

# ACTION SHORT OF A STRIKE (ASOS) ADVICE AND GUIDANCE FOR ACADEMIC-RELATED AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES STAFF

The following is guidance for Academic-Related and Professional Services (ARPS) members on the action short of a strike (ASOS) we are taking as part of industrial action against the proposed redundancies in the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences. This is general and non-exhaustive advice and it may not cover all circumstances, so please feel free to contact the branch directly with any queries – [lucu@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:lucu@liverpool.ac.uk)

The following guidance is drawn from national guidance from central UCU from previous rounds of industrial action and guidance created for previous industrial action by the Branch and a number of other local UCU branches.

## What is ASOS?

Action short of a strike begins on Monday 10th May 2021 and will continue until members are notified otherwise.

While a strike is a complete stoppage of work, action short of a strike (ASOS) is normally action which affects only certain aspects of your work. Since the changes introduced by the Trade Union Act 2016, UCU have to determine and ballot members regarding the types of action short of strike that are called for.

Action short of a strike in this dispute means from Monday 10th May you will be:

- Working to contract
- Not covering for any absent colleagues or vacant posts
- Not undertaking any voluntary duties

In order for the University to function effectively, management are hugely reliant on your goodwill. When this goodwill is not forthcoming it results in the University functioning less effectively and

supports the fight to protect our colleagues at risk of redundancy.

## Working to contract

Working to contract means that you need to be strict in ensuring you do not work in excess of the hours you are contracted. A typical ARPS member of staff will have 35 hours per week specified in their contract. If you are a part time member of staff on a fractional contract but do not know how many hours you are contracted to work then should determine this based on 35 weekly hours and calculate accordingly to your FTE.

If you are hourly paid do not work in excess of the hours you have agreed to work and receive payment for. If you feel you are pressured into working in excess of the hours you have agreed or the customary hours you are paid for then contact the Branch immediately for support – [lucu@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:lucu@liverpool.ac.uk)

It is essential that you do not work in excess of the contracted hours you are paid for. If you have tasks that have not been completed by either the end of the day or the end of the week then do not worry. You begin working on that when you resume work the next day/week. It is vital for your own wellbeing you take a lunchbreak and you do not work outside of your typical working pattern by working evenings and/or weekends if that is not your working pattern. This includes checking, writing or responding to emails outside of your working pattern. Do not start early and do not work late.

## Not Covering for Any Absent Colleagues or Vacant Posts

If a colleague is off sick or on leave, you should not agree to cover for them, or to pick up extra work. Equally, if a post is vacant you should not take on any of the work associated with that vacant role. It is important to remember that you are working to YOUR contract and not anybody else's so you should not take on that additional work that may not be carried out due to illness or an inability of managers to fill a vacancy.

### Not Undertaking Any Voluntary Duties

You should only take on work that is part of your formal role. This means that you not take on anything that falls outside of your typical activities at work. This list is not exhaustive but here are some suggested activities or duties that should be refused under ASOS:

- Voluntarily attending meetings you are not obliged to attend as part of your role.
- Undertaking support work on a voluntary basis.

- Completing University surveys, consultations or questionnaires.
- Volunteering at Open Days or other student-recruitment related events including online events.
- Volunteering to attend meetings or events outside of your typical working pattern or during your lunch break.

You can and should refuse to undertake all of the above and anything else which does not form part of your formal role and responsibilities.

## Determining Whether an Activity is Voluntary

If you believe something you are being asked to do constitutes a voluntary activity then reply to your line manager with the following:

'As you know, UCU members are taking action short of a strike including refusing to undertake any voluntary activities so unfortunately I will not be able to carry out these duties.'

If you receive a reply that this is a mandatory activity then please contact the Branch immediately with an overview and you will receive support from a rep – [lucu@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:lucu@liverpool.ac.uk)

## Suggested ASOS Email Signature and Out of Office Reply

Please note I am working to contract as part of Action Short of a Strike to defend the jobs of my colleagues who face the threat of redundancy in the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences.

Response times will be slower during this period and I will not be monitoring or responding to emails outside of my typical working pattern.

Please support staff at risk by writing to the University Senior Leadership Team and call on them to withdraw the proposed redundancies.

