

# A letter to visitors

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## Who will teach you when you come to St Andrews?

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On your visit to St Andrews today, you will see an unusual sight. You will meet many of the staff on a picket line rather than in a lecture theatre. They will be holding placards and talking to you about pensions rather than talking about their academic subjects. Because today, academics are on strike.

We are not a group that easily goes on strike. We only do so as a very last resort. But the Universities are proposing such drastic changes to our pensions that we feel we have no alternative.

You may have read the headlines about University leaders getting huge salary rises. Figures in the range of 300 or 400 thousand pounds are not unusual. And you may have concluded that University staff are well off. But the rises for those at the top are not matched for ordinary staff. Our pay has fallen by nearly 15% in recent years. And now the Universities want to completely change our pension system. It would mean young staff losing something in the region of £10,000 per year when they retire. Some face cuts in the order of 50% to 60%.

It simply isn't fair. And when we asked for negotiations the Universities refused to budge on their proposed system. That is why—with great reluctance—we are on the picket lines rather than in the lecture theatres.

Our concern isn't just for ourselves. It is for the future of our profession. We are proud of St Andrews as a world class institution. That is reflected in the way that top academics from around the world want to come and work here. But already people are saying that they can't afford to come here under the new pensions system. Others are talking of leaving and going back home. Yet others are talking of leaving the University system altogether.

So who will be left if these pension changes go through?  
Will we still attract the best staff as well as the best students? Who will teach you when you come to St Andrews?



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# What you can do:

If you want to know more, email us on [ucu@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:ucu@st-andrews.ac.uk)

If you want to help us reach a fair settlement you can do the following things:

1. Write to the Principal of the University and ask her to support negotiations for a fair pension settlement on [principal@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:principal@st-andrews.ac.uk)
2. Follow us at [facebook.com/standrewsucu/](https://facebook.com/standrewsucu/)
3. Write to your MP and ask him or her to urge the University employers to reach a fair pensions settlement



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