

PERSONNEL SERVICES

University Offices, Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JD
Acting Director of Personnel and Related Services



To: heads of departments and institutions, and faculty board chairmen

Ref. EMS/6,
EMS/33

Copies to: heads of division, divisional secretaries, departmental administrators and faculty board secretaries, Mr Shaw, Dr Gasser, Principal Administrator of the Conference of Colleges

22 November 2011

Industrial Action on 30 November 2011

1. The UCU has called members out on strike on 30 November 2011, in support of its dispute in relation to changes to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS).

Deductions at the rate of 1/345 of the annual salary will be made from the pay of those taking part. Departments and divisions should ensure that all those who participate in strike action complete the attached payroll deduction form. Departmental and divisional managers may ask staff in advance whether they intend to take strike action, so that arrangements for cover may be made. However, staff are not obliged to state whether or not they intend to go on strike in advance of any such action.

The industrial dispute is between the UCU and the University: industrial action should not be taken by college-only employees nor by those holding joint appointments, except in respect of their university duties.

2. Unite has balloted members on industrial action in relation to the 2011 pay offer. Action short of a strike will commence on 30 November, in the form of working strictly to contract and a ban on overtime.

3. Wider industrial action by public sector unions, including a planned demonstration and rally in central Oxford on 30 November may also have an indirect affect on university employees.

1. Action required of departments and divisions

Departments and divisions are asked to:

- (a) review contingency plans to ensure that, as far as practicable and consistent with safe working, key services continue to operate on 30 November;
- (b) ensure that staff have, where necessary, made alternative arrangements for dealing with possible disruption to public services (schooling, care of dependants or travel) on 30 November, such as requesting in advance approval for annual leave or for working from home;



- (c) ensure that staff who take part in the strike action on 30 November are aware of their responsibility to complete and return a salary deduction form; and
- (d) note that Security Services are issuing separate guidance in relation to possible disruption arising from the rally in central Oxford planned for 30 November.

2. Background

The University and College Union (**UCU**) has called its members out on strike on 30 November. This follows a ballot in relation to the recent changes to the University Superannuation Scheme (USS). The UCU is in dispute with the University, and the industrial action should not be joined by college-only employees. Holders of joint appointments may only take action in respect of their university duties.

We understand that, as part of the action on 30 November, members of Oxford UCU intend to mount a picket of the University Offices in Wellington Square from 8.15-9.30 am and 12.20-2.30 pm.

Unite has conducted a ballot of its members in connection with a separate dispute over the annual pay award. This ballot produced a majority against to strike action, but a majority in favour of action short of a strike. Unite will, therefore, not be taking strike action against the University on 30 November, but they have notified the University that, starting on 30 November, they will be asking members to work strictly to contract and not to work overtime as part of continuous action short of a strike.

As part of a nationwide campaign against changes to public sector pensions, the Oxford TUC is organising a **demonstration** in the centre of Oxford on 30 November. Demonstrators coming in from different points in Oxford will gather in the area of the Plain in St Clements at 2 pm, before moving over Magdalen Bridge, up the High to Carfax and then via Cornmarket to Broad Street for a rally between 3.45-4.45 pm.

Concerted strike action by public sector unions on 30 November may also affect university employees by possibly disrupting, for example, schools, care for dependants, or travel.

3. Deduction of salary for those who take strike action

Members of UCU who take strike action will not be paid for any day on which they do not attend or (in the case of those who do not work in university offices or buildings) on which they do not carry out work. The deduction for each day not worked will be 1/345 of the annual salary (i.e. 365 days less 20 days' statutory paid leave).

The attached notice and salary deduction form will be published in the *Gazette* and may also be downloaded from the university web site at http://www.ox.ac.uk/staff/staff_communications/index.html.

4. Alternative arrangements on 30 November

All staff are expected to make every reasonable effort to work as normal on 30 November, making such alternative arrangements as may be needed to handle the possible disruption to schools or other services. If this involves the member of staff taking annual leave or working



from home (where the latter is accepted practice), departments have discretion to give approval, provided that the request is received in advance, that the department is satisfied that the reasons are genuine, and that the request can be met without unacceptable disruption to normal operations. Leave or working from home should not be approved if the department has reason to believe that the employee intends to take part in industrial action on that day.

If an employee who has not received advance approval for leave nonetheless has to take time off on 30 November to look after dependants, departments may authorise, retrospectively if necessary, unpaid leave under the policy on Time Off for Dependants (<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/during/leave/time/>). Again, approval should only be given if the department is satisfied that the request arose from a genuine emergency.

The demonstration on 30 November may cause disruption and delay to movement around the University. Members of staff should make all reasonable efforts to continue business as usual, subject to any further advice from the University Security Service.

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DEDUCTING SALARY FROM STAFF TAKING PART IN INDUSTRIAL ACTION

The UCU has notified the University that it intends to call its members out on a one-day strike on 30 November 2011. Any member of staff who participates in this strike is asked to complete the form below (or a photocopy of it) and send it to the Payroll Office. The appropriate deduction from salary will be made in the next available payroll (normally, the following month).

To:
Payroll Office
23-38 Hythe Bridge Street
Oxford
OX1 2ET

Deduction for strike action on 30 November 2011

I authorise you to deduct from my next available salary payment, before tax and National Insurance, pay equivalent to 1 day (1/345 of annual salary) for the one day of strike action I have taken.

I took strike action on **30 November 2011**.

*In order to maintain my pensionable service, I also authorise you to deduct the employer's pension contribution of 0.038356% of pensionable salary per day in respect of the above day(s) of action, in addition to my normal employee's pension contribution and any AVC payments I normally make.

**This paragraph may be deleted if you do NOT want to maintain pensionable service for the period when you were on strike. In this case neither the employer's nor the employee's contributions will be payable for this period.*

My details are:

SURNAME:.....INITIALS:.....

EMPLOYEE NUMBER:.....
(7 digits beginning '1' or '2' as shown next to the employee's name on the payslip)

and/or NATIONAL INSURANCE NUMBER:.....

Signed:..... **Date:**.....
