

MARKING AND ASSESSMENT BOYCOTT: WE HAVE YOUR BACK

TODAY IS A HUGE DAY FOR THOUSANDS OF UCU MEMBERS. WE HAVE COMMENCED A NATIONAL MARKING AND ASSESSMENT BOYCOTT IN OUR PAY AND WORKING CONDITIONS DISPUTE. THE INITIAL FEEDBACK IS THAT SUPPORT HAS BEEN OVERWHELMING.

This is despite many of you receiving outrageous threats of punitive deductions from employers for daring to make a stand. Many of you have been told you are facing 50% pay deductions, with some employers even going to 100%. These actions are immoral, aimed at intimidating you, and about attempting to break your resolve as quickly as possible.

I want to start by addressing the law. The legal system in the UK is stacked against working people. But let me be clear: UCU will take legal advice and action wherever we possibly can. One of the issues we have is that we cannot commence action against an employer until after deductions have taken place, and a further outrage of the UK legal system means that any claim we do make will be tied up for years before knowing if we have won. Whilst the potential to take legal action does exist, and we will obviously fight these deductions legally where possible, at this point in time the law does not help you.

This is why we have developed a plan to apply maximum pressure on employers immediately.

- 1. we will be writing to MPs setting out the actions of employers; we will set up a process for you to support this as members**
- 2. we are building solidarity and fundraising networks across our movement**
- 3. we will be using local press and national media to expose employers which move to punitive deductions**
- 4. we will be working with local student groups to create maximum pressure and solidarity on the ground; we will set up a tool for staff and students to email their vice-chancellors**
- 5. we have developed a social media strategy to target institutions which are attacking our members**
- 6. we will escalate to strike action in universities where punitive deductions take place.**

We are going to raise the profile of these attacks from university management, and raise money and support for you.

It is absolutely crucial that you play your part in this plan as well.

Document every conversation on deductions that takes place locally, share all of the union's content, write to your local MP and most crucially of all--back the marking and assessment boycott.

We will not bow down to intimidation.

The employers can end this now. Table a renewed offer on pay and working conditions. It's that or we will take this dispute to an even higher level.

In solidarity



Jo Grady

UCU general secretary