

# National Bargaining News

Issue 5

October 2015

News from your EIS NJNC negotiators

## Management make another 1% offer

There have been several important developments in the national bargaining process since our last newsletter, and we are now able to announce the first full and final national pay offer for 20 years... [trumpet fanfare!]

Management have changed their initial offer of 1% pay uplift unconsolidated to a final offer of a 1% pay uplift that is consolidated. This comes after protracted delays, promises and dragging of feet.

The offer represents a real-terms pay cut, since RPI has been over 1% for part of the settlement period and is expected to rise for the rest of the settlement period. The 1% pay offer also increases the huge gap in lecturers' pay across the sector—a growing gap of almost £7k per year between the best paid and the lowest in the sector.

The EIS asked for a flat-rated offer so that all lecturing staff had the same. The proposed 1% makes salary harmonisation more difficult since the higher paying colleges will have a larger cash rise than the lower paying colleges.

The EIS negotiators have told the Management Side that they will recommend to Members that the offer should be rejected.

An EIS-FELA Special Conference has been arranged for Friday 13 November. All branches are urged

to send delegates, so that members can decide the way forward—as the EIS is a member led union.

Please use this newsletter—circulate it to members in your college, and print it out for the staffrooms. Talk to members in your college, and encourage those who haven't yet joined the EIS to do so, particularly if they are on temporary or fixed term contracts—we are only as strong as our membership.

### What can I do in my branch?

Talk to members, and recruit to the union. Make sure everyone knows about the offer, and share this newsletter

Invite in speakers from the negotiating team and/or the National Executive.

It has taken political pressure to get us this far. Most of the colleges have now signed the national recognition and procedures agreement (nRPA), a small number of colleges have so far refused, and we need to keep the pressure up to force all colleges to participate fully in the process.

Let's keep the pressure on—come to the Special Conference, as a delegate or participate in Branch meetings to mandate your delegates to vote in the way that you believe.

### There are 7 members of the EIS negotiating team plus two substitutes:

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# What's the claim and how do we get it?

## What are the National Bargaining team trying to achieve?

Our objectives are to secure a real terms pay increase for all lecturers in Scotland and to achieve harmonisation of salaries across Scotland.

Our pay claim is a complex flat cash claim different for each college (it does not consider conditions) and may be worked out for individual lecturers (unpromoted and promoted) by:

- Take the highest paid un-promoted lecturer scale point in Scotland. This is currently **£39,086**.
- Add **2.3%** for RPI in October 2014 when the claim was made and **1%** for a modest real terms pay increase, giving **3.3%** in total.
- 3.3% of £39,096 amounts to **£1290**. This would take the highest un-promoted scale point to **£40,386**.
- **This figure would then become the top of the un-promoted lecturer scale point for every college in Scotland.**

The amount paid to each lecturer would therefore vary from college to college. For each college it would be the amount paid would be the difference between the current top of the un-promoted lecturer scale. For example, members in a college where the top of the un-promoted lecturer scale is currently £38,500 would receive **£1,876** (£40,376-£38,850).

All members in that college, including promoted posts covered by the college's RPA, would receive that amount.

## Can the Colleges afford it?

The colleges can easily afford it. According to Audit Scotland colleges had accumulated historic surpluses totalling £214 million. The management's own figures cost our claim at £18 million, less than 10% of those reserves. We should not forget the £99m salted away last year by colleges into secretive Arms Length Funds (ALFs).

## Will the management pay it without a fight?

Probably not. Already we have had to declare a dispute to try and get the management to make any offer at all.

If we do not receive a credible offer then we will need to move to the next stage which is to ballot on industrial action.

Please note, that this is always a last resort for EIS-FELA. All other possibilities must be exhausted before we would move to this stage.

## What can the members do?

EIS-FELA National Executive members will be trying to visit as many branches as possible. EIS-FELA will try to co-ordinate this activity early in the new academic year. Full details will be included in a subsequent newsletter.

But most importantly, members can help achieve these objectives by actively participating.

- Participate in the ballots
- Vote for the Executive recommendations
- Take industrial action if required
- Participate in picket lines, organised lobbies and demonstrations.

## Are these objectives achievable?

Absolutely. As already stated, the sums involved in meeting our claim are tiny compared with historic reserves.

If all members show resolve to act collectively and demonstrate the will to win then we will achieve our objectives.

## What happens after we achieve our immediate objectives?

There will still be much to do. All members will have received a pay rise, but we will only have achieved harmonisation at the top of the un-promoted scale. We will still have to work to get a completely harmonised scale for all including promoted posts. We will also have to work towards harmonised conditions. However, we will have laid down solid foundations for achieving complete harmonisation in the future based on best practice for all, without detriment to any.