCU and take action. www.ucu.org.uk/join

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