Industrial Action 2020

Frequently Asked Questions

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the current dispute at Royal Holloway, University of London, please contact the team using the following address EmployeeRelations@rhul.ac.uk

What will happen if I take strike action or action short of strike on some days?
The College will withhold a day's pay for the day that you take part in strike action. The amount withheld will be calculated at the rate of $\frac{1}{365}$ of annual salary for each day.

Action Short of a Strike (ASOS) which breaches the employment contract will amount to partial performance of the contract. The College reserves the right to withhold full pay or, at its discretion, a lesser amount for partial performance of duties.

Reductions in pay for this strike action will be applied over a three month period from April to June 2020.

I have already made prior plans for the day(s) of the strike/action short of strike days that will result in me being away from the College. What will happen to my pay?
As long as you have the prior approval of your line manager to be away from the College, you will not be considered as having taken strike action, and there will be no impact on your salary. This applies to all pre-authorised absences including annual leave, absences for training and attendance at conferences as well as other absences for official College business.

What happens if I am sick on a day where there is strike or action short of a strike?
Colleagues who are sick are required to comply with our normal notification procedures.

Am I able to take annual leave on the strike days?
Annual leave that has previously been agreed by your line manager can be taken. However, should you not report for work and prior agreement has not been given you will be considered to be on strike, and appropriate pay will be withheld. Approval for requests made for annual leave on known strike days will be subject to the discretion of the Head of School or Director of Professional Services as relevant.

Am I able to attend a conference on a strike day?
Where attendance at a conference/training event has been approved prior to formal notification of industrial action, this will be honoured. Approval for attendance at conferences/training on days of strike action will be subject to the discretion of the Head of School or Director of Professional Services as relevant.
I am concerned about being confronted by colleagues on picket lines. What should I do?
Picketing is protected by a Code of Practice that restricts the number of people in pickets to six plus a full-time trade union official.

People involved in picketing should conduct themselves in a peaceful and non-threatening manner. Some colleagues on picket duty may attempt to persuade you not to work, but they do not have any right to prevent you from gaining access to College premises. If you intend to work on the day of the strike, you will need to attend your normal place of work.

**What happens if I refuse to cross a picket line?**
Refusal to cross a picket line is not a legitimate reason for absence from work. Colleagues who refuse to cross picket lines will be regarded as having taken strike action, and pay will be withheld.

**What should I do if I feel threatened or intimidated by the pickets?**
We would expect colleagues who are picketing to conduct themselves in a peaceful and non-threatening manner. Any colleague who feels threatened or intimidated for any reason should talk to their line manager or contact Security on 01784 443063.

**How will the College calculate the deducted amount?**  (all figures below include London Allowance)

Example Grade 6, spine point 30 at £34,951 per annum. A day’s pay would be £95.76
Example Grade 7, spine point 35 at £42,456 per annum. A day’s pay would be £116.32
Example Grade 8, spine point 42 at £51,687 per annum. A day’s pay would be £141.61
Example Grade 9, spine point 47 at £61,269 per annum. A day’s pay would be £167.86

Deductions for part-time staff will be on a proportional basis.

**When should I submit my declaration form?**
You are required to advise that you took part in strike action immediately after you return to normal working. You will be expected to state that you took part in the strike action if asked by your line manager. Not doing so would be a failure to respond to a reasonable management request.

If you do take strike action, the College requires that you record every day of your taking part as an absence on the industrial action notification form to ensure the impact on students can be properly reviewed and so that your pay can be appropriately calculated.

**Notification of strike action must be provided to the dedicated email address by 12 noon on the day that you return to work following strike action.**

The University may in any event record you as taking part in the action if the evidence supports this if you do not report your participation in this manner.

**What is the role of the line manager or Head of Department?**
Line managers need to be aware of who is participating in the industrial action so as to manage the impact on learning, teaching and assessment.

**How will information concerning staff partaking (or ceasing to participate) in industrial action or ASOS be managed? Whose responsibility will this be?**
The College will, through the Employee Relations Team, collate submitted pro-formas from staff declaring their participation in the industrial action. Pro-formas are being sent out too. Not all staff participating in the strike action and ASOS might report their involvement to the College.

**Will I be dismissed for being on strike on any of the strike days?**
No. There will be no dismissals resulting from involvement in the strike action, subject to the provisions of Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

**Can the College provide cover for work affected by the strike?**
The College may decide to cover the work of staff on strike by temporarily reallocating work to other staff who could provide short-term cover, including visiting or retired staff.

**Will my pension be impacted if I were to participate?**
Yes. Pensions contributions will not be made for those staff who elect to take part in industrial action for the days that they are on strike.