

Joint Statement from the University of Edinburgh (the University) and the University and College Union Edinburgh (UCU Edinburgh) – 4 August 2023

Following continuing discussions between The University and UCU Edinburgh the following joint statement has been agreed:

There is understanding by both parties of the following:

1. The disruption that the marking and assessment boycott has caused to students and that it is in the interests of HEIs, staff, and students that the dispute is resolved.
2. That issues currently being negotiated between UCEA and UCU continue to remain on the national table rather than being agreed locally. Current meetings taking place are welcome and we urge both parties to continue to work towards a resolution of the dispute.
3. Engagement in the MAB is being determined nationally by UCU and then through the individual choices of UCU Edinburgh members to take that action. Everyone involved in these discussions at The University of Edinburgh accepts that this will not be resolved at a local level.
4. Providing all our students with the quality grades and feedback they rightly expect as part of their university education is a key priority for both parties, including delivering all outstanding marking and finalising awards for all students who have completed their programme this year, and finalising progression outcomes for all others.

Moving forward

- A. The University has agreed to pause deductions for those currently taking part in the MAB with effect from 1 July 2023. Deductions up until this date will take place as previously notified unless national agreements supersede this. For the avoidance of doubt, deductions will be made from July pay in respect of participation in June, however no deductions will be made in August pay in respect of participation in July. This pause will not apply to any new action subsequent to the date of this statement by colleagues who have not previously taken part in the MAB, or who have previously taken part but subsequently ended their participation.
- B. UCU Edinburgh has agreed that as strike action was called at the University due to the level of deductions, UCU Edinburgh will recommend to members to agree to cancel the strike dates scheduled for September, and not seek authorisation for any further local strike action during the period of the mandate (ending 30th September), except in response to escalation by the University. Equally, the University will only review its position for the remainder of this mandate if UCU nationally or locally escalate the dispute. Escalation on both sides is taken to mean acting against either the terms or spirit of this agreement, resulting in further disruption to students.
- C. This period of relative calm will allow all staff to return to working normally, accepting that some UCU Edinburgh members may only begin to undertake outstanding marking and assessment when the dispute is settled nationally, or the MAB is ended. The University and UCU Edinburgh have agreed that UCU Edinburgh will encourage members to prioritise outstanding marking so that this marking will be complete to allow the October exam boards to run smoothly. To achieve this goal, line managers will ensure that the appropriate prioritisation of marking is managed within the overall workload of individual members.

Professor Peter Mathieson on behalf of The University of Edinburgh

Sophia Woodman and Cat Wayland on behalf of UCU Edinburgh