

A Joint Statement by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bristol and the Local Branch of UCU (Bristol UCU)

The University and its local branch of UCU are both very disappointed that the recent round of negotiations failed to resolve the ongoing industrial relations dispute concerning the USS pension scheme.

We are proud of our University's world-class reputation for excellence in education, research and scholarship and wish to see this dispute resolved as soon as possible so that we can focus on our core mission.

We urge that both sides return to the negotiating table immediately to bring a fresh proposition by 23 March and will take steps individually and in co-operation to encourage this.

The University is willing to consider an improved offer for staff within the bounds of affordability. This would include reconsidering the accrual rate and inflation cap as well as employer and employee contributions. We reaffirm our support for an independent, expert advisory board chaired by a world-leading academic authority to bring fresh thinking to the valuation in support of a sustainable solution. We also request the removal of the clause pertaining to rescheduling of lost teaching activity.

The University and Bristol UCU share an understanding that our staff will, on return to work on Monday 19 March, support our students as they approach the end of the academic year, including prioritising teaching and other student-focused activities.

The University wishes to reassure students and parents that we will continue to do everything we reasonably can to support our students and to mitigate the impact of the strike on their educational experience.