

Dear colleague,

I hope you are well and managed to have a break over the Easter long weekend.

There is a lot going on currently across the higher education sector, and at Queen Mary. At sector level, the Government has recently published its alternative plan should negotiations regarding Horizon Europe prove unsuccessful. Do have a look at this [plan](#). At the moment, the most important thing is to keep on applying to Horizon Europe, which remains underwritten by the UK government, in addition to all other sources of research funding. Our research income figures across the University are very strong this year and we hope to maintain this positive trajectory.

In relation to local news at Queen Mary, we held our annual Alumni Reception at the House of Lords yesterday, which was hugely successful. There have also been some fantastic recent successes by our staff – please do have a look at the [website](#) for more information.

Industrial action update

As you know, at the end of March we reached an [agreement](#) with our local UCU branch. The agreement included a commitment from the Union to work with the University to help ensure our students achieve a high-quality academic experience that allows them to continue to progress and complete their studies in a timely manner. This agreement remains in place, is working well, and demonstrates our shared commitment to our students.

Like many other universities across the UK, we have now been informed by UCU of a marking and assessment boycott, starting on 20 April 2023. This is national industrial action, affecting approximately 145 universities across the UK.

We will monitor the impact of this latest industrial action, noting the local agreement in place with UCU to support our students to progress and complete their studies in a timely manner. We do not accept partial performance and as with previous industrial action, and in line with the latest agreement, we reserve the right to withhold 100 per cent of pay for breach of contract. If we have to proceed to implement the policy of withholding pay we will communicate with staff again before any period of pay adjustments starts. We continue to hope for a positive outcome to this national dispute.

If you have further questions at this stage, have a look at our [FAQs](#) or contact your [HR business partner](#).

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff for the continuing support you provide to our students. I will write again when there is a further update to share.

Best wishes,

Colin

Professor Colin Bailey, CBE, FEng, BEng, PhD, CEng, FICE, FIStructE, MIFireE
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Message to students - Update from the Vice-Principal (Education): industrial action

Dear student,

I hope you are well. For those of you preparing for assessments and/or completing coursework, I hope this is all going smoothly. Studying hard is of course particularly necessary at this time, but it can take its toll and it is very important you look after yourselves. Please ensure you take regular breaks, and take advantage of the support on offer through the University and our Students' Union. Your Advisor is your first port of call, and you can also always contact our [student wellbeing services](#) or the [Student Enquiry Centre](#). If you are struggling, do please reach out for support – we are here to help you. Our Students' Union is refreshing its Study Well resource (more on this to follow); and don't forget the [340+ new study spaces](#) now available as part of the extension to one of our libraries, based on the Mile End campus. There are also plenty of study spaces on all our other campuses.

Industrial action

In March 2023 we reached an important [agreement](#) with our local branch of the trade union UCU. This agreement includes a commitment from the trade union to work with the University to help ensure you achieve a high-quality academic experience that allows you to continue to progress and complete your studies in a timely manner. This local agreement remains in place and I'm pleased to say is working well.

Like many other universities across the UK, we have now been informed by UCU of a new mandate that gives notice of a marking and assessment boycott, starting on 20 April 2023. This is national industrial action, affecting approximately 145 universities across the UK.

We will monitor this latest industrial action, noting the local agreement in place with UCU to support our students to progress and complete their studies in a timely manner. We expect any industrial action to be focused on a very small number of areas within the University. Should you be in one of the affected areas, the University will take all necessary steps to ensure you can progress or graduate on time, assuming you reach the required standard. I also want to reassure you that we will not compromise on the quality and standards of our assessment processes as a result of any industrial action: the rigour with which your work will be assessed will be of a standard that is similar to that of a normal year, and hence your marks and degree classification, will be a true reflection of the quality of your performance.

If you have any questions about industrial action, have a look at the [FAQs](#), contact the [Student Enquiry Centre](#) or me at principal@qmul.ac.uk.

Best wishes,

Stephanie

Professor Stephanie Marshall

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Vice Principal (Education)

