

I WOULD STRIKE BUT....

I have responsibilities to others and it is impossible for me to fully participate in the strike.

The strike helps us to see the ways in which we may suffer from a false sense of urgency, largely a consequence of the very conditions we're striking against. You might be surprised to learn that it's okay if work is delayed or takes extra time.

This is just going to be worse for me later, so I should keep working on it now.

The effects of strike action extend well beyond the actual strike days and may have knock on effects on later deadlines, and other work we do for the university. It can be tempting to try to mitigate the effects of this and avoid potential conflict by continuing to work on essential tasks, even if you aren't crossing the picket line. This undermines some of the most effective means of pressuring the University to bring about a rapid a sustainable agreement. Leave all these tasks, work according to management direction on your return: unanswered emails, mounting admissions and unmarked work are the responsibility of those not fighting for improvements. If you make your absence unnoticeable, what was the point of not being there?.

I want to protest but I don't want to cause too much trouble.

Industrial relations is basic economics: the employer wants to avoid additional labour-related costs and workers want more investment for their benefit. This means causing some trouble. When workers become too unhappy, they attempt to increase the cost of status quo operation through Industrial Action: ideally pushing the cost above and beyond that of operating without them. Unless Senior decision makers evaluate that the cost of the strike is too great, they will just wait it out, being better off in the long term. Therefore, think less about just not going to work, and think of ways to increase the costs of ignoring you and your demands.

I care about my students and colleagues and I don't want to make things more difficult for them

Reflect on the fairness of supporting your immediate students and colleagues, and not supporting improvements for staff in precarious conditions and all of our future students who will receive less effective teaching and commitment as staff are too under-resourced, overloaded and precarious.

I just can't afford it.

The financial costs of participating in strike action are real, and losing pay is not always an option for everyone. However, there are local and national fighting funds that can help cover lost wages, and for many on casual and hourly paid contracts, the fighting funds can cover all of your lost wages. This is what the fighting fund is for, and if it makes the difference between you joining the strike action or not, use it! If you will still struggle to afford it, consider whether you can strike some days but not others. Any participation is better than none at all.