

Disappointment as Strike Action Goes Ahead

On the first day of EIS strike action in Scotland's colleges, a spokesperson for the Colleges Scotland Employers' Association said:

"It is hugely disappointing that the EIS is taking strike action that will affect college students at this critical time. Colleges across Scotland are doing everything they can to minimise the disruption to students, who are currently preparing for their exams and finishing coursework.

"The strike is completely unnecessary and inappropriate at a time when we are currently engaged in ACAS talks with the EIS to try and resolve this dispute. Harmonisation of pay and conditions is a complex process that requires compromise, not strikes and disruption.

"We are, however, pleased that the EIS now recognises the agreement reached in March 2016 is a 'deal on pay and conditions', because that is the simple reality.

"We have already agreed to an average pay rise of 9% over the next two years, but the EIS is striking to also secure an increase to 66 days holiday and a reduction in teaching class contact time to 21 hours.

"The employers have agreed to pay the £40,000 top salary, plus a generous package that would provide 56 days holiday and 24 hours teaching class contact time, with the facility to timetable up to 26 hours in any eight week period. That is a very good deal by any standards.

"The EIS claim that 'the funding is sitting in college bank accounts' for the March 2016 agreement, but that is factually wrong.

"The EIS should call an end to this unnecessary industrial action, get back round the negotiation table with employers' and allow students to get on with their studies."

ENDS

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Notes:

- 'deal on pay and conditions' is stated in the EIS News Release dated Thursday 27 April 2017
- Larry Flanagan, general secretary of EIS is quoted as saying 'the funding is sitting in college bank accounts' in the BBC article - College lecturers' strike to go ahead after talks fail <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-39714231>