Dear Principal, George Boyne,

As a student at the University of Aberdeen, I would like to bring a few concerns I have to your attention.

Firstly, I am concerned about the impact the ongoing University and College Union (UCU) industrial action is having and will continue to have on my education. 14 days of strike action, over a month-period will have serious consequences for my performance in assignments and exams. I would like to be clear that while I am concerned about the impact the strikes are having on my education,I do not blame our staff but the conditions they work in. I do not believe that it is okay to have my lecturers worry about their pension or my tutors needing to worry about their next employment due to their unfair and exploitative contracts.

While I acknowledge the effort of the University to work with UCU, I think the University can do more to influence the Universities UK (UUK) and Universities and College Employers Association (UCEA) to address all the demands of UCU members so strike actions do not have to continue. I support the striking lecturers, librarians and professional staff as I believe staff should **be paid fairly**, their **pension protected** and their **working conditions improved.**

Research from UCU shows across the University sector, about [half of academics](https://www.ucu.org.uk/stampout) are employed on casual contracts, pay has fallen by 17% in the last decade and research an analysis from the Times Higher Education states there is still an [astonishing 15.1%](https://www.ucu.org.uk/genderpay) gender pay gap. I am asking that the management of Aberdeen University do all they can to ensure better conditions for the staff by meeting their demands and thus avoid more disruption to their students’ learning.These strikes are not only important for current staff but also for **future generations of academics**, which includes many of us students. For students who wish to remain in academia, these strikes will affect our **future work life and we want to inherit a better working environment.**

I also want all of the docked salary to be **allocated to specific funds** accessible to students, such as the **International Hardship Fund** as the Aberdeen UCU (AUCU) branch has suggested. I want **transparency** and ask the University to make a public statement to be clear on where these funds will be used.

Lastly, I would like to voice my concern over the growing commercialisation of education. I believe that universities should be a place of learning and that students should not simply be viewed as consumers. However, this does not seem to be a shared view and if I'm treated as a customer, I will treat the University as any business I do not want to support. Therefore, I do not feel comfortable paying for a service that does not deliver fair compensation to their workers. If you cannot do so, as a “customer” I shall withhold as much money from this institution as possible. I will actively promote the idea that students should boycott shops and installations on campus as to withhold their proceeds.

Please support your staff and support your students,

Yours,