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The Sabbatical Officer Team 2022/23  
Cardiff Students' Union

13 February 2023

Dear Sabbatical Team,

Thank you for your open letter about the University's use of strike deductions.

I share your wider concerns and the concerns of our students about the impact of industrial action on their studies. This is not a situation I want to see, especially for those students impacted by previous rounds of industrial action and the pandemic.

I can assure your team that we will continue to work with our academic Schools and will take all reasonable steps to mitigate the impact on teaching and learning.

As you are aware, these are national disputes involving most UK universities. Cardiff University cannot solve these issues independently. We are part of and remain legally committed to collective pay bargaining.

Representatives from both sides - UUK and UCU - continue to meet. Previously the University [agreed a joint statement](#) with Cardiff UCU. As part of this joint statement, we agreed to use our position as a member of UUK to work actively in support of the points set out in our statement.

I will continue to do so, and hope both parties can come together as soon as possible to find a sustainable solution so further disruption can be avoided.

On strike deductions, staff are fully aware that if they take part in the strike days they will not be paid for those days. As with previous periods of industrial action the salary that is held back from staff who take part in industrial action will be used by the University to support students and to address the disruption caused by industrial action.

On your specific point about using this money to make immediate payments to students, whilst I appreciate the point, the University's commitment is to take all reasonable steps to ensure that students have the learning opportunities they can reasonably expect.



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To do this effectively, it will take time to understand the full extent and impact of the disruption caused by the industrial action, and to identify appropriate actions that can be taken following the period of strikes

Our position on financial payments for missed contact hours has always been clear. We first need to identify where disruption has occurred and, where possible, Schools will put in place actions to support students' learning, and address any disruption that may have arisen. Schools will need time to do this and the actions they take will be recorded and students informed.

Consideration will then be given as to whether any further remedies are required, which may include a financial settlement.

If students are still dissatisfied with the alternative learning opportunities provided to replace missed content or with the other remedies applied, they should initially raise their concerns via their School.

If students remain dissatisfied after all actions have been taken to provide alternative learning opportunities, they can then submit a complaint using the University's Student Complaint Procedure, which allows for several remedies including a financial settlement.

We believe this approach is the clearest and fairest way of managing the disruption by allowing Schools the opportunity to provide alternative learning opportunities first and considering whether further remedies may be required. I understand that Registry colleagues are due to meet with the OIA shortly to ensure our approach is reasonable and comparable with the rest of the sector.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to remind your team that the University provides information and support services to help students manage their emotional, mental and physical health during this uncertain period. More information is available via the [student intranet](#). As always, our [Student Connect](#) service is your first point of contact if students need any advice and support.

In the interests of openness and transparency, I will be publishing this response on the University's website.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Colin Riordan  
Vice-Chancellor