

## **EIS-FELA INDUSTRIAL ACTION STATUTORY BALLOT STATEMENT**

**Your EIS-FELA Executive Committee is recommending that you vote YES in this statutory ballot for industrial action.**

It took industrial action in March 2016 to deliver the first National Agreement on pay since the early 1990s and a further six days of strike action to force the Management to 'honour the deal' in 2017. Now, the only avenue open to secure a cost of living pay rise for college lecturers in Scotland is further industrial action.

EIS-FELA has been in dispute since December 2017 over a failure to agree a cost of living pay rise. The original pay claim for 2017/18 was submitted in December 2016 and despite a lengthy delay in receiving any response from Management, we continued to demonstrate a willingness to negotiate throughout the dispute resolution process and were even willing to consider a multi-year deal covering the years 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20. In an effort to move negotiations forward, we recently invited Management to make an adjusted offer based on public sector pay policy – acknowledging that this was the approach taken with the Support Staff. Despite these attempts, Management has steadfastly refused to enter into meaningful negotiations, conflating equal pay with a cost of living pay rise.

Management's pay offer consists of a 2.5% consolidated pay increase over three years (to be paid from April 2019) with only unconsolidated payments in 2017 and 2018, for some (but not all) members. Crucially, the offer of £600 for 2017 and £1,000 for 2018 is linked to the harmonisation uplift - whatever you received as part of the harmonisation uplift will be deducted from these figures. If you received more than £600 in 2017 and £1,000 in 2018 through the harmonisation process, you will receive nothing further by way of cost of living pay rise for these years.

Because Management has linked the 2017 and 2018 payments to harmonisation, the impact of the offer will differ from college to college and even within colleges, from pay point to pay point. Full details of what the offer means for you have been sent to your Branch Secretary and we would advise you to contact them or access information on what this offer means for you (<https://www.eis.org.uk/FELA-Consultative-Ballot-On-Pay/Meansforyou>) for further information about the offer and its impact in your college.

This dispute is about a cost of living pay increase and ensuring that lecturers' pay keeps up with inflation. Delivering equal pay in FE does not reflect the rising cost of living. The campaign for equal pay was never intended to result in a pay freeze. The current offer of a 2.5% increase over three years will result in a real terms pay cut and imposes a pay cap on Scottish FE lecturers at a time when the Scottish Government is lifting the cap for the rest of the public sector.

It is not an easy decision to ask members to take industrial action and over recent months, your negotiators have sought to avoid the situation in which we now find ourselves. Movement from your negotiators included consideration of a multi-year deal, resubmission of a pay claim with elements of unconsolidated payments and a clear indication that we are willing to consider an offer based on public sector pay policy. Despite this, the Management has been intransigent and refused to move from its final offer.

At a time when the sector would benefit from stability, it is regrettable that Management are conflating the provision of equal pay across the sector with a cost of living pay increase and have introduced this as a barrier to further negotiation. We need your

support now to fight against what will be for some a pay freeze – vote YES to get the Management to negotiate now for fair pay - 'Negotiate Now – we are public sector too!'

The new trade union law means that we must have over 50% of eligible members voting. Please do not rely on others voting; not voting is now effectively a vote for no action and this will only help the Management Side to impose their sub-inflationary pay offer.

This is another key moment in the struggle to get fair pay for all our members across the Scottish FE sector. The Management Side has shown that they only move when industrial action is threatened or applied. It is the only option left to us.

**VOTE YES! VOTE NOW!**