

**From:** Helen Thornham H.Thornham@leeds.ac.uk  
**Subject:** Fw: MEDIAStaff: Message for students on the industrial action  
**Date:** 3 December 2019 at 12:26  
**To:** Joanne Armitage J.L.Armitage@leeds.ac.uk

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Associate Professor Digital Cultures  
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*Gender and Digital Culture: Between Irreconcilability and the Datalogical* (Routledge 2018)

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**From:** mediastaff-bounces@lists.leeds.ac.uk <mediastaff-bounces@lists.leeds.ac.uk>  
on behalf of Kate Nash <K.Nash@leeds.ac.uk>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 8, 2019 8:51 AM  
**To:** mediastaff@lists.leeds.ac.uk <mediastaff@lists.leeds.ac.uk>  
**Subject:** MEDIAStaff: Message for students on the industrial action

Dear Colleagues,

I just wanted to keep you all in the loop in relation to communication with students relating to the industrial action. I have sent out some general information this morning - which students should receive in the next day or so. I am hoping to have further information for staff sometime next week and to find an opportunity for us to come together. This may be particularly valuable for new staff, particularly those from overseas, who may have questions about what happens during industrial action.

All the best,  
Kate

Dear SMC Student,

As you are probably aware the University and Colleges Union (UCU) has called a period of industrial action that will take place in late November and early December. **The dates affected are: 25.26.27.28 and 29<sup>th</sup> November and 2,3,4 December.**

The strike is related to several disputes: the issue of academic staff pay (including racial and gender pay gaps) and pensions as well as the growth in casual academic contracts. You can find out more about why staff are taking industrial action via the UCU website here: <https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/10399/UCU-members-back-strikes-over-both-pensions-and-pay-and-conditions> and you can find a joint statement by the UCU and National Union of Students on the strike here: <https://www.ucu.org.uk/UCU-NUS-jointstatement> I'm sure you understand that staff have not voted lightly to take industrial action.

You may, however, be worried about the effect that the strike will have on your as you finish your semester's work. Most members of staff in SMC are members of the Union and will, likely, be taking strike action. However, you should check with your module leader to see if they intend to cancel classes. Please be aware that teaching staff do not have to indicate in advance if they are taking strike action. Please be understanding if they don't let you know their plans, but I think you will find that many will. If you are unsure whether a class is cancelled, please do attend as normal.

The teaching staff in SMC are very mindful of the potential impact of industrial action on students and typically go out of their way to ensure that they are not disadvantaged in any way. They may do this in many ways: classes may be made up (although many staff will also be participating in action short of a strike which precludes making up classes); they may provide materials for you to work through

proceeds making up classes, they may provide materials for you to work through during the strike; they may make adjustments to your assignments and/or assessment due dates in order to account for teaching that you may have missed.

In addition, the School has a number of mechanisms to ensure that students will not be disadvantaged in terms of module results or degree classifications. We will be reviewing all results for the semester with a view to identifying and mitigating against any impact on student achievement. There is no need for you to do anything e.g. applying for mitigating circumstances or extensions in relation to this, if mitigation is required it will be applied to all students.

You should continue to work on your assignments and set work and talk with your module leaders (on non-strike days) to understand how they plan to manage the disruption. Staff in the Student Education Service may be able to provide you with advice during the strike period, but please do be aware that they may not know individual module leaders' plans.

I appreciate that this may be a worrying time, but I would encourage you to have confidence in your module leaders - they are dedicated teachers who care deeply about your education. I also appreciate that industrial action is inconvenient and disruptive, but is an important way in which your rights as future workers have been achieved.

If you have further questions either now or during the strike, please don't hesitate to get in touch and I'll do my best to provide support.

Kate Nash,  
Head, School of Media and Communication

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MEDIAStaff mailing list  
MEDIAStaff@lists.leeds.ac.uk  
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