

USS dispute: Support for members taking industrial action

UCU officers' decisions on the use of the Fighting Fund and setting up local hardship funds

1. The UCU Fighting Fund will be used to support members in the USS dispute. In accordance with previous practice, payment will be made from the fourth day of participation in the action. Application to the fund is via the online form:
https://ucu.custhelp.com/app/fighting_fund/
2. To ensure the union can provide support to as many members as we can and in as targeted a way as possible, the maximum daily compensation that a member can claim will be £50 per day, up to a maximum of £500 for the fourteen days of strike action initially called by UCU.
3. Claims from lower paid members and those on insecure contracts will be prioritised. Recommendations for special support for a member in these groups should be supported by the Branch.
4. A claim arising from this dispute will only be paid if it is received within 3 months after the date of the loss of pay.
5. No claim can be met for members who are in arrears of subscriptions or for those who are not paying the correct level of subscription based on their earnings.
Further guidance on this is available here.
6. To apply to the fighting fund members will need to supply proof of loss of earnings in the form of a scanned copy of their pay slip. Members who do not receive a conventional pay slip or cannot provide other evidence of loss of earnings should contact the fighting fund via: fightingfund@ucu.org.uk
7. Branches can decide to set up a local Hardship Fund using branch funds or local donations, but subject to authorisation by the UCU National Head of Resources that the following criteria have been met:
 - i. normal Branch funds are retained at a level to ensure that staff employed by the Branch are not put at risk and that normal branch activities are maintained. (Guidance is available from the UCU Finance Office).
 - ii. a separate Unity Trust Bank account is set up by the Branch to hold the Hardship Funds and to pay local claims.
 - iii. the Branch agrees to follow guidelines that will be issued centrally for the assessment of hardship claims.
 - iv. the Branch undertakes to keep records of all decisions and payments of claims for audit purposes.

- v. the maximum provisions outlined for claims to the national Fighting Fund are adopted for claims to the local Hardship Fund.
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- 8. Members claiming from the local Hardship Fund are requested to confirm that they will not receive more than the total loss of income from combined applications to UCU accredited funds.
 - 9. All solidarity funds collected or held by branches must be validated by the UCU Finance Office and be held in a Unity Trust Bank account.
 - 10. Voluntary donations and collections to the national Fighting Fund or to branch hardship funds will be sought and encouraged. An appeal to wider trade union movement for support will be instigated. Branches are encouraged to seek similar support in their local area.