

**Wednesday 20 March 2019**

**Comment on Open Letter to Lecturers**

Alex Linkston, Chair of Colleges Scotland Employers' Association, said:

"We've taken the unusual step of writing directly to the lecturers ourselves as the EIS-FELA continually misrepresent the pay offers colleges are making. The fourth day of EIS-FELA strike action of 2019 is looming on Thursday 21 March, but they have never actually taken any of our offers to their members to see if they would accept them.

"Colleges are gravely concerned with the direction the EIS-FELA is heading in as they are committed to withholding assessment results if they receive a mandate from their members for action short of strike action.

"Such a course of action would severely affect students in the sector as without external verification by awarding bodies, they would be unable to achieve their qualifications, meaning they would be unable to move on to other courses at college or university, finalise their apprenticeships or move into jobs. This cannot be right, and we believe many lecturers will be aghast at this ploy, and, if so, we ask them to make it clear to their EIS-FELA branches they do not want to put the students at such a disadvantage.

"Lecturers in Scotland are by far the best paid in the UK, and the pay harmonisation rises from 2017 to 2020, combined with the current pay offer on the table from colleges, equates to a national average increase of over £5,000, but the EIS-FELA has rejected this and refuses to make any concessions or compromises at all. We are urging lecturers to make it clear to the EIS-FELA that it is finally time for them to engage meaningfully and actually negotiate."

**ENDS**

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