



Dear Colleague

Our industrial action short of strike action (ASOS) starts tomorrow.

Are you ready to take action to protect lecturer posts at FVC and support your colleagues?

Over the past 6 months, we have been working hard to defend our lecturing profession and hard-won terms and conditions. **We've already had three ballots with overwhelming turnouts and support for action.**

Our reps have been working hard to regularly negotiate with college management in good faith. But no resolution has been reached – instead, management are attempting to undermine your democratic decision to take action, rather than deal with your concerns. **Forth Valley College has also admitted that they will review and potentially replace any vacated lecturer posts with more instructor assessors in the future.**

The only way to protect the role of lecturers in Forth Valley College is for you to take effective action short of strike action, starting tomorrow, Tuesday 10th November 2020.

We've produced a guide to taking action: <https://www.eis.org.uk/Mailings/Advice> including a FAQs. Please read this as it explains that stage 1 of our industrial action is 'working to rule'.

Forth Valley College Stubbornly Refuses to Resolve this Dispute

The College management has sent out another unhelpful response to your local, democratic decision to take Action Short of Strike Action in a video from the Principal which asks staff to consider not taking industrial action and to work alongside each other in these difficult times, and that industrial action will harm the learners and the organisation. The EIS believes that having support staff with no maximum contact hours teaching students will harm student learning. It should be noted that it was the college that decided to progress these plans during these "difficult times", not the EIS. The College has said it will review future lecturer vacancies and appoint more instructor assessors if it wishes. This is not the actions of an employer in a modern and fair society. **Do not be intimidated by this tactic.**

The Vice-Principal wields the stick by threatening to deduct pay for not taking the student registers or covering for classes when these ASOS steps are activated. Furthermore, the College threatens to deduct 100% pay when the ASOS step of not marking is activated. **Is this intimidatory behaviour truly a college that values its staff and really wants to work alongside its staff?**

The College's Plan to Deduct Wages as the ASOS Escalates

The College would prefer to crush the action short of strike action by financially punishing staff with 100% pay deduction for an action short of strike action rather than find a resolution. The EIS believes that this is a disproportionate deduction but UK employment law tends to favour employers when it comes to industrial action and deeming.

As a result of the College's hard line, the national EIS Executive decided last Friday to:

1. Deploy the EIS national hardship fund to support EIS members that are deemed (i.e. have pay deductions);
2. Agree to the EIS FELA Executive Committee request to instigate a voluntary national levy of all FELA members;
3. Agree in principle to progress a statutory ballot for strike action if the Branch requests a strike ballot in response to deeming by the College.

The college has effectively stated that it will accept partial performance of lecturers for the ASOS escalations of refusal to take student registers and not covering lesson/sessions, but will reject partial performance of not marking as it will deduct 100% of pay during the period of this escalation. **The EIS has sought clarification from the College as to whether the college will expect EIS members to attend work/sign-in/carry out any work during the ASOS period that has a 100% pay deduction. We will share the College's response with you.**

We are currently also looking at Forth Valley College's Financial Accounts.

What else can you do?

- Tomorrow, please amend your out-of-office message to read: 'From Tuesday 10th November, I will be taking action short of strike over the introduction of instructor assessor posts in the college. As I am working to rule (i.e. contract) there may be a delay in the response to some emails.'
- Stay in touch with the Branch and get key updates on the campaign through the [WhatsApp group](#) and the private branch [Facebook group](#)
- Organise a team coffee or lunch catch up during the first week of action
- Stick your posters up behind you on the wall while you're on video calls

The National Dispute & Forth Valley College Dispute

The national dispute is separate to the dispute at Forth Valley College, and the national dispute will not resolve the dispute at Forth Valley College. Resolution of the national dispute will come at Colleges Scotland and resolution of the Forth Valley College dispute will come at Forth Valley College.

Nationally, the Employer's Association chair has openly stated at NJNC meetings that he expects other colleges to continue to roll out the instructor assessor (or equivalent) role. The national dispute is about a principle and the object is to avoid the national systematic downgrading of lecturing staff. The EIS believes Forth Valley College is ahead of other colleges in Scotland in seeking to weaken and undermine the role of lecturers in colleges and that is why you have had to defend your profession and colleagues first.

Is Forth Valley College Behaving like a good public sector body employer?

The Fair Work Convention is facilitated by the Scottish Government and its role is putting fair work at the heart of Scotland's workplaces and economy. There are 5 parts to the Fair Work Framework; Effective Voice, Fulfilment, Opportunity, Security and Respect. Forcing lecturers to take instructor-assessor posts with the "opportunity" of applying for future lecturing posts does not create a safe and respectful workplace with fulfilled staff. The College has created a workplace where the only recourse staff have is to vote for lawful industrial action to protect their colleagues and profession.

If you have any queries; please contact your Branch Officials or Sarah Collins (SCollins@eisorg.uk)

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