



Advice in Cases of Industrial Action by Other Trade Unions

We would therefore wish to use this opportunity to remind members of the AEP's policy with respect to industrial action by the members of any other trade union.

Association advice to members

The AEP's advice to members who may be faced with the prospect of non-AEP colleagues taking any form of industrial action comes in two parts -- a "General Principle" and a "Golden Rule".

The 'General Principle'

The "General Principle" that members are advised to follow when faced with the prospect of colleagues taking any form of industrial action is to **try to do nothing which would undermine, or otherwise invalidate, that industrial action.**

This general advice is given because:

1. To show solidarity, members of the AEP, as Trade Unionists, should, **on principle**, do nothing which would be to the detriment of the actions of other Trade Unionists, and
2. If the AEP undertakes any action, we would hope to receive similar support from other Trade Union members.

The 'Golden Rule'

The Golden Rule to which all members are strongly urged to adhere is that members should do **nothing** which might either jeopardise their own employment situation or damage the AEP.

For example, "coming out in sympathy" with another Union, or joining them on their picket line, may constitute so-called "secondary action". Such action could result in a breach of contract and/or industrial misconduct. If the breach of contract or industrial misconduct is thought sufficiently serious by one's employer, it could result in a "fair" dismissal of that employee from work. Similarly, if the actions of members were thought by employers to be detrimental to their interests and their ability to deliver services to their clients, those employers could apply to the Courts for AEP funds to be sequestered.

General advice to members – on industrial action of others

Simultaneously following both the "General Principle" and the "Golden Rule" as defined above may prove difficult. However, here are a few words of advice which might prove helpful. They will not be definitive advice to cover every possible situation.

- Members should try, wherever possible, to avoid crossing any other Union's picket lines.
- Dates of strike action have been announced: [NEU to take strike action over pay | NEU and Pay Attention - Pay Campaign 2022/23 \(eis.org.uk\)](#). Members are therefore encouraged to try to arrange their diaries so that the need to cross a picket line is avoided. For example, they could arrange to spend the whole of that day either in the office, working from home or on a CPD day.
- If any member were not able to avoid crossing another Union's picket line, (for example, if a very tricky statutory visit has been scheduled for a day of action), they could express support for those

who are picketing and explain that they not involved in the strikes. It is perfectly permissible to express support for the strikers' cause, while explaining the necessity of the visit. If your safety is threatened by those who are on the picket line, you should return to your office and report the matter to your manager as soon as possible'

Members can offer moral support and solidarity outside of their contracted hours to visit fellow Trade Unionists on a picket line.

This guidance could never be wholly definitive. The overall guidance to AEP members is that behaviour at work should, at all times, be "reasonable". If specific instances arise that members are unsure about, they should refer, in the first place, to their local representative. Alternatively, please contact enquiries@aep.org.uk