

**Friday 12 February 2015**

**Colleges Scotland's Statement regarding EIS Strike Ballot for Lecturers in Scotland**

Colleges Scotland is disappointed by the actions of the EIS. The last thing the college sector wants is for students to be disadvantaged by a strike.

The EIS continues to mix negotiations for a reasonable pay offer for 2015/16 with a claim for harmonisation of pay. Their pay claim represents an average pay increase of over 13 per cent across all lecturers. In any walk of life, that is an exceptional claim and in the current financial climate it is completely unrealistic. The EIS is not prepared to discuss conditions of service at the same time as pay which means that discussion about pay harmonisation across Scotland is not currently possible.

The EIS believe that a 1% increase is not enough. Our existing offer is in line with public sector pay policy, which has been accepted by three other unions already. Unfortunately, the college sector simply does not have access to additional funds to deliver more.

Shona Struthers, Chief Executive of Colleges Scotland, said:

“The college sector is committed to National Bargaining and to addressing pay differentials. However, this cannot be done overnight nor in isolation to conditions of service, which for lecturing staff are very generous. The EIS position is so far from what is realistic that we fear any industrial action will not only detrimentally affect students but also do little to improve lecturers' prospects of reaching a pay settlement this year.”

**ENDS**

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