

Contact details

If you have any questions which are not answered in this guide, please contact your Regional Organiser or email education@unison.co.uk.

If you are using social media, tag us on @unisoninHE and use the hashtag #WereWorthMore

Introduction

This information is about the higher education ballot for strike action over the employers' final offer of 3% for most higher education staff, and a bit more for those who are paid less. This offer is for the year commencing 1 August 2022 and will be imposed by the employers on that date.

Branches and regions have agreed to ballot members at 93 university employers, three subsidiaries which are wholly owned by universities included in the ballot and three private companies where staff are paid on the pay scales of a university included in the ballot. All members being balloted are due to have their pay rises agreed through national pay bargaining for 2022/23.

If your branch is included in the ballot, please do everything you can to encourage all members to use their vote.

What members need to do is

- Put a cross in the box
- Put the ballot paper in the envelope
- Take it to the post box and post it

Our message to members is

We need your vote! It only takes a few minutes to make sure your voice is heard!

Important dates

The ballot opens on 22 July across the UK. All ballot papers will be despatched on 22 July. The closing date varies depending on where you live, so please check this timetable to see what applies to your branch:

	Opens	Closes	Ballot hotline
Scotland	22 July 2022	19 August 2022	28 July-15 August (12pm)
England, Wales & Northern Ireland	22 July 2022	26 August 2022	28 July-18 August (5pm)

Ballot hotline

Members can call the ballot hotline to request a replacement ballot paper if they haven't received one or if they have lost their paper.

The last date to join, transfer, be reinstated or request a replacement ballot paper and reliably be sent one in time is:

- 9 August in Scotland
- 11 August in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Ballot website

You can find more information on our ballot hub webpage at unison.org.uk/wereworthmore

A list of the 93 universities, three wholly owned subsidiaries and three private contractors UNISON is balloting is available on this web page.

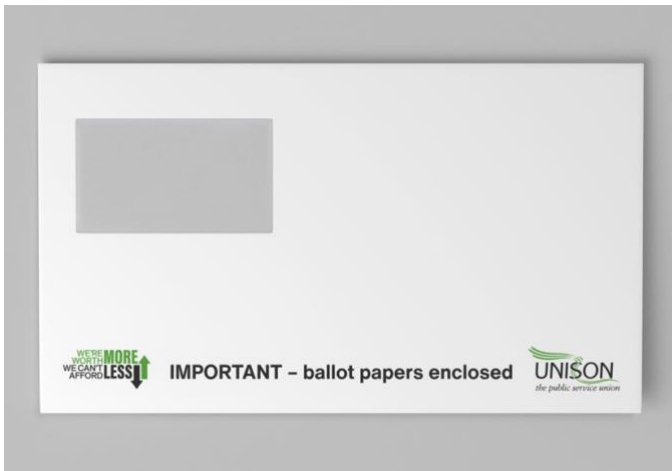
NEW: A new [pay rise calculator](#) has been added to this page. This new calculator shows what annual pay rise you will be getting from the employers on 1 August, and how much more you would have got if they met our claim in full.

How the ballots will work

Only full members working for the 99 employers on the list for balloting will be sent a ballot paper. Members working for students' unions are not being balloted this time around. Members working for wholly owned subsidiaries or private companies other than those listed are not being balloted.

BAOT members are not being balloted on this occasion, as they have the option to be balloted via UCU or EIS instead. If authorised strike action is called after the ballot, BAOT members will not be able to join our strike, although they could refuse to cross a picket line (secondary action). If balloted by UCU or EIS they would be able to join in any strike action called by the union that balloted them.

Members will be sent a personalised ballot pack to their home address. The envelope looks like this:



The envelope will contain:

- A ballot paper
- A letter explaining why we are asking members to vote for action (supplementary material)
- A freepost return envelope

Members need to complete the ballot form, put it in the freepost return envelope and post the envelope; no stamp is needed. Remember that all forms need to be returned in good time before the ballot closes.

Ballot question

There will only be one question on the ballot paper, which will be:

“Are you prepared to take part in strike action?”

Ballot supplementary material

The supplementary material included with the ballot paper is attached below for your information (England version). There are four versions, one for each of the devolved nations and one for England, containing the appropriate dates. In the Welsh version the text is translated into Welsh on the back of the sheet.

National pay campaign communications

We will be sending a number of emails and text messages to remind members to vote, as follows:

- 14 July - email 1: pre-ballot
- 18 July - SMS 1: pre ballot
- 22 July - email 2: ballot open
- 27 July - CES email 1: reminder to vote
- 3 August - email 3: reminder to vote
- 8 August - CES email 2: reminder to vote
- 12 August - email 4a: reminder to vote (Scotland)
- 15 August - SMS 2a: last chance to vote (Scotland)

- 16 August - CES email 3: reminder to vote
- 19 August - email 4b: reminder to vote (England, Wales and NI)
- 22 August - SMS 2b: last chance to vote (England, Wales and NI)

Strike pay and branch industrial action funds

We have received the following message from Sandy Nicoll, the Chair of UNISON's Industrial Action Committee:

"On behalf of the Industrial Action Committee I can confirm our standing policy is to pay £50 per day strike pay (or full take home pay if this is less) from day one of any properly authorised strike action (subject to sufficient resources being available in the national UNISON Industrial Action Fund)."

Branches may also set up and use industrial action funds to provide further financial support to members taking properly authorised strike action where the strike pay referred to above does not meet all of their salary losses as a result of taking strike action, in accordance with [UNISON's scheme for industrial action funds](#).

What you can do now

By law, we need to achieve a 50% turnout in any industrial action ballot and a majority yes vote from those who voted. To achieve this, we will all have to work hard to get out the vote. The first few days are critical, as members are more likely to vote if they do so early.

Recruit

Now is a good time to recruit. Members who join, are reinstated or transfer from another employer by Tuesday 9 August in Scotland or Thursday 11 August in England, Wales or Northern Ireland will be sent a ballot paper automatically. Even during the holidays, you can still contact and talk to colleagues and encourage them to join and to join in. Let them know they can join online or by calling **0800 0 857 857**.

Increase turnout

As ever, it is vital that we get the highest possible turnout in this ballot. Please ask all your branch activists to talk to members about pay. We know that many people are still working remotely for some of their hours, and that during the summer many will be off work for a period of time. Remember, you can still phone members to ask whether they have used their vote, where your activists are registered WARMS users or have registered for 'phone-banking' through MCT Lite as explained below.

Call members – running a phone bank

UNISON is providing a system so that your branch can run a local 'phone bank' enabling you to systematically call members and log the calls that you have made. This facility is provided through WARMS and is called MCT Lite.

Running a WARMS-based phone bank means that UNISON keeps a clear record of who has been called, which means that you will be operating safely within data protection legislation.

Registration for MCT Lite has now closed and those activists who were flagged by their branch and completed the online GDPR e-learning module have been sent instructions for how to use the system.

Any registered branch WARMS user can automatically access the system through WARMS and does not need to complete the online GDPR e-learning module again. The phone banking script attached at the end of this document **MUST** be followed.

The following details will be required by WARMS users to access the campaign:

Campaign Code: 328

Campaign Name: New JNCHES Higher Ed Pay 2022

Use the available resources

The following resources are available on the campaign web page unison.org.uk/wereworthmore in the 'resources for branches' section to help you build your campaign locally:

- A PowerPoint presentation for members' meetings, which can be held online
- Social media, website or email graphics
- A short, animated video which can be shared on social media or by email
- Two pay calculators – what you have lost over 13 years and what your pay rise would have been if they had met our claim
- FAQs
- Posters, leaflets and stickers on the UNISON Catalogue
- The nine-point action plan to help us get out the vote (see below)

An editable leaflet is available which allows branches to tailor the figures on the leaflet to be applicable to particular membership groups. Branches can identify the spine points which large numbers of members are on at their university (often the top of the scale), access the figures from the pay calculator for the employers pay rise and what members would have got if our claim had been met, enter them on the pdf of the leaflet and then print off copies to hand out or send via email/ social media.

Alternatively, there are four fixed versions of the leaflet available to order as printed copies, for spine points 4, 22, 26 and 30.

Use the 9-point action plan to get out the vote

Please find below a 9-point action plan. We hope that this will help you with the smooth running of your local campaign, so that you are able to engage with as many members as possible and maximise your branch turnout.

1. Keep membership records up to date. This is vital in case any members need a replacement ballot paper. Members can update their details themselves online at MyUNISON or the branch can update them on WARMS.
2. Ask any activists working on campus to put up leaflets, stickers and posters, so that colleagues who are at work will be aware of the ballot.

3. Match up every member with an activist who knows them, who can keep in contact with them and talk to them throughout the campaign.
4. Get together to do some sessions of phone banking regularly, gradually working through all your members. Go back to those you couldn't get through to later.
5. Badge your social media accounts with campaign branding. Use the Twitter header and Facebook cover to brand your social media accounts throughout the ballot period, and share the posts provided at regular intervals.
6. Use the hashtag **#WereWorthMore** and tag us on @unisoninHE so we can join together in a nationwide campaign.
7. Hold regular meetings for members, and online meetings as well. You can use the UNISON PowerPoint presentation which is on the campaign web page.
8. Think about holding rallies with local speakers, or online rallies with national speakers, to explore the issues behind the campaign.
9. Check the frequently asked questions on the campaign page. If you have another question, please email it to us on education@unison.co.uk.

What next? Planning for strike action

When the ballots close the service group executive will meet to consider the results and make a decision about submitting a proposal for industrial action to be approved by the industrial action committee. Action can only be taken where we achieve a turnout of more than 50% and a majority yes vote.

The process for requesting and approving dates for action will differ between the aggregate and disaggregate ballots and between nations, and will be as follows:

Scotland disaggregate ballots

An extraordinary SGE meeting will be held on 22 August at 09:30 to consider the results from the Scottish disaggregate ballots. Should the SGE decide to move to requests for action from any branches, those branches will be asked to complete and return a template industrial action report, agreed at a quorate branch committee meeting with a regional organiser present, signed by the regional secretary, to education@unison.co.uk to be signed off by the national secretary and referred to the industrial action committee for approval. **Scottish branches may wish to schedule a branch committee meeting after 10:30 on 22 August if they want to get any action approved quickly**, bearing in mind that UNISON has to give employers two weeks' notice of strike action.

Cymru Wales aggregate ballot

The Cymru Wales higher education committee will be asked for recommendation on dates for action in Welsh HEIs prior to the extraordinary SGE meeting on 30 August, for the approval of the SGE. The SGE would then refer this request via an industrial action report to the industrial action committee for approval.

England disaggregate ballots

An extraordinary SGE meeting will be held on 30 August at 09:30 to consider the results from the English disaggregate ballots. Should the SGE decide to move to requests for action from any branches, those branches will be asked to complete and return a template industrial action report, agreed at a quorate branch committee meeting with a regional organiser present, signed by the regional secretary, to education@unison.co.uk to be signed off by the national secretary and referred to the industrial action committee for approval. **English branches may wish to schedule a branch committee meeting after 10:30 on 30 August if they want to get any action approved quickly**, bearing in mind that UNISON has to give employers two weeks' notice of strike action.

Northern Ireland disaggregate ballot

An extraordinary SGE meeting will be held on 30 August at 09:30 to consider the results from the Northern Ireland disaggregate ballot. Should the SGE decide to move to requests for action from any branches, the branch will be asked to complete and return a template industrial action report, agreed at a quorate branch committee meeting with a regional organiser present, signed by the regional secretary, to education@unison.co.uk to be signed off by the national secretary and referred to the industrial action committee for approval. **Northern Irish branches may wish to schedule a branch committee meeting after 10:30 on 30 August if they want to get any action approved quickly**, bearing in mind that UNISON has to give employers one week's notice of strike action in Northern Ireland.

English standalone aggregate ballots involving wholly owned subsidiaries and private companies

These ballots are being run through the relevant regions (Greater London, Northern and West Midlands) so the decision as to whether or not to move to action rests with the branch, their regional organiser and the regional secretary. **These branches should talk to their regional organiser** to ensure they have a branch committee scheduled on a suitable date to make this decision in time for any action they hope to be able to take.

Phone banking script: get out the vote phone campaign HE Industrial Action 2022/3

Campaign Code: 328

Campaign Name: New JNCHES Higher Ed Pay 2022

Script for speaking to members – this script **must** be followed.

The aim of the phone bank is to encourage participation in the ballot.

It is best to start calling one week after the ballot papers are posted so that members have the chance to get their papers and return them before calling UNISON Direct for a replacement.

If members have specific queries, please offer to send them the generic information email or direct them to the HE pay campaign web page. FAQs are available below to give you context and additional information.

Script

Hello, I'm _____ calling from your trade union UNISON. Are you OK to speak for a minute?

I'm ringing to check that you have received your ballot paper in the post from us for members working in universities about the 2022/23 pay offer.

Have you received your ballot paper? If no, request preferred email details, update on MCT and offer to send the campaign email (which includes details of how to request another ballot paper and ballot details).

Do you intend to vote?

Record one of the following outcomes on MCT:

- Ballot paper has been received - but not interested (109)
- Ballot paper has been received - confirmed it has been returned (91)
- Ballot paper has been received - intends to return it (92)
- Duplicate ballot paper requested - Change of address (93) *(see note below)
- Duplicate ballot paper requested - accidentally lost or mislaid or not delivered (94)*(see note below)

**If a duplicate paper is requested then the member MUST be advised to call the ballot hotline before 12 noon on 15 August 2022 in Scotland and 5pm on 18 August in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. They must call 0800 0 857 857. Duplicate ballot papers are not issued unless the members contacts the hotline.*

If member has not yet voted **Could I let you know that when UNISON consulted members over this offer 83% of members rejected it, and so UNISON/ your UNISON branch is recommending that members vote yes for strike action?**

Thank you for your time

Campaign Email

It's time to vote in the industrial action ballot on the 2022/3 HE pay offer Your vote counts!

For the current pay year, 2022/3, university employers have offered their staff a pay rise – which for the majority of staff was for an increase of just 3.0%. The lowest paid staff have been offered between 9.0% and 3.1% for those on pay points 3 to 19. The employers have made some offers for joint work on addressing pay spine compression, career development; workload and stress; redeployment; tackling the gender, ethnic and disability pay gaps, but only if we agree to the pay offer first.

This offer comes after a below inflation 1.5% increase was imposed in 2021 without agreement from the trade unions (with slightly higher increases for those up to pay point 21), and a pay freeze in 2020 with no increases to salaries at all whilst prices continued to rise.

Your branch was given the option of opting out of balloting members for strike action against this offer but has not done so. As a result, you are being balloted.

If you haven't yet received your ballot paper, or if you can't find it, you can call the UNISON ballot hotline to request your ballot paper.

Call UNISON Direct on 0800 0 857 857.

The ballot in Scotland closes on 19 August 2022. The ballot in England, Wales and Northern Ireland closes on 26 August 2022, so make sure that you post your vote in good time.

It only takes a minute to mark your vote on the ballot paper and return it in the freepost envelope provided. Voting means that your voice will be heard.

If you've got any questions about the offer and the ballot, please look at our UNISON HE Pay campaign webpage: unison.org.uk/wereworthmore

For anything else, your branch will be able to help.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Latest information:

unison.org.uk/wereworthmore

What is the ballot about?

The ballot is a ballot for strike action in relation to the pay offer for the HE pay year which starts on 1 August 2022 (i.e. the current pay year).

The pay offer from 1 August 2022 is just 3.0% for most higher education staff. Those on some of the lower pay points will get percentage increases between 9.0% to 3.1%.

Who is included?

- 93 ballots in universities across the UK
- An aggregate ballot of all 8 universities in Cymru Wales
- 77 ballots at English universities
- 7 ballots at Scottish universities
- 1 ballot at a Northern Irish university

Supplementary material

Dear colleague

In May 2022, UNISON ran an online consultation to find out members' views on the national Higher Education pay offer for 2022/23.

As expected, we received a strong response with 83% of members across the UK rejecting the pay offer of 3% plus a bit more for the low paid.

Now, due to the current cost of living crisis, many members are struggling to pay their rocketing bills and are having to decide whether to use their hard-earned cash to buy food or fuel, energy or essentials. This pay offer doesn't do our members justice for the hard work they do every year.

For 13 years, we are seeing another below inflation pay offer in Higher Education. In real terms this pay offer is a pay cut. A real pay rise is needed – **We're worth more. We can't afford less.**

Your vote is important

Now is the time to make your voice heard, and as a collective we can make a difference. The law says that at least 50% of members who are eligible to vote must do so for strike action to go ahead, with a majority voting in favour. If members don't vote we can't do anything about the pay offer.

So, vote YES for the pay you deserve. Vote YES for job security. Vote YES to protect your future.
Vote YES for strike action!

Key dates to remember

All ballot papers must be received by **26 August 2022**. Please post back your ballot paper as soon as it arrives to ensure it is received before the ballot closes.

If you need a replacement ballot paper, call our helpline on **0800 0 857 857**. The helpline opens on **28 July 2022** and closes at **5pm on 18 August 2022**.

Best wishes,

Jon Richards

Assistant General Secretary

