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|  | Sheila Gupta MBEDirector of Human Resources |
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| 14 January 2015 |  |
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| Heads of Schools, Secretaries of School Chairs of Faculty Boards, Secretaries of Faculty BoardsHeads of Department Departmental Administrators |  |
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Dear Colleague

**Industrial action commencing 16 January 2015**

The University has been advised that the University and College Union (UCU) intends to call on its members to participate in action short of a strike in the form of an assessment and marking boycott with effect from 16 January 2015. This action is being taken in relation to potential changes to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS).

As you may recall, UCU previously called on its members to participate in an assessment and marking boycott commencing from 6 November 2014. An agreement was later reached to suspend the boycott from 20 November until after the USS Joint Negotiating Committee meeting scheduled for 15 January 2015. The action is therefore expected to resume from 16 January 2015.

**The University’s approach**

The University considers that participation in the notified industrial action would constitute a breach of contract. It should also be noted that legally the University is not obliged to pay any salary to employees who choose to perform limited duties. However, at the present time, the University is adopting the approach to limit deductions to 25% of pay for each date that the employee specifies that they will be participating in action, without prejudice to the University’s right to deduct 100% of pay. We will keep the percentage of the deduction under review.

Consistent with the University’s previous treatment of industrial action USS pension contributions will be maintained (with both employer and employee contributions at 100%) and therefore death in service cover will remain in place for employees even if they participate in the action. The remainder of pay withheld will be allocated to the student hardship fund.

**Process for employees**

To enable institutions to plan properly and safely employees will be asked to advise their Departmental Administrator, or equivalent, in advance if they intend to participate in action short of strike by completing a pro-forma, which is included in the attached letter. This letter will be sent to all members of Academic, Academic-Related and Research staff over the next few days.

Employees will also be asked in the letter that if it is necessary for them to submit multiple forms that they limit submissions to one per month. It is suggested in the letter to employees that they may wish to make copies of the attached form for this purpose.

**Process for institutions**

Institutions are asked to send hard copies of signed forms to Nicola Mister at Human Resources, the Old Schools, Trinity Lane, Cambridge, CB2 1TT, or to send scanned copies to industrialaction@admin.cam.ac.uk.

Employees will be advised in the letter that where it is not possible to administer adjustments to pay by the payroll cut-off point for a particular month, the deduction may be made in a subsequent month.

**Further considerations for institutions**

Institutions are advised to consider the implications of the industrial action for their areas and to put in place contingency arrangements as required. The attached guidance on industrial action also includes advice on managing the impact of the boycott on student experience and staff management. If you have any queries regarding examinations at the University, please direct these to Catherine Fage, Head of Student Registry, either at Catherine.Fage@admin.cam.ac.uk or on 01223 332303.

**Updates**

Updates concerning the industrial action and examinations will be posted on the latest news section of the HR Division homepage at <http://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk>. Further information concerning the dispute can be found on the UCEA website [www.ucea.ac.uk](http://www.ucea.ac.uk).

Yours sincerely



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Enc. Guidance for Institutions

Template letter to staff (to be circulated by Human Resources)