

IA comms: 14 November 2022

Message to students

Update from the Vice-Principal (Education)

Dear student,

I hope you are well and enjoying this semester. There is so much to get involved with at Queen Mary! As well as the work and activities you have relating to your course, do please have a look at all the [co-curricular and social activity](#) available to you, run by the University and our Students' Union. Just last week I was invited to a careers fair, run by the University, that was absolutely buzzing: do go along to those [careers events](#) if you can. The feedback we get from employers on our students is sensational, and always makes me feel incredibly proud.

Part of the reason for this message is to tell you about forthcoming national industrial action, affecting universities across the UK including Queen Mary.

On 25 October, our Principal Professor Colin Bailey wrote to you to explain the outcome of a ballot for industrial action at 150 universities across the UK, including Queen Mary. I'm sorry to tell you that the trade union UCU has now confirmed there will be 3 days of strike action on Thursday 24, Friday 25, and Wednesday 30 November 2022, and continuous action short of a strike (ASOS), commencing Wednesday 23 November. ASOS means staff work to contract and do not undertake voluntary activities. Staff taking part in ASOS will still deliver their educational activities. There is more detail about ASOS [on our FAQs](#).

Going forward, we will continue to work hard with our campus trade unions on areas of mutual interest and concern: if you would like to see some more information about this work, have a look at the [joint statement](#) between the University and UCU, and our [FAQs](#) which cover details about staff pay and pensions.

I understand that this news regarding the industrial action is worrying. However, in the past industrial action has only affected a very small number of disciplinary areas and degree programmes at Queen Mary, with the vast majority of our 32,000 students unaffected by the 2% of our staff who take industrial action. We expect this period of industrial action to be similarly limited in its impact. Faculties will be communicating with you very shortly if you are in an affected area.

In those limited disciplinary areas and degree programmes that are affected, we have worked with colleagues to protect your education and experience by enabling colleagues choosing to take part in industrial action to focus solely on their educational activities and to stop all other work where needed. This means we will ask all colleagues who take part in strike action to make up any missed education when they resume work. We will also ask colleagues taking action short of a strike to undertake their educational activities, and deprioritise or stop all other work where needed. This approach fully respects the right of staff to take strike action, whilst focusing the resulting disruption away from you, our students, and on to all non-educational activities, including all research activities and external engagement.

We have developed an [online form](#) for you to report any educational activity that is cancelled, and where you have not been told, or are not sure, that it will be made up.

If you fill in this form and have not already been contacted by your School/Institute, your School/Institute will look into the issue and report back to you. If you do fill in a form please bear with us, as it may take a couple of weeks for the School/Institute to report back to you.

I will write again when there is more information to share. In the meantime, if you have any questions about industrial action, including what the action is about, have a look at [the FAQs](#), or contact the [Student Enquiry Centre](#) or me at principal@qmul.ac.uk.

Best wishes,

Stephanie

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