

IFUT PICKETING GUIDELINES 2026

Official guidance for members,
branch officers and picket captains



PEOPLE
STRONGER
TOGETHER



VOICE
FOR A FAIRER
HIGHER EDUCATION



CHANGE
THROUGH
SOLIDARITY

*Together
for a Fairer
Higher Education*



**PRACTICAL
GUIDANCE**



**SAFETY &
WELLBEING**



**SUPPORT
AT EVERY STAGE**





IFUT

Irish Federation of University Teachers
Cónaidhm Éireannach na Múinteoirí Ollscoile

IFUT PICKETING GUIDELINES 2026

FAIR CONDITIONS |
STRONGER UNIVERSITIES |
TOGETHER

PURPOSE, LEGAL BASIS & SCOPE

PRACTICAL GUIDANCE. SAFER PICKETS. STRONGER TOGETHER.



1. PURPOSE OF A PICKET

The purpose of a picket is to communicate, in a peaceful and disciplined way, that an official dispute exists, to explain the reasons for the dispute, and to ask others to respect the picket. A picket is not an end in itself: it is part of a wider strategy of collective action and persuasion.



2. LEGAL BASIS

Picketing must be carried out in

- contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute.
- It must be conducted for the purpose of peacefully obtaining or communicating information, or peacefully persuading a person to work or abstain from working.
- Legal protection depends on members and officials acting within the law and within union instructions.
- Only official, union-sanctioned pickets should take place.



3. WHO MAY TAKE PART

- Employees of the employer in dispute.
- Head office staff and officers of IFUT representing those employees.
- Authorised IFUT representatives assisting with organisation and compliance.



4. WHERE PICKETING MAY TAKE PLACE

- At a place where the employer works or carries on business.
- Where that is not practicable, at the approaches to such a place.
- At a site where members may never have worked personally, provided the employer carries on business there.
- Picket locations should be agreed in advance by the branch / strike committee and Head Office.



CORE PRINCIPLES

Lawful ● Peaceful ● Disciplined ● Informative ● Collective



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CONDUCT, DISCIPLINE & PICKET ORGANISATION

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5. CONDUCT ON THE PICKET LINE

- Picketing must be peaceful at all times.
- The object is to inform and persuade — not to intimidate, obstruct or harass.
- Members should be courteous and calm when dealing with colleagues, students, contractors, delivery personnel, the public, security staff and Gardaí.
- There must be no threatening, abusive or insulting behaviour, and no physical obstruction of persons or vehicles.
- Alcohol or drugs must not be consumed on a picket line.
- Members should follow the directions of the designated picket captain.



DO

- ✓ Explain the dispute calmly.
- ✓ Ask others to respect the picket.
- ✓ Wear or display official IFUT material.
- ✓ Keep entrances visible but safe.
- ✓ Report problems immediately.



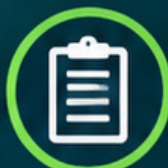
DON'T

- ✗ Do not obstruct entry or exit.
- ✗ Do not intimidate or threaten anyone.
- ✗ Do not engage in mass picketing.
- ✗ Do not speak to the media unless authorised.
- ✗ Do not post inaccurate information online.



6. NUMBERS, ROSTERS & PICKET CAPTAINS

- Numbers should not exceed what is reasonably required.
- Mass picketing is not permissible.
- Rosters and locations should be agreed by the branch / strike committee in consultation with Head Office.
- Each picket should have a designated picket captain or local lead.



ROLE OF THE PICKET CAPTAIN

- Brief members and maintain discipline.
- Coordinate rosters and sign-in.
- Act as point of contact with Head Office.
- Record incidents or concerns.
- Ensure the picket remains lawful and proportionate.



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COMMUNICATIONS, SAFETY & COMPLIANCE

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7. COMMUNICATIONS, SIGNS & MEDIA

- Use official IFUT materials wherever possible.
- Communicate the dispute accurately and succinctly.
- Refer media enquiries to the authorised IFUT spokesperson or Head Office unless a local spokesperson has been designated.
- Exercise care on social media. Do not publish confidential information, defamatory statements or inaccurate content.



8. DEALING WITH OTHERS

- The object of the picket is to secure respect and solidarity, not confrontation.
- Members may ask colleagues, workers in other employments, contractors and the public to respect the picket, but they must remain free to make their own decision.
- Students should be treated respectfully and given factual information where appropriate.
- If a person becomes hostile or aggressive, refer the matter to the picket captain.



9. HEALTH, SAFETY & WELFARE

- Take account of weather, traffic, visibility, accessibility and personal safety.
- Wear weather-appropriate clothing and any high-visibility gear provided by the union where required.
- Consider breaks, water and welfare arrangements when organising rosters.
- Report any accident, near miss or safety concern immediately.



10. RECORDS & COMPLIANCE

- Retain a sign-in sheet for those undertaking picket duty.
- Record any incident involving management, security, Gardaí, contractors or the public.
- Members are expected to comply with these guidelines and any dispute-specific instructions issued by IFUT.



11. IF PROBLEMS ARISE

- Refer questions immediately to the picket captain, branch officers or Head Office.
- If the lawful right to picket is challenged, contact IFUT immediately.
- All queries should be directed to admin@ifut.ie.



**A disciplined picket line
is part of our collective strength.**

