

PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday 2 November 2016

Colleges Scotland calls on support staff to accept improved final offer and call off strike action

Colleges Scotland Employers' Association is calling on the unions representing college support staff to accept the revised, final 2016/17 offer that will see those earning under £22,000 receive £500 and those earning £22,000 or over receive 1.5%.

The final offer has been devised in good faith as a result of the recent discussions with unions, facilitated by ACAS.

Colleges Scotland is urging UNISON, UNITE and GMB to end the dispute, rule out further industrial action and take this improved offer back to members.

College employers are committed to reach an agreement as soon as possible so that progress can be made in addressing the wider employment issues in the sector such as a National Job Evaluation Scheme and National Pay Scales. These key objectives, which are crucial to developing the Workforce for the Future, have been adversely affected by ongoing Cost of Living negotiations.

Shona Struthers, Colleges Scotland Chief Executive, said: "This is a fair, reasonable and equitable offer which sees everyone in the sector receive at least a 2.5% pay increase – mindful of the current challenging financial environment. This new and final offer exceeds Public Sector Pay Policy and is on a par with what school teachers and college lecturers are receiving. Crucially, it is heavily weighted to benefit those support staff at the lower end of the pay scale.

"We recognise that college support staff already work extremely hard for the benefit of Scotland's 227,000 students. We urge the unions to rule out further industrial action and encourage them to put this offer to their members. We are keen to agree this deal and move on to further develop terms & conditions at a national level."

Notes to editors:

The Colleges Scotland Employers Association 2016/17 pay offer for support staff:

- A consolidated uplift of 1.5% for all employees earning £22,000 per annum or more.
- A consolidated uplift of £500 for all employees earning less than £22,000 per annum.
- A total, minimum leave entitlement of 36 days in total.

If the full two year reference period (2015/16 and 2016/17) is considered for college support staff, this means:

- For 2015/16 1% or £300 whichever is the greater.
- For 2015/16 all support staff employees had an additional 2 days unconsolidated leave.
- Many employees reduced their working week to 35 hrs per week, with no deduction in pay.
- All directly employed staff receive the Living Wage.
- Employees earning less than £22,000 will receive 3.6% (£800) over the two year pay period.
- In % terms, those above £22,000 will receive a minimum of 2.5%.

ENDS

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