



Goldsmiths Students' Union Policy

Goldsmiths Students' Union Student Assembly

Motion proposed by Soren Goard

Motion Seconded by Jamie Woodcock

Motion Title:

Supporting the UCU Strike Action

Union Notes

- That the two staff unions on campus, UCU and Unison, are likely to take industrial action over pay in the next few weeks, probably including a one-day strike.
- The strike is due to an effective cut in pay.
- The squeeze on staff pay comes at a time when pay and benefits for university leaders increased, on average, by more than £5,000 in 2011-12, with the average pay and pensions package for vice-chancellors hitting almost £250,000
- Moreover, the government has lied about cuts. They have effectively increased the money invested in student loans by £3 billion, but hidden that through an accountancy trick, in order to sell off the loan book. This is, effectively, a short-term cash generator that is also intended to appeal to business by making universities saleable and profit-driven.
- This will have an inevitable effect on students. Its likely that there will be little to no teaching on the day and that the library will be closed.
- Many of our members are also members of these unions, notably PhD students who teach seminars and mark work, who will be part of that action.

Union believes

- That this is objectively a strike to defend education. The government, and university employers, are attempting to reduce the amount that they provide for teaching.
- That lecturers, support staff and seminar leaders deserve fair pay for the already elongated hours that they work.
- That lecturers and education staff are genuinely passionate about education.
- Quality teaching is at the core of quality education.
- Therefore, whilst the strike will have an effect on students, it's reasonable to argue that the effects of the pay cut also has the potential to have a serious effect on the quality of teaching students receive.
- The SU therefore has a responsibility, not to apologise for the action, but to explain it and the context within which it comes.

Union Resolves

- To express our whole-hearted solidarity with the staff at the university.
- That we encourage students not to cross the picket line on the day.
- To work with the UCU and Unison to produce videos and blogposts detailing the reasons for the strike and why students should support it.
- To hold an open meeting in advance of the strike, allowing the staff to explain their position and to articulate what the wider context of the attack on education is, as well as involve students in organising for action if they wish.
- To hold a teach-out on the day and join the strikers on the picket line in solidarity