

SNCT Consultative Ballot

Information for Members

Introduction

Members are encouraged to consider the recommendation of the Institute and to **vote to reject the pay offer and move to a statutory ballot for strike action.**

Council, however, agreed to furnish members with key points from both sides of the argument in order to promote genuine debate and discussion. Ultimately, the decision lies with you, the members.

This has been **your** campaign; this is **your** union; and **you** decide what happens next.

Whatever your view, please use your vote.

The points provided are not exhaustive, but they capture some of the key arguments from the debate at Council.

We have built a stronger union through the pay campaign, with a greater capacity to represent and fight for Scottish teachers. Irrespective of what is decided in the ballot, we need to remember that, and remain united as a union and as a profession.

Further information

Members are encouraged to look at the campaign materials, the story of the pay campaign and the FAQs on Industrial Action, all of which can be found at www.eis.org.uk/ValueTeachers

Further information on the ballot can be found at www.eis.org.uk/SNCTBallot

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Arguments to Reject and move to a strike ballot

- The offer of 25th January is not restorative. Take home pay has fallen in real terms by 24% in the past decade (and has continued to fall during these protracted negotiations); our 10% claim is already a compromise.
- The offer is undermined by the fact that inflation, as measured by RPI, has been running just below 3% so overall the value of each of the increases in the three years covered by the new offer is undermined.
- The revised offer does not achieve 10% in one year. Whilst the offer would deliver a headline figure of 6% at the end of 2018-19, as it is end-loaded, only 3% is backdated to April 2018, with the other 3% backdated to January. (The previous offer backdated 2% to August 2018.)
- At the top of the main grade, the current offer, due to the January end-loading date, pays £200 less to teachers in 2018-19 than the previous offer (dated 7th January).
- The improvements from the January 7th offer aren't substantial enough – at the end of the 3-years, the top of the main grade is only £400 better off in the new deal than the one we emphatically rejected in the previous consultative ballot.
- The EIS has built a strong campaign and we should press home our advantage now, as it would be difficult to rebuild such a pay campaign in the near future. Our position might be weakened also, on other issues such as workload without a bigger win on pay.
- We shouldn't be afraid of the Trade Union Act which is designed to intimidate trade unions and prevent strike action. FELA (College Lecturers) have shown what can be achieved.

Arguments to Accept offer

- The current pay offer is the best achievable by negotiation alone and is the best public sector pay settlement in the UK. We risk losing public support if we say “No” to this offer.
- A settlement worth 12.5% (compounded) over 3 years, 9.25% in April of this year, arrests the long-term decline in the value of teachers' pay, giving a real-terms increase to all staff whilst also creating stronger starting salaries to attract new entrants.
- In April 2020 the top of the main grade will be over £41,000 – that's more than £4,500 above the current scale. It achieves one of our benchmark references and is ahead of college lecturers – who also had a 3-year deal after taking 6 days of strike action.
- Sustained strike action may bring only a marginal improvement in the current pay offer and that would be at the cost of pay lost through strike days.
- Brexit could undermine public finances in the near future and therefore having a three year pay deal reduces the risk of poor deals in years 2 and 3. The EIS can signal its intention to reopen negotiations for Year 3 if inflation in a post Brexit scenario exceeds 3%.
- Pay isn't the only issue – we need to take the strength and energy of the campaign and re-focus it on workload and support for ASN.
- The Trade Union Act thresholds (50% participation rate and 40% of entire membership voting Yes to industrial action) present significant challenges if the members are split – and “losing” a statutory ballot could leave us vulnerable.