



University of Exeter Branch

Hardship Fund Terms & Conditions

Details of the Fund

The Exeter UCU Branch has established a local fund to help those suffering particular financial hardship due to loss of pay arising from USS industrial action. This includes all members: lecturers, academic-related staff, Postgraduate Teaching Assistants (PTAs) and members who may be paid by the e-Claims system.

“Particular hardship” means that the member is low-paid (e.g. small fractional contract; or hourly-paid equivalent to only a small fraction) and/or that the strike days disproportionately affect them (e.g. it’s the only day(s) they work; or it’s the day(s) they work most).

Marking and Assessment Boycott with 50% deductions:

For action taken after 20th April 2023, where the University of Exeter has deducted 50% of daily pay for partial performance under the Marking and Assessment Boycott, **the Exeter UCU Hardship Fund** will pay the following:

- up to £30 for each day of deductions for members earning £30,000 gross or more per annum; and,
- up to £45 for each day of deductions for members earning less than £30,000 gross per annum.

This is subject to a provisional cap of 10 days (which may be lowered or raised depending on funds). In no case can payments be made in excess of the actual loss as evidenced by payslips or similar. Depending on funds we may have to prioritise staff on lower grades, and those with exceptional circumstances.

Note that the **National UCU Fighting Fund** rates are the same as those above, with a cap of 9 days, meaning that the total cap over claims to the two funds would be 19 days (until further notice). **Staff should claim for the first 10 days from the Exeter UCU Hardship Fund.**

Note that the number of days here means number of days of deductions at 50%. So for example 10 days above at 50% is equivalent to 5 days at 100%.

Strike action with 100% deductions:

The **Exeter UCU Hardship Fund** is designed as a safety net for local members and is intended to augment the **UCU National Fighting Fund**, which will pay members as follows:

- in the sum of £50 for the second and subsequent days of strike action for members earning £30,000 gross or more per annum (this is subject to a cap of 11 days, which will be kept under review); and,

- in the sum of up to £75 for the second and subsequent days of strike action for members earning less than £30,000 gross per annum (this is subject to a cap of 11 days, which will be kept under review).

For those earning less than £30K: the Exeter Hardship Fund will cover the first day of strike action taken by members (i.e. **your** first day of action – this might not be the first day of the action). The National Fighting Fund will cover the second day of action onwards. The maximum daily amount that a member can claim from both funds will be £75 per day (subject to a cap of 11 days, kept under review)

For those earning £30K or more: the Exeter Hardship Fund will cover the first day of strike action taken by members (ie **your** first day of action – this might not be the first day of the action) at a level of up to £75. The National Fighting Fund will cover the second day of action onwards at up to £50 per day. If the loss of pay is greater than £50 on one or more days, then following a claim to the national fund, a member may apply to the Exeter Hardship Fund for up to a further £25 per day. The maximum daily amount that a member can claim from both funds will be £75 per day (subject to a cap of 11 days, kept under review).

Applications from members on all pay grades will be considered although priority will be given to those on lower grades (Grade F or lower), who are casually employed or on part-time contracts, or have indicated “special circumstances” on the application form.

Members are expected to apply for assistance in the following order (1) from the UCU National Fighting Fund; (2) Exeter UCU Hardship Fund. Please ensure you have obtained a **claim reference number** from the National scheme before submitting your claim to Exeter’s Hardship Fund – you will be asked for this on our application form. If you participated in just one day of action then please skip stage (1) and clearly state the reason for their being no claim reference number the “additional information” field in your application to Exeter UCU.

As all claims must be supported by payslips showing actual deductions/loss of pay, some applicants may need to submit two claims to each fund, for example where the deductions appear in separate pay periods. **Note that all claimants must have the appropriate UCU subscription type and level – see notes 13, 14 below.**

How to Apply

1. Ensure you read and familiarise yourself with the eligibility requirements and terms and conditions set out below
2. If appropriate, submit a claim to the UCU Fighting Fund by completing the form at: https://ucu.custhelp.com/app/fighting_fund/. Once submitted you will receive a confirmation email and a claim reference number.
3. Download [the application form for the Exeter UCU Fighting Fund](#), taking care to read the Eligibility criteria and Terms and Conditions
4. Send completed application form with supporting payslips or other documents (see Pt 9 below) to exeterucuhardshipfund@gmail.com
 - You can access PDF copies of your payslip from Trent Self Service at <https://my.exeter.ac.uk/>

- If you cannot locate your membership number, please email membership@ucu.org.uk.
5. If you have selected “yes” to the *special circumstances* question please provide a brief explanation why particular hardship has been caused.
 6. Your application will be reviewed by an Assessment Panel convened specifically for the purpose of assessing applications to the Exeter UCU Hardship Fund
 7. If approved, funds will be made by bank transfer to the account stated in the application
 8. We aim to process all applications within 10 working days of receipt.

Eligibility

9. To be eligible to make a claim against the Fund, you must meet the following criteria:
 - Be a current and fully paid up member of the UCU
 - Have taken part in the industrial action called by the Union.
 - To have not received any pay from the University on each day of action in which you have participated.
 - Be able to supply a PDF or scanned copy, of your pay slip(s) showing the gross amount of pay deducted in respect of each day’s participation in the action.
10. Members unable to demonstrate loss of pay from relevant payslips (e.g. those paid via e-Claims) will need to provide other information such as payslips for two or more immediately preceding months, timesheets and/or letter of appointment or other documentation confirming appointment. Please use the “additional information” field to provide further clarification or context if you think this would prove helpful to the Assessment Panel
11. Claims not accompanied by pay slip(s) showing the deductions or other supporting documentation will be rejected.
12. A claim arising from this dispute will only be paid if it is received within 3 months after the date of loss of pay (that is, within 3 months of the payroll run that shows the deduction).
13. **No claim can be met for members who are in arrears of subscriptions or for those who are not paying the correct level of subscription based on their earnings: see <https://www.ucu.org.uk/whyjoin?detailid=1693>**
14. **In line with the rules for the UCU National Fighting Fund, members with only *student membership* are not eligible to claim from the Exeter Hardship fund. In order to claim, employed postgraduates should ensure their UCU membership is at the *standard free* membership level, which is free and provides the full benefits of membership: see: <https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/5143/Can-students-or-postgraduates-join>, and <https://www.ucu.org.uk/free>**
15. If you have selected “yes” to the special circumstances button on the claim form we may ask you for additional evidence.
16. Please ensure that you enter correctly all the bank details as we may not be able to recover any payments sent to an incorrect bank account and, if that occurs, we regret it may not be possible to make a further payment from the Fund to recompense for the mis-directed payment.

Terms and Conditions

17. In no case will payments from combined applications to UCU accredited funds be made in excess of your actual total loss of income. The *pro rata* principle will be applied where appropriate for part-time staff.
18. Members who continue to suffer disproportionate hardship are eligible to submit further applications to the Exeter UCU Hardship Fund although we reserve the right to seek information on support received from the National Fighting Fund and we may ask you for additional evidence of hardship.
19. All claims are at the discretion of the University of Exeter UCU Hardship Fund Assessment Panel. The Panel reserves the right not to meet a claim if it is not satisfied about the eligibility of the claimant, the details of the claim itself or the supporting evidence.
20. As the fund is finite there may be a cap placed on payments. We reserve the right to withhold decisions relating to claims from staff at grades of G and above until the full extent of applications received has been assessed by the Panel.
21. If you need to contact us, please email exeterucuhardshipfund@gmail.com. All email concerning the hardship fund should be directed to this address, and not to any Exeter University addresses.
22. Applicants will be required to sign a GDPR notice on the claim form to give the Assessment Panel the right to use and store personal data. Applications cannot be considered without this signature.