

**From:** Helen Thornham H.Thornham@leeds.ac.uk  
**Subject:** Fw: Industrial action on pensions and pay  
**Date:** 3 December 2019 at 12:24  
**To:** Joanne Armitage J.L.Armitage@leeds.ac.uk

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Associate Professor Digital Cultures  
MA Programme Lead Digital Media

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

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**From:** Sue Thornham <s.thornham@sussex.ac.uk>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 29, 2019 10:09 AM  
**To:** Helen Thornham <H.Thornham@leeds.ac.uk>  
**Subject:** FW: Industrial action on pensions and pay

Found this

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**From:** Adam Tickell [internalcomms@sussex.ac.uk]  
**Sent:** 05 November 2019 16:47  
**To:** allteachfac-list@sussex.ac.uk  
**Subject:** Industrial action on pensions and pay



## Industrial action on pensions and pay

Dear colleague,

Yesterday we received notification from the University and College Union (UCU) that the majority of their members at the University of Sussex have voted in favour of industrial action over pensions and pay.

UCU have, this afternoon, announced that 60 universities will face industrial action in respect of the disputes on pay or on pensions or on both. They are asking their members to take eight days of consecutive strike action from 25 November 2019, along with a longer period of action short of a strike (ASOS)

action short of a strike (1000).

Whilst I know that no-one embarks on industrial action lightly and I fully respect anyone who takes it, this is a gravely disappointing outcome for the University and the sector as a whole.

I can't emphasise enough that I am extremely concerned about the jeopardy this could place on our students' education. As any resolution to the disputes will need to be national, our focus at Sussex will be on minimising the impact on our students.

I have tried very hard over recent months to lay out the difficulties we face at Sussex in a changing economic and political climate. We don't simply have external challenges from Brexit, uncertainties over our future student fee income and challenges to the public finances, I am aware that the whole University community has been grappling with the problems of long-term underinvestment in our estate, our IT systems and our people. It is critical that we turn this around for the long-term future of the University.

The pay offer from UCEA this year matched the rate of inflation at the point it was implemented and staff on the lowest grades received up to 3.6%. Approximately half of all staff receive an additional award every year.

During the summer, the employers made UCU an offer to reduce individuals' contributions in order to resolve the dispute but this was rejected. Unlike last spring, there are no proposed changes to the benefits that staff will receive.

More confrontation now will be damaging to everyone in higher education. Even at this late stage, I sincerely hope that UCU will take the opportunity to reconsider the wisdom of causing such damage to this university and the reputation of UK Higher Education.

With best wishes,

Adam Tickell  
Vice-Chancellor

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**Sent by**  
Internal Communications, University of Sussex