

Monday 10 June 2019

EIS-FELA Members Approve Colleges' Offer and End Industrial Action

Members of the Educational Institute of Scotland Further Education Lecturers' Association (EIS-FELA) have voted to approve the total package offer from colleges and immediately end the industrial action which has affected the college sector since January 2019.

The offer was ratified by Colleges Scotland Employers' Association on behalf of colleges last week, so both sides have now reached agreement on pay, and terms and conditions.

Under the terms of the agreement, all lecturers will receive £400 unconsolidated and £1,500 consolidated – covering a period of three years and five months – and on the terms and conditions, there is clarification on flexible working arrangements and observation of learning.

The deal runs from 1 April 2017 to 31 August 2020, bringing the pay period for lecturers in line with support staff workers, but the additional £17.5 million cost of the deal will all have to be met by colleges making cuts and, as last week's Audit Scotland report, *Scotland's Colleges 2019* highlighted, colleges are already facing considerable financial challenges.

Commenting, Shona Struthers, Chief Executive of Colleges Scotland Employers' Association, said:

“We very much welcome this agreement which ends the EIS-FELA's industrial action and restores some stability to the sector. We are especially pleased for the students who have been adversely affected by the EIS-FELA's strike action and its action short of strike action. The £17.5 million this deal is costing all comes from colleges making cuts, which will be challenging as the sector is already under considerable financial pressures.

“Colleges' total package deal with the EIS-FELA gives lecturers an extra £1,900, while providing clarity around flexible working and observation of learning.

“Lecturers in Scotland are the best paid in the UK, earning approximately £10,000 more than their English counterparts, and the pay harmonisation rises from 2017 to 2020, combined with the improved pay deal agreed with the EIS-FELA, equate to a national average increase of over £5,000 – or more than 13%.

“Lecturers have already also had significant improvements in terms and conditions over the same 2017-20 pay period, including the introduction of 62 days' holiday per year and 23 hours per week class contact time.”

ENDS

Notes to Editor:

The significant financial pressures facing the sector were highlighted by Audit Scotland in its report published on Tuesday 4 June 2019. A copy of the report can be found at <https://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/news/colleges-financial-challenges-increase>

Pay Offer Details:

The combined pay rises from harmonisation and the pay offer agreed in principle increases the top of the unpromoted lecturer scale to £41,526 from April 2019, with over 90% of lecturers across Scotland at the top of the scale.

Years 1 & 2: 1st April 2017 – 31st March 2019

Lecturers will receive a combined unconsolidated payment of £400.

Year 3 + 5 months: 1st April 2019 – 31st August 2020

Lecturers will receive a consolidated payment of £1,500.

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