|  |
| --- |
|  |

**University Superannuation Scheme (USS): FAQs, strike pay and more**

The campaign to save USS pensions is building up to a wave of strike action set to hit a mass of universities from 22 February.

[The first set of members' FAQs is available here](https://list.mercury.ucu.org.uk/t/41104/151504/5453/1/?c73c8e04=Y2FtcGFpZ251cGRhdGU%3d&60bc612e=X2FsbC1tZW1iZXJz&560a3889=VGhlIEZyaWRheSBlbWFpbDogMDIgRmVicnVhcnkgMjAxOA%3d%3d&x=2f6194f6). New questions arise all the time so we will update this regularly. If anything is not clear, please [email Matt Waddup](https://list.mercury.ucu.org.uk/t/41104/151504/5457/2/).

We have now [published the strike fund guidance](https://list.mercury.ucu.org.uk/t/41104/151504/5454/3/?c73c8e04=Y2FtcGFpZ251cGRhdGU%3d&60bc612e=X2FsbC1tZW1iZXJz&560a3889=VGhlIEZyaWRheSBlbWFpbDogMDIgRmVicnVhcnkgMjAxOA%3d%3d&x=2310f8a8) agreed by the officers. Priority will be given to those most in need. The officers have also agreed that branches may use their own funds to alleviate hardship subject to following the guidance.

This week we welcomed support from our sister union the National Union of Students who issued [a solidarity statement](https://list.mercury.ucu.org.uk/t/41104/151504/5423/4/?c73c8e04=Y2FtcGFpZ251cGRhdGU%3d&60bc612e=X2FsbC1tZW1iZXJz&560a3889=VGhlIEZyaWRheSBlbWFpbDogMDIgRmVicnVhcnkgMjAxOA%3d%3d&x=90de7aca) with us calling the proposed pension cuts ‘hugely damaging’.

We’ve produced [a short video for you to share with students](https://list.mercury.ucu.org.uk/t/41104/151504/5455/5/?c73c8e04=Y2FtcGFpZ251cGRhdGU%3d&60bc612e=X2FsbC1tZW1iZXJz&560a3889=VGhlIEZyaWRheSBlbWFpbDogMDIgRmVicnVhcnkgMjAxOA%3d%3d&x=e455dc6c)and also [a letter explaining why we are striking](https://list.mercury.ucu.org.uk/t/41104/151504/5431/6/?c73c8e04=Y2FtcGFpZ251cGRhdGU%3d&60bc612e=X2FsbC1tZW1iZXJz&560a3889=VGhlIEZyaWRheSBlbWFpbDogMDIgRmVicnVhcnkgMjAxOA%3d%3d&x=35219c9b) and what they can do to help. As requested by members, both of these have been produced aimed at students who may not know about trade unions or what strike action entails.

**Further education ballot open in a dozen colleges**

A dozen colleges across England are being balloted for action as part of our campaign for better pay, better jobs in further education and you can watch [a special video message from the general secretary here](https://list.mercury.ucu.org.uk/t/41104/151504/4017/7/?c73c8e04=Y2FtcGFpZ251cGRhdGU%3d&60bc612e=X2FsbC1tZW1iZXJz&560a3889=VGhlIEZyaWRheSBlbWFpbDogMDIgRmVicnVhcnkgMjAxOA%3d%3d&x=9b096334).

[See here for the full update including](https://list.mercury.ucu.org.uk/t/41104/151504/5456/8/?c73c8e04=Y2FtcGFpZ251cGRhdGU%3d&60bc612e=X2FsbC1tZW1iZXJz&560a3889=VGhlIEZyaWRheSBlbWFpbDogMDIgRmVicnVhcnkgMjAxOA%3d%3d&x=b51e7913):

* In the news
* Annual meeting for staff on casual contracts
* UCU officer and national executive committee elections 2018 - ballots open
* NHS in crisis – demonstrate this Saturday 2 February

Best wishes

Justine Stephens
UCU head of campaigns