



14 December 2022

We met with the employers on 30 November. At that meeting the employers asked us to agree to open the 2023-4 pay round early. Then, without the joint unions' agreement, the employers posted what was referred to as a '[jointly agreed statement](#)' on their website, even though this had not been jointly agreed.

We met again yesterday on 13 December. We attended in good faith, expecting to hear the employers' introduction to negotiations and receive their opening offer. However, the employers wasted the whole meeting discussing this statement, which related to the mechanism and process of the negotiations, insisting that we confirm that we would cease all industrial action during the negotiating process. When we did not agree to this, as we were unable to do so due to our own internal democratic processes, they then refused to move into negotiations without going back to consult their board about the amended process and mechanism that we told them we could sign up to.

UCEA informed us that they did have a figure that they would have presented to us as an opening offer if we had agreed to stop industrial action related to the 2022-3 pay dispute during the negotiations. When we refused to agree to this they refused to engage in negotiations.

The joint unions are disappointed that while we turned up ready to negotiate in good faith, UCEA declined to put any offer on the table amidst a cost-of-living crisis which is creating hardship for higher education employees, despite admitting they do have money they could pay in February 2023.

The meeting was adjourned at the employers' request, and we look forward to the employers returning to negotiations as soon as possible. We would invite them to send us their offer in writing before the Christmas break.

A joint statement agreed by all five HE trade unions, 14 December 2022