

University to review UCU boycott sanction

The University had previously declared it would withhold the pay of staff who participated in the upcoming boycott



By [Amy Wong](#), Deputy Editor (2015)

Wednesday 5 November 2014

The University has announced it will review its decision to withhold the pay of staff members who take part in the upcoming [University and College Union marking and assessment boycott over proposed pension changes](#).



Photo credit: churchofpunk

The decision was announced in a letter to staff written by Professor Koen Lamberts, Vice-Chancellor of the University of York, which stated the University has been asked by the UCU to reconsider its initial stance.

Professor Lamberts explained in the letter that the aim of withholding the pay of staff members who decided to participate in the marking and assessment boycott was to send a “clear message to staff that assessment and feedback are an essential part of our students’ learning” and that “it is not acceptable for staff to refuse to undertake them”.

However, he said: “We are willing to ask the Senior Management Group to give this matter further consideration and will revert to local UCU reps on this point as soon as possible.”

Sally Hunt, UCU general secretary, said she was pleased that the University of York had decided to reconsider its “punitive approach to staff fighting for their pensions” and added: “The proposals from Universities UK would leave many of them thousands of pounds worse off in retirement.”

Earlier this week, members of staff at the University of York wrote an [open letter](#) raising concerns about the “confrontational” stance taken by senior management regarding the boycott which they said “shocked” and “disheartened” them.

The letter was signed by nearly 500 academics from several departments and was described by Hunt as “crucial” in persuading the University to reconsider its decision regarding the pay of staff members who participate in the boycott.

It is estimated that approximately 1.2 million students across the country will be affected by the boycott, which is due to begin tomorrow.



One comment

Jean McKendree

7 Nov '14 at 10:42 am

Thank you for drawing attention to the current negotiations. University staff have undergone an erosion of pay over the last 5 years which amounts to a 15%+ paycut and now are facing changes to pensions that would mean the loss of thousands of pounds. The management state that negotiations have "only just begun". In fact, it is a matter of public record that these negotiations began at least eighteen months ago, but the proposal tabled by the employers in July was not put out for consultation with employee representatives, only employers.

I hope that University of York students will join the National Union of Students in supporting the staff. We are all members of the University and all we are asking for is a fair settlement for your future as well for the staff.

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