

Public statement from Hartwig Fischer ahead of planned industrial action by the PCS Union from 13-19 February

Next week members of the Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS) are planning strike action from the 13 to 19 February. As some British Museum employees are PCS members, this action is likely to cause disruption to our visitor offer. I respect my colleagues' right to take this action, but I am disappointed that the British Museum is being made a focal point for a dispute about wider public sector terms and conditions which are beyond its control.

We have taken the difficult decision to cancel our programme of free half-term events and activities next week to avoid last minute disappointment for visitors. This is not a decision we have taken lightly.

I will be working hard with colleagues on each day of the planned industrial action to provide some access to our permanent galleries and temporary exhibitions. In the event we cannot open all, or parts, of the Museum this will be communicated as early as possible on our website. We have also taken the decision that entry to the Museum from 13 to 19 February will only be available to pre-booked ticket holders, members, and supporters. To find out more about available tickets (both for the permanent collection and our special exhibition) please visit our website at: <https://www.britishmuseum.org/visit>.

In the current climate access to free visitor attractions has never been more important. I am deeply sorry for all those families whose visits to the Museum will be disrupted during the half term holidays.