

Social History Society
Lancaster University
LANCASTER
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22 June 2023

Dear Professor Forster,

We are writing on behalf of the Social History Society, one of the UK's leading learned societies in the historical discipline, which has represented social and cultural historians since 1976.

Our members include faculty and students based at the University of Essex. Your university also recently celebrated our society's last book prize, which was won by Professor Lucy Noakes from the Department of History.

We are holding our annual conference at the University of Essex between 5-7 July 2023. This is the peak of our annual activity and usually the largest gathering of social and cultural historians in the UK. We have over 150 delegates registered for this showcase event, made possible by support from Essex historians and the Essex conferencing team. We have invested around £15,000 in this event and your university will also benefit from the accommodation income.

We are aware that the University of Essex UCU branch had called strike action during these days and are still facing up to 80 per cent pay deductions for participating in the Marking and Assessment Boycott called as part of UCU's national dispute about pay and conditions.

We write to let you know that our membership strongly supports the right to legal industrial action and the academic principle of work being marked, moderated and externally examined by specialists.

On behalf of the Social History Society, we wish to express solidarity with staff taking industrial action at Essex during this period. We call on you to engage in constructive negotiations with the local UCU branch and remove the threat of punitive pay deductions.

We have also written to the Essex UCU branch to explain our position and offer them our warmest support. We intend to publish a version of this letter on our website.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Naomi Tadmor (Chair of the Social History Society)
Professor Georgina Brewis (Honorary Secretary of the Social History Society)
Dr Rachel Bright (Treasurer of the Social History Society)
Dr Henry Irving (Communications Secretary of the Social History Society)