



Hardship Fund applications: Guidance for Applicants

Introduction

In support of industrial action, the Officers of HWUCU have the discretion to agree that compensatory payments can be made from a local Hardship Fund to those members who have had pay deducted as a result of the member's participation in industrial action.

As the UCU national [Fighting Fund](#) does not provide cover for all days of a dispute, a local Hardship Fund has been established to provide support for this period. As per the national Fighting Fund, the maximum daily claim limit is capped at £50.

The union endeavors to give priority of payment to members most in need (e.g. lower paid or casual staff, members on insecure contracts etc.)

Eligibility

To be eligible to make a claim against the Hardship Fund, you must meet the following criteria:

- Be a current and fully paid up / fee waived member.
- Have taken part in the industrial action called by the union in the dispute concerned.
- Have been docked pay for each day of the claim
- Be able to supply a scanned copy, or photocopy, of your pay slip(s) showing the gross amount of pay deducted in respect of each day's participation in the action.
- Have not submitted a claim to the national Fighting fund for the same period (i.e. no 'double claiming' for the loss of earnings).
- Submit a claim within 3 months of the date of loss of pay.

The Officers may set an upper limit for the daily maximum claimable. Currently, the maximum daily rate is £50. **Payments will only be made in respect of the first three working days of action for full time members of staff (*pro rata** for part time members of staff). Claims out with this period must be made to the national UCU [Fighting Fund](#).**

* The *pro rata* principle will be applied where appropriate.

When you submit a claim, your membership will automatically be checked and no claim can be met for members who are in arrears of subscriptions. Before you claim, therefore, check to ensure you are paying the correct level of subscription according to your earnings and you are up to date with your subscriptions.

If you cannot locate your membership number, please either log in or register [here](#) or email membership@ucu.org.uk.

How can claims be submitted?

To submit a claim, please apply using the HWUCU Hardship claim form and send it to ucu@hw.ac.uk. We will process and respond to all claim applications as quickly as we can.

What evidence is needed to support a claim for compensation?

Applications to the Hardship Fund must be accompanied by evidence of pay deduction (i.e. copies of the relevant pay slip(s) from Heriot-Watt University). This is essential to avoid liability for tax on the compensation paid. **Claims cannot be paid without this evidence.** However, we can assure you that your pay slip(s) will be treated in a strictly confidential manner.

If you send a copy your pay slip(s) by post, we regret we cannot return these to you as we need to retain them for audit and HMRC purposes.

How will my claim be assessed?

Applications for assistance made to the Hardship Fund will be assessed in confidence by a Panel of three committee members, including the Branch President or their nominee, and the Branch Treasurer. The Panel's decision will be final.

In what circumstances might claims be rejected?

Claims not accompanied by the evidence of pay slip(s) showing the deductions will be rejected. In those circumstances, you will need to send us the relevant pay slip(s) before your claim can be processed.

Claims from

- non-members
- members in arrears of their subscription
- members not paying the correct UCU subscription according to their annual earnings

will not be paid

All claim decisions are at the discretion of the local Branch and subject to available funds. HWUCU reserves the right not to meet a claim if it is not satisfied about the eligibility of the claimant, the details of the claim itself or the supporting evidence.

How will successful claims be paid?

Claimants will be notified if their claim has been successful. We will endeavor to make payment of funds within 3 weeks of an application being received. Payments will be made by cheque and made out to the name of the applicant. Collection will be made by arrangement with the HWUCU Branch administrator's office.

Special circumstances

If you are in particular need of financial assistance resulting from the docked pay, for example if you are hourly paid and lost a significant proportion of your weekly earnings, you will be given priority of payment. Please provide details in the special circumstances section on the claim form. We may ask you for additional evidence in these circumstances. In no case can payments be made in excess of your actual loss.

Will I need to refund HWUCU if Heriot-Watt University repays the deducted pay?

No, you will not need to repay any payment you receive from the Hardship Fund. However, if Heriot-Watt University does repay you the deducted pay, HWUCU asks that you consider making a donation to the Hardship Fund to help support members in future industrial action.

Contacting us

If you need to contact us please email ucu@hw.ac.uk or phone 0131 451 3014 and make sure to include your UCU membership number in all correspondence. Further details can be found [here](#).