

**Tuesday 11 April 2017**

**Strike action hugely disappointing when a substantial pay rise for all was guaranteed**

Commenting on the outcome of the EIS ballot for strike action, a spokesperson for the Colleges Scotland Employers' Association, said:

"It is hugely disappointing that the EIS are planning to take strike action that will badly affect college students in the run up to their exams. We have already agreed an average pay rise of 9% over the next two years, but the EIS wants to strike to also get an increase in holidays to 66 days and a reduction in class contact time to 21 hours. The employers are offering 56 days holiday and up to 26 hours class contact time, which we believe is a good package that would be warmly welcomed in other sectors.

"Time and again we have tried to engage with the EIS on pay and conditions of service, but they remain unwilling to discuss change to professionalise the sector and deliver better value to students and the public purse.

"Our door remains open and we are happy to continue discussions with the EIS, but they have to accept that we both signed up to a total package in March 2016, including changes to terms and conditions, not a pay-only deal. We agreed to pay the £40,000 top salary on the proviso that there would be changes to terms and conditions of service. There must be a spirit of give and take, it cannot simply be a one-way street."

**ENDS**

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**Notes:**

- There are now only three outstanding items still to be agreed. These are:
  - salary conservation
  - annual leave
  - working hours.
- The agreement reached in March 2016 was not just a 'pay' agreement, it was a total package of changes. The EIS interpretation of the agreement is inaccurate.
- As salaries are harmonised, pay increases for lecturers (excluding any cost of living increases) are guaranteed for the next two years.
- The employers are committed to paying lecturing staff the money agreed in March 2016 and this will be applied from 1 April 2016 and backdated if necessary. However, it can only be paid when the total package has been agreed.
- As they stand, the EIS demands include 66 days' annual leave and 21 hours' class contact per week. The employers are offering 56 days annual leave and 26 hours contact time along with the substantial pay rise.