

TO: Assembly

FROM: Seun Twins, Jack Ballingham, Charlie Procter, Declan Merrington, Jonah Graham

RE: Durham SU policy position on UCU industrial action

DATE: 11 November 2021

Durham SU Notes

1. That the University and Colleges Union (UCU) have recently conducted a ballot for industrial action including strike action and action short of a strike (ASOS).
2. As well as continuing to protect pensions, which was the focus for the 2018 UCU strikes, staff are also balloting over the 'four fights'¹;
 - i. Addressing gender, ethnic and disability pay gaps for university staff
 - ii. End contract casualisation and rising job insecurity
 - iii. Tackle rising workloads
 - iv. Fair pay
3. In 2018 Durham Students' Union passed policy to support UCU's strike action²

Durham SU believes

1. Many Durham postgraduate research student are adversely affected by the issues raised particularly in UCU's Four Fights campaign, and as dual members of Durham SU and UCU they will be entitled to vote in the ballot and engage in any industrial action.

Durham SU resolves

1. Durham SU supports the University and College Union because we want great people to be in great jobs, making our education excellent. Our staff deserve secure and equitable work and their pension contributions protected.
2. No UCU member will engage in industrial action lightly, and we respect and support the difficult decision they have made. We know that striking is always the last option. This dispute must be resolved, through negotiation, as soon as possible.
3. There is no contradiction in supporting UCU's campaign goals whilst recognising that ongoing strike action could harm students' education. Students won't have had a 'normal' education for three years, and they deserve the full Durham experience. The quicker the dispute can be resolved, the better for students and staff.
4. The Durham SU Officers will make every effort to advocate for the continued quality of teaching and learning, for reasonable adjustment in assessments, and to represent the interests of all members (including postgraduate research students) to the University administration.

1) <https://www.ucu.org.uk/hedisputes>

2) [Durham SU update: UCU strike action policy @ Durham SU](#)

The background image shows a modern university building with a prominent skybridge. The scene is captured in a dark, blue-tinted style, with dense foliage in the foreground and background. The skybridge is a long, elevated walkway supported by a central pillar, extending from the building towards the right side of the frame. The building itself has a mix of brick and concrete, with several windows visible. The overall atmosphere is quiet and academic.

DURHAM \$U

INTRO TO ASSEMBLY

What is the purpose of Assembly?

Assembly is...

- **...the body who deliberate and discuss complex policy positions**
- **...a representative body who present the views of the students they represent on DSU policy**
- **...a place to bring things students care about to the forefront of the Student Officers' work**
- **...an opportunity to hold the elected student officers accountable for their work**

Ultra Vires

"beyond the powers."

Describes actions taken by government bodies, charities or corporations that exceed the scope of power given to them by laws or corporate charters.

Further reading [here](#)

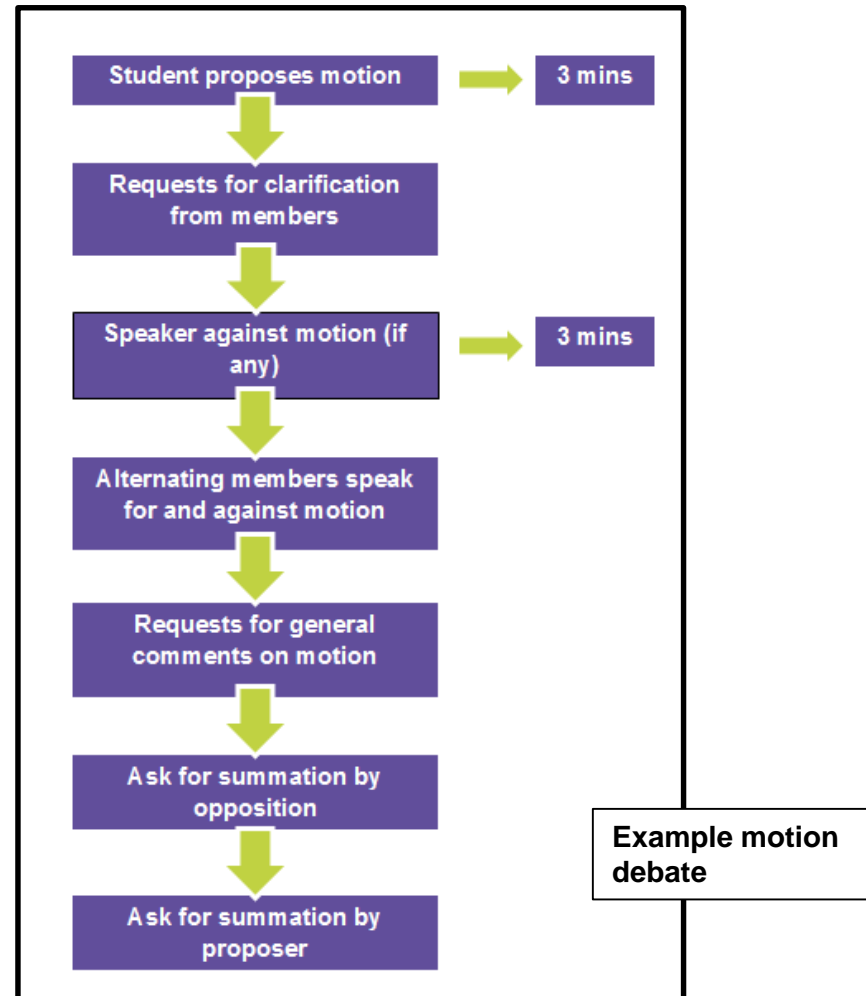
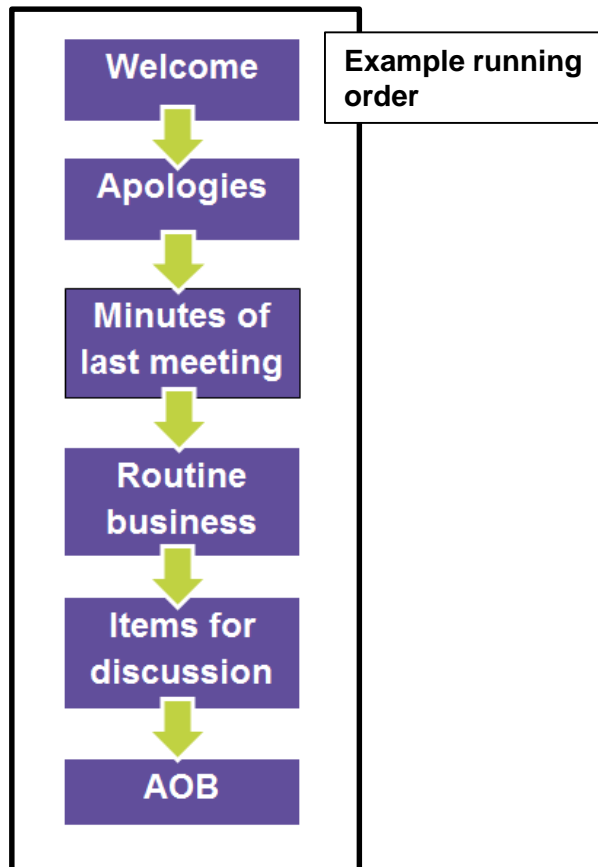
INTRO TO ASSEMBLY

How does it work?



INTRO TO ASSEMBLY

How does it work?



Procedural Motions

The procedural motions below may be proposed. A procedural motion must have the support of five Assembly members to be debated and voted on. A vote on a procedural motion must not itself be held by secret ballot.

The motions are as follows, in decreasing order of precedence:

- I. To suspend the rules (requires a two-thirds majority),
- II. A vote of no confidence in the chair
- III. To overturn a ruling of the Chair,
- IV. To vote on a question by secret ballot (requires a two-thirds majority),
- V. To not vote on a question,
- VI. To suspend or revoke a guillotine,
- VII. To recess the meeting for a specified amount of time,
- VIII. To vote on a question in specific parts,
- IX. To vote on a question by roll call (requires only one-third of votes),
- X. To move to a vote

Assembly Website

Assembly Hub - <https://www.durhamsu.com/voice/assembly>

Current Policy - <https://www.durhamsu.com/assembly/policies>

Key Resources - <https://www.durhamsu.com/voice/assembly/assembly-resources>

Assembly Papers - <https://www.durhamsu.com/main-menu/voice/assembly/assembly-papers>

Email address: dsu.governance@durham.ac.uk

INTRO TO ASSEMBLY

General Conduct

1. If you are unable to attend a meeting, please send a delegate and inform us 4 days before the meeting by emailing dsu.governance@durham.ac.uk
2. If you are unable to send a delegate, please send your apologies in advance by emailing dsu.governance@durham.ac.uk
3. Access breaks will be included wherever possible within the time constraints of the agenda, actioned by the chair
4. If you wish to speak (i.e. for or against a motion, to ask a question) please raise your hand and you will be called upon by the Chair