

To: All Staff
From Andrew Dodman, Director of Human Resources

Date: 30 Oct 2014

Title: Message for Staff regarding UCU action over changes to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS)

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing following the notification from the University & College Union (UCU) that they will be calling on their members to take action short of a strike in the form of an assessment and marking boycott on a continuous basis from Thursday 6 November 2014. This action is being taken following a national ballot of UCU members for industrial action over potential changes to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS).

I anticipate that this communication will be of interest to all staff who are either members or eligible members of USS, as well as to other UCU members at the University who will be invited to participate in the industrial action from next week.

Whilst we would prefer not to be in the position of contemplating changes to USS, we do need to address the funding deficit, as required by the Pensions Regulator. We want to secure its long term sustainability and ensure that the scheme remains affordable for members and employers.

Through the recognised decision-making framework, UCU, as the representative of all USS members, has the opportunity to negotiate with the employers' representatives to determine a set of proposals for changes to put to the USS Trustees to decide upon. Following that negotiation process, it is a statutory requirement that all members of USS have the opportunity to be consulted on the final proposals – we anticipate that consultation with members will occur in early 2015.

Whilst the negotiation process is continuing we are providing staff with factual information on the proposals as they develop, along with information and background on the drivers for change and modelling provided by the Employers' Pension Forum via our web pages at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/hr/guidance/ussconsultation>.

In addition, once we have a clear set of proposals that will be presented to the USS Trustees for a decision we intend to hold a series of open meetings for staff. Information on these forums can be found at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/hr/guidance/ussstaffforums>.

Information relating to the industrial action can be found via the staff home page at http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/staff/news/ucu_dispute-1.415765. This information will be updated as the situation develops so please do check these pages regularly.

UCU members were warned on their ballot papers that taking industrial action would constitute a breach of their contract of employment. It is my duty to inform those of you considering participating in this industrial action that the University does not accept partial

performance of the contract of employment and, where it constitutes a breach of your contract of employment the University reserves the right to deduct 100% of pay at a daily rate of 1/260th of annual salary. The University's statement on deduction of pay for industrial action can be found here <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/hr/az/industrialactionanddispute>. We will be communicating to staff early next week with further details.

Taking industrial action will inevitably impact on our students and on the earnings of those who choose to participate and we urge you to think of this while considering whether industrial action is an effective way to negotiate change. Industrial action will not make the USS deficit go away or change the requirement for the scheme to put in place an integrated plan to address the deficit. Although the vast majority of our staff will not be participating in this industrial action, we will be working very hard to minimise the impact on students.

We ask you to find out more about the issues surrounding USS and consider fully the implications of industrial action before deciding whether or not to participate.

Further information about the USS changes can be found at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/hr/guidance/ussconsultation>.

Yours,

Andrew Dodman

Director of Human Resources