

National Bargaining News

April 2018

News from the national negotiations

Happy New Pay Year—where's our rise?

Having passed the 1 April settlement date for 2018/19, we are still in dispute over the failure to award a cost of living rise for 2017/18 session.

We have indicated to management that we are willing to consider a multi-year deal—but we will not accept a pay freeze, nor will we accept a deal which results in undoing the efforts of our members to win equal pay by 2019!

Management's original offer, rejected by the EIS some months ago, was based on an unconsolidated offer which would apply only to some teaching staff.

We have made it clear that we cannot consider an offer which takes us further away from equal pay and offers no real pay raise for anyone.

We have won a harmonisation

payment for teaching staff—and we have been assured by the government and SFC that the next 25% tranche will be paid in April 2018 in all colleges.

Harmonisation is not a pay rise – it's a payment to take all teaching staff up to the level they should have been on in the first place.

With inflation running at 3.6% and the recent announcement to lift the public sector pay cap and deliver a fair deal for workers in the sector, we do not accept that FE lecturers should do without and that there is no money left in the pot.

Colleges can find the cash to richly reward senior management—and stash some in an ALF for a rainy day to boot. It's time for a real pay rise for all teaching staff.

ALFs

For a number of years, we have been calling for clarity on the use of ALFs, specifically in relation to staffing costs. We have recently been told that an application has been made to use funds from an ALF to fund a voluntary severance scheme. If these funds can be used to make one off payments to remove lecturing staff, then why should they not be used for a one-off payment to retain and reward current lecturing staff. We believe this money could help fund a pay deal for staff.

"£100" to be paid

The long-awaited £100 payment from 2016 should soon be paid in all colleges. A Circular is currently being drafted which will provide guidance to the sector on payment. Watch this space for further information.

Promoted Job Matching Referrals

We advised in the last newsletter that we were still waiting for dates for further referral panels—so far there has been only one day of meetings with no outputs as yet.

Dates have now been identified and we hope to re-commence meetings after Easter for the 11 colleges waiting for decisions from the process.

Once these decisions have been made, then implementation of the migration and harmonisation process for each job family will take effect, with payments due being back-date to 1 April 2017.

Shetland sign nRPA

Good news at last for our most northerly college. Perhaps the distance caused the time delay, but Shetland have waited for over a year for a decision on whether or not they could sign the nRPA. The Employers Association has discussed the issue on at least two occasions, citing the potential for unspecified "unintended consequences" as the reason for the delay.

While we are no wiser as to the "unintended consequences", Shetland are finally to join national bargaining—leaving just five colleges to 'shadow'.