

## MSP Briefing: Update on Strikes and National Bargaining in the College Sector – May 2017

### Key Facts

- The opportunity to deliver harmonised terms and conditions for lecturers across Scotland is being held up by the industrial action.
- On top of the average 9% pay increase for lecturing staff already agreed, Colleges Scotland is offering 56 days annual holiday (with no detriment to current staff) and 24 hours teaching time per week, which is the sector norm.
- The EIS had refused to link pay and conditions of service, though the union has now accepted that terms and conditions are an integral part of the deal that was agreed in March 2016.
- The EIS is undertaking a programme of industrial action, which will affect student assessments, exams and coursework.
- Students are very concerned that the strike action will impact on their courses – this is a critical time for them and their future.
- Colleges are doing everything to minimise the impact on students and have contingency plans in place to ensure that exams are not disrupted.

### Background

The employers signed an [Agreement](#) with the EIS in March 2016 which included measures to harmonise lecturers pay across the country (giving most a generous pay rise) and make changes to their terms and conditions of service. The EIS want the salary uplift to be implemented but oppose proposals by the employers to review terms and conditions of service. Talks to agree the detail of the March 2016 Agreement have been ongoing since that time.

Employers are keen to resolve the industrial dispute as quickly as possible. The EIS agreed to the employers' offer to use the services of ACAS to try and settle the current industrial dispute. One meeting has been held through ACAS to date. The employers remain happy to discuss the pay and conditions package with the EIS at any time. Talks are continuing between the employers and the EIS through the National Joint Negotiating Committee.

The EIS is undertaking a programme of discontinuous industrial action because it believes that lecturers should be awarded an average 9% pay increase over the next two years without any changes to their terms and conditions. This is on top of demands for 66 days holiday and weekly teaching time to 21 hours, when the sector norm is 24 hours teaching time per week. All but four colleges are already on 24 hours teaching time per week.

The proposal on the table from the employers is as follows:

Terms and Conditions		Staff in post at 31 July 2017	New Employees from 1 August 2017
<b>Salary Conservation*</b>		Where a member of staff is currently in receipt of existing local salary conservation arrangements these will be retained.	3 years at cash value.
<b>Annual Leave</b>	<b>Unpromoted Lecturers*</b>	Retain existing local terms.	56 days per annum.
	<b>Promoted Lecturers*</b>	Retain existing local terms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 1 – 51 days per annum.</li> <li>• Level 2 – 51 days per annum.</li> <li>• Level 3 – 45 days per annum.</li> </ul>
<b>Class Contact</b>	<b>Unpromoted Lecturers</b>	24 hours class contact with annual hours of 880 (based on the Management Side interpretation of class contact).	24 hours class contact with annual hours of 880 (based on the Management Side interpretation of class contact).
	<b>Promoted Lecturers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 1 – Up to 18 hours per week.</li> <li>• Level 2 – Up to 15 hours per week.</li> <li>• Level 3 – Up to 12 hours per week.</li> </ul> <p>(Note – from 1 August 2017 or date of appointment through matching process if differs)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 1 – Up to 18 hours per week.</li> <li>• Level 2 – Up to 15 hours per week.</li> <li>• Level 3 – Up to 12 hours per week.</li> </ul> <p>(Note – from 1 August 2017 or date of appointment through matching process if differs)</p>

*Note: Any contractual move to another post and or college/employer means that existing local arrangements would cease.*

## Progress to Date

A National Pay Scale and migration plan has been jointly developed, and pay is guaranteed for college lecturers. However, in order to implement this, there has to be agreement on terms and conditions of service which is an integral part of the Agreement reached in March 2016.

Despite the clear differences, good progress has been made and, subject to an Equality Impact Assessment on the whole Agreement, there are only three areas that remain outstanding for further discussions and agreement. These are:

- Working Hours
- Annual Leave
- Salary Conservation.

We are open to having constructive negotiations with the EIS, however the terms of the Agreement must be implemented in full. It is a total package, with salary and changes to conditions of service being inextricably linked.

## Strike Dates

The EIS has already undertaken four days of discontinuous industrial action. Future planned strike dates are as follows:

- Tuesday 16 May and Wednesday 17 May 2017
- Tuesday 23 May, Wednesday 24 May and Thursday 25 May 2017
- Tuesday 30 May, Wednesday 31 May and Thursday 1 June 2017.

## **Impact of Strikes**

We are keen to ensure that the impact of the EIS strike action is as limited as possible and colleges have contingency plans in place to ensure the disruption is minimal. As it is only some lecturing staff who are taking strike action, all our colleges remain open for use, however some may be operating a reduced timetable on strike days.

Students are very concerned that the strike action will impact on their assessments and coursework – this is a critical time for them and their future. All colleges have contingency plans in place and will be taking all measures possible to minimise the disruption to student progress, such as the use of online teaching. However, there can be no doubt that the EIS action will have a serious impact on student learning at a critical time in their academic year.

Employers' Association  
May 2017