Dear Vice Chancellor/Provost/Principal

We are writing to you as students of the University of Warwick, of which you are on the Executive board, to complain about the impact of the UCU strike action upon our education. This is a result of the failure to protect the current pension scheme upon which your employees rely. As such, I am emailing to ask you to recognise the seriousness of the situation and agree to meaningful negotiations with the UCU.

The extremely high quality of the teaching at the University, recognised both nationally and internationally, was one of the most important reasons why we chose to study at the University, even at the cost of accruing over £27,000 in debt. Strike action will result in serious disruption to our studies in important weeks leading up to exams and important pieces of coursework in the summer. We would urge you as the executive of the University to protect your staff who are, without doubt, your greatest assets, and to ensure a high quality of education for your students.

The proposed changes to the pension scheme offered to academics at the University of Warwick would result in a loss of almost £10,000 a year in retirement for the typical employee in the University system, who relies upon this as a vital safety net. With a UCU-wide turnout of 58%, 88% of members who voted backed strike action. This demonstrates how strongly University academics feel about this change. At the University of Warwick, the percentage in favour was even higher, with 91.3% of employees being in favour of a strike, w and an extra 4.3% favouring industrial action short of a strike.

 We understand that our lecturers would only take strike action in extreme circumstances, due to the impact that it can have on the studies of their students. As such, it seems clear that this drastic action is a result of untenable problems, which must be sorted to ensure the financial security of lecturers and, indeed more broadly, the livelihood of the entire University system as a whole. The University of Warwick has a responsibility to protect the livelihoods of the employees upon which it relies for its success, and we would ask you to take this responsibility to heart and offer public support for its employees on this issue.

As well as the responsibility of the University to prevent the human cost that would come about as a result of this significant loss in pension returns upon which University academics will rely in their retirement, we would also argue that it is in the interest of the University to support its employees on this issue. The existing pension scheme is a key reason in why academics choose to remain at the University of Warwick and do not seek alternative employment. A loss of this key safety net could mean the loss of experienced lecturers, whose expertise is vital both in the education which they offer to their students, and in the example which they set for their colleagues. The failure to properly staff pensions of employees could seriously discourage potential employees from considering the University of Warwick as a place of employment, damaging its global reputation as a centre of learning.

As things stand, this university -our university -has alienated its staff and is failing its students. I again urge you to agree to resume national negotiations with UCU with immediate effect in order to end this damaging dispute and enable us to get the education that we deserve.

Yours faithfully,

The Students of the University of Warwick