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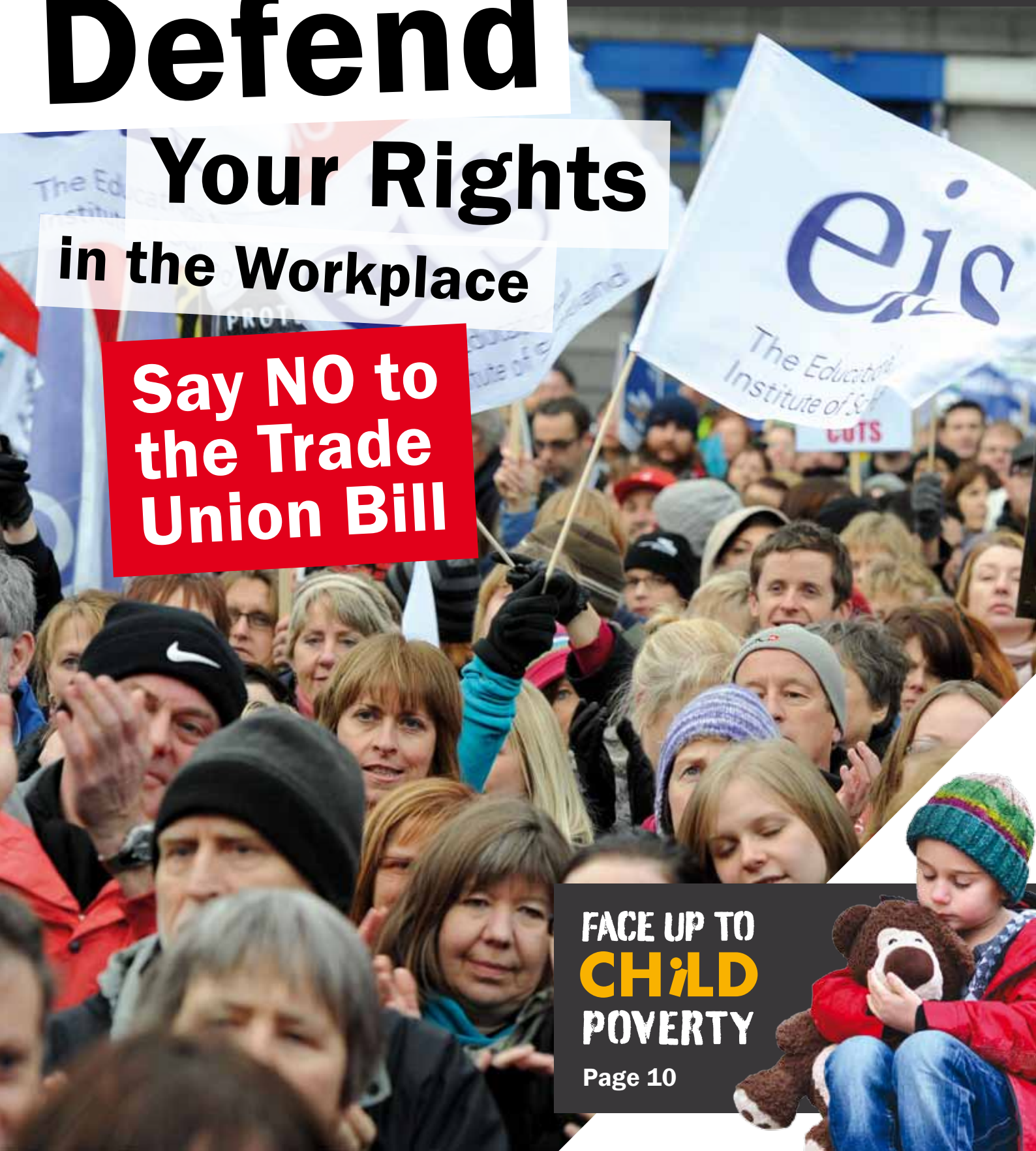
October 2015  
Vol. 99  
Issue no. 05



# Defend

## Your Rights in the Workplace

**Say NO to  
the Trade  
Union Bill**



FACE UP TO  
**CHILD**  
POVERTY

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# Defending Trade Unionism - Protecting Workers

The Westminster Government's Trade Union Reform Bill is nothing but a shameful attack on workers' rights, dressed up as a reforming piece of legislation. The changes outlined in the Bill will dramatically reduce the ability of trade unions to organise, to stand up for workers, and to campaign on the issues that matter to trade union members.

It is significant that the first act of the majority Tory government, following their General Election victory, was to introduce a piece of legislation to weaken representation for workers and to shift the balance of legal protection in favour of employers. In a country that already has some of the strictest anti trade union laws in Europe, the Westminster government's move to impose further restrictions is both inflammatory and wholly unnecessary. Not even Thatcher ever attempted an attack as severe as the one the Bullingdon boys – Cameron, Osborne and Johnson – now intend to launch on trade unions and workers.

The changes outlined in the Bill are so Draconian that the Westminster government has managed to unite almost everyone – trade unions, most political parties, community groups, the Scottish Government, local authorities, progressive employers, and even some Tory MPs – in opposition to the Bill or its aims.

The EIS will work with sister unions through the TUC and STUC to beat the Bill. We welcome the support of the Scottish Government and those local authorities who have vowed to oppose the Bill or to

refuse to implement changes such as the removal of check-off or the loss of facility time for trade union reps. These changes are not, as the government claims, about improving democratic processes – they are an ideologically-motivated attack designed to weaken trade unionism and to reduce employee representation in the workplace. We must, and we will, fight them.

Every EIS member needs to be aware of the Bill and the threat that it represents to them in their employment. It will reduce the ability of Reps to work in the interests of members, it will impact negatively on dispute resolution, it will have a damaging impact on workplace health and safety protections. It will also damage the ability of unions to organise and will weaken vital campaigning work on a wide-range of important issues such as negotiating on pay and conditions, arguing against austerity and highlighting important education and equality matters.

Our focus on pp8-9 of this SEJ outlines some of the main elements of the Trade Union Reform Bill and highlights how these will impact on workers and their unions. The campaign against the government's plans is already well underway, but will need active support from all union members if it is to be successful. Please do all that you can to support the campaign and to oppose the Bill. We cannot allow the government to turn back the clock and reverse the valuable workers' rights and protections that collective trade union activity has won over the years.

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All articles and letters in the SEJ represent the views of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent the EIS view or EIS policy. To be considered for publication, all letters and unsolicited articles must be accompanied by a full name and address. The Editor's decision on publication is final, and the Editor reserves the right to edit all submissions.

### THE EDITOR:

The SEJ Editor, 46 Moray Place,  
Edinburgh, EH3 6BH

**t: 0131 225 6244**

**E: [sej@eis.org.uk](mailto:sej@eis.org.uk)**

# Council News...

## September EIS Council National Testing, New Qualifications, Pay Ballot and Trade Union Bill on the Agenda

EIS Council gathered in Edinburgh in September for its first meeting of the new term, and welcomed a large number of new members elected to represent colleagues for the first time. It was also the initial Council meeting in the chair for new President Pat Flanagan (Aberdeenshire).

A busy agenda of Committee business

included a report on the Scottish Government's plans for a National Improvement Framework and the reintroduction of National Assessments in primary schools and, also, their introduction in the third year of secondary schools. The introduction of the new qualifications, including the new Highers and, in particular, the fallout from the new Higher Maths, also prompted considerable discussion.

The launch of the ballot on the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) offer on pay and conditions also

led to some questions, on the terms of the offer, the potential implications for teachers, the ballot process and the unanimous decision of the Salaries Committee to recommend acceptance of the offer.

To start the afternoon session, STUC Deputy General Secretary Dave Moxham, briefed Council members on the Westminster Government's attack on trade unions in the form of the Trade Union Reform Bill. See **pp8-9** of this SEJ for more on the TU Bill and the joint trade union campaign to oppose it.

## National Testing

Education Convener Susan Quinn updated Council on discussions with the Cabinet Secretary for Education and the Scottish Government relating to the launch of the National Improvement Framework and the mooted return to a national standardised system of assessment.

"The EIS position on National Testing has not changed," said Ms Quinn. "We continue to oppose the notion of a standard test which will be taken at a set point and used as a benchmarking tool. We are in continuing discussions around the wider implications of the National Improvement Framework. We do know that there is already more than enough data in the system."

Alan Gardiner (North Lanarkshire) asked for the EIS view on the Scottish Government making a request for retrospective data as part of a national benchmarking exercise. Ms Quinn, in response, said that no EIS member should carry out, or be asked to carry out, any additional work related to such a request for data.

Nicola Fisher (Glasgow) asked if there would be an option for parents, schools or local authorities to opt children out from sitting any new National Assessments. Ms Quinn replied that there had been no indications of any opt out yet, and that the EIS and parent groups were keen to avoid placing undue stress on young people. Ms Quinn added, "It will be for local authorities to make their own decisions on whether to comply with any new national assessment model."



## SQA Assessment Burden and New Qualifications

A number of Council members raised issues relating to the SQA, the assessment burden and the introduction of the new Highers. Aileen Barrie (North Lanarkshire) highlighted the severe workload burden placed on teachers and pupils alike by the current assessment system: "When teachers are marking unit assessments, the requirement for every pupil to pass absolutely every outcome is creating an excessive workload burden. Would we not be better off with a move to an overall pass/fail rather than require every pupil to pass every single outcome?"

In reply, General Secretary Larry Flanagan said, "The current SQA verification process is absolute overkill. We have asked for a short-term working group to look at the design of the qualifications, with a view to implementing any change required before the next school session, as well as delivery of a significant reduction in verification procedures."

Also on SQA matters, Education Convener Susan Quinn commented on issues relating to the new Higher qualifications, which pupils sat for the first time before the summer. "There are a number of concerns over significant differences in pass marks between the old and new Highers in a number of subjects. The EIS continues to highlight these concerns around the subjects affected, such as the new Higher Maths, with the SQA in order to ensure that any design flaws are addressed."

## Council Snips

**David Farmer** (Fife) was successful in proposing a Motion calling on the EIS to show solidarity and to consider any assistance that might be offered to teacher trade unions in Greece, in light of the austerity agenda and budget crisis.

**Paula Dixon** (EIS-FELA) successfully called for Reps to have access to online Labour Research department booklets, which provide important information on a range of employment and trade union issues.

**Alison Murphy** (Edinburgh) was successful in raising two Motions calling on the EIS to look at the structure of the EIS AGM and EIS Council meetings, with the aims of better engaging members and ensuring proper scrutiny of committee decisions.

## Tackling Poverty and Combatting Racism



Equality Convener Bill Ramsay highlighted the publication of the EIS guide to Poverty and Education (see feature on **pp10-11** of this SEJ) and advised Council of the positive feedback and the significant media coverage that the launch of the book had generated, including front cover

stories in both the *Scotsman* and the *i in Scotland* newspapers. Mr Ramsay went on to say, "This is a very positive piece of work and I would encourage members to use this valuable resource to support their own work in schools and colleges."

Mr Ramsay also reminded members of the upcoming St Andrew's Day March and Rally against Racism and Fascism, which will be held in Glasgow on Saturday the 28th of

# FACE UP TO CHILD POVERTY

November. Mr Ramsay encouraged all Local Associations to make arrangements for members to attend this important event – "Sadly, it is particularly relevant and even more important this year in light of the current refugee crisis and the negative right-wing media coverage of refugees and migrants," said Mr Ramsay.

## Pay & Conditions Ballot

Salaries Convener Tom Tracey updated Council on the discussions at the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) which led to the employers' side making a formal offer and, subsequently, the EIS opening a ballot of members on the offer with a recommendation to accept. Mr Tracey reminded members that the ballot was open and that all members should be encouraged to exercise their right to vote on the offer.

Mr Tracey answered a number of

questions on the SNCT negotiations, the terms of the offer, the ballot, and the decision of the Salaries Committee to recommend acceptance of the offer. Responding to a question from David Baxter (Dundee) which asked if the Salaries Committee had considered the terms of the AGM resolution - calling on the EIS to seek a restorative pay deal - when making the recommendation to accept, Mr Tracey said, "Yes, absolutely. Every member of the Committee was very aware of the terms of the AGM resolution. Following a lengthy discussion, the

Salaries Committee unanimously decided to recommend acceptance of the offer, based on the clear belief that this was the best deal that could be achieved through negotiation."

At the time of writing the ballot was ongoing, but will have closed by the date of publication for this SEJ. Full information on the result of the ballot will be available on the EIS website [www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk)

## FE National Bargaining Pay Negotiations

### An update for EIS-FELA members on the nature of the national FE (NJNC) pay negotiations.

The EIS entered into a dispute with colleges regarding their failure to make a "reasonable pay offer" in response to the EIS Pay Claim for 2015/16. At the second dispute meeting between the EIS and the Employers Side on 30 July 2015 the Employers Side made an offer.

The offer may be summarised as a 1% unconsolidated payment with conditions forcing the EIS to link pay with

other conditions of service in future pay negotiations.

The EIS informed the Employers Side, prior to the NJNC pay negotiation meeting of 27 August 2015, that the Employers' pay offer was unacceptable – setting out clear reasons. This meeting was effectively a deeper exploration of the EIS Pay Claim. At the end of the meeting the Employers stated that they would lodge an improved pay offer at the next pay negotiation meeting.

The EIS-FELA Pay Negotiators and EIS-FELA Executive Committee is losing



patience with colleges for not putting forward a reasonable pay offer and for the slow process. The unconsolidated pay offer with conditions was considered as an insult to the sector.

The EIS-FELA Executive is hoping that the pay dispute will be successfully resolved but is planning for an escalation of the current pay dispute if no reasonable offer is forthcoming.

Please see the EIS website for further updates on the FE pay negotiations.

## Trade Union Congress Campaign Against Trade Union Bill Far From Over

**T**HE UK Government's attack on trade unions and the rights of workers, in the form of the Trade Union Reform Bill, dominated much of the debate at this year's Trade Union Congress (TUC) in Brighton. The government introduced the Bill as one of their first steps following the General Election and, in an inflammatory move, arranged for the second reading in the House of Commons during the TUC meeting and also immediately following a reshuffle of the Shadow Cabinet.

Commenting following the vote in the House of Commons on the second reading of the Trade Union Bill, TUC General Secretary Frances O'Grady said, "The record books will show that this government's first major act in office has been to attack the right to strike – a fundamental British liberty."

She added, "While the result of this vote is very disappointing, the campaign against this Bill is far from over. We will continue to oppose it at each stage through Parliament. And it was good to hear MPs from across the house recognise the huge threat this Bill poses to civil liberties and fair treatment at work."

Opposition to the Bill has been strong and has united opposition parties including Labour, the Liberal Democrats, and the Scottish National Party. Even some Conservative MPs have raised concerns over the content of the

government's Bill.

During this House of Commons debate David Davis MP (Conservative) said: "I have some sympathy with the criticisms of the Bill. I particularly am offended by the idea that a picket organiser needs to give their name to the police. This to me is a serious restriction of freedom of

association."

Mr Davis said he would vote against the Bill at its third reading if certain measures were still included.

Earlier, former Business Secretary Vince Cable (Liberal Democrat) said the Trade Union Bill was "vindictive" and had "no evidence base at all."

In her first speech as

Shadow Business Secretary Angela Eagle (Labour), who had been appointed to post less than 24 hours previously, said, "I am dismayed that we have a government which believes in attacking trade unions rather than working with them in the spirit of social partnership. It saddens me that we're dealing with the most significant, sustained and partisan attack on six million trade union members and their workplace organisations that we have seen in the last 30 years."

The SNP's Chris Stephens declared "total opposition" to the Bill. He added: "In

reality, this Bill will lead to a deterioration of good industrial relations and it has no support within public opinion. It is designed to reduce civil liberties and human rights, and it also displays a remarkable ignorance of the valuable work undertaken by trade unions and their Reps."

Leading human rights groups have also warned that the Trade Union Bill is "a major attack on civil liberties in the UK." In a joint statement Liberty, Amnesty International and the British Institute of Human Rights said the Bill "would hamper people's basic rights to protest and shift even more power from the employee to the employer."

The Regulatory Policy Committee (RPC) – an independent body appointed by the government which verifies the costs and savings of proposed changes to businesses and civil society – slammed the government's trade union proposals impact assessments as "red – not fit for purpose."

The RPC found that the government had not made the case for any changes in the law on trade union picketing and protest – including proposals to make unions give 14 days' advance notice of whether their members will use Twitter or Facebook during protests.

The RPC said that "there is little evidence presented that there will be any significant benefits arising from this proposal" and "the definition of the problem currently appears weak and must be substantiated."

See feature on **pp8-9** of this SEJ for more on the Trade Union Bill and the campaign against it.

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# EIS to the Fore at TUC

The EIS played a prominent role at this year's Trade Union Congress in Brighton. President Pat Flanagan led the EIS delegation and moved a Motion on Education Funding Cuts, where he focused on the sharp decline in Further Education budgets and raised concerns over the disproportionate impact on

students with disabilities and additional support needs.

The Vice-Convenor of the Equality Committee, Mary Matheson, spoke on a Motion addressing Education and Poverty, highlighting the need to address issues associated with poverty to tackle the attainment gap and provide all pupils with

the chance to achieve their potential.

General Secretary Larry Flanagan supported a major composite Motion opposing austerity and calling for an end to public sector pay restraint. He emphasised the need for all unions to work closely together to ensure a fair deal for all public sector workers.

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# National Occupational Networks

National Occupational Networks operate to represent certain members who are part of an occupational group within the EIS who have distinctive interests and who may not be represented in other structures within the Institute. These groups operate on behalf of five categories of members – Additional Support Needs, Educational Psychologists, Headteachers and Deputy Headteachers, Instrumental Music Teachers and Quality Improvement Officers.

Networks operate to offer a forum for such members, to keep the main body of the EIS advised of developments in these

areas and to allow proper assistance to be offered to these members in matters which affect them. Occupational Networks discuss matters of specific interest to these categories of members and the results of their discussions are passed to Executive Committee or Local Associations to form part of the normal process of policy consideration.

New elections to the Networks are now underway, and any relevant members have the opportunity to nominate themselves for election.

Applications are invited from members in these categories to serve as the

representative of their Local Association area on the national Network for their category. One Network representative is elected for each Local Association area and members may nominate themselves. The period of office is three years and Networks normally meet around two occasions each year.

Nomination forms are available from Local Association Secretaries and from the Organisation Department at EIS Headquarters and should be sent to Local Association Secretaries to arrive no later than **Friday 20 November 2015**.

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# Asbestos in Schools

The dangers of asbestos have long been known. But as it can be many decades from exposure to an asbestos-related disease causing symptoms, the management of asbestos may not always be the priority it should be. A recent national conference, arranged by the charity Scottish Hazards in association with the STUC and Thompsons solicitors, focused on the management of asbestos in schools and other public buildings. A number of EIS Representatives from across Scotland attended the event.

The conference was prompted by STUC Freedom of Information requests sent to all local authorities in Scotland, requesting information about the management of asbestos in schools. The findings, from those authorities that responded, indicate that almost 90% of Scottish school buildings contain asbestos. The conference highlighted the importance of proper asbestos management to ensure that pupils and staff are not placed at risk of asbestos exposure.

Next month's SEJ will include an in-depth look at the issue of asbestos and how it should be safely managed.



Further information:

Scottish Hazards  
[www.scottishhazards.co.uk](http://www.scottishhazards.co.uk)

Asbestos in Schools  
[www.asbestosexposureschools.co.uk](http://www.asbestosexposureschools.co.uk)

UK Asbestos Training Association  
[www.ukata.org.uk](http://www.ukata.org.uk)

# Opposing the **Anti-Trade Union Bill**

One of the first pieces of legislation introduced by the Conservative Government at Westminster was its Trade Union Reform Bill – essentially an ideologically-driven political attack on trade unions and employee rights. The Bill recently had its second reading at Westminster as it moved one step closer to becoming law. The EIS is working with a broad coalition of organisations – including sister trade unions, the TUC and STUC, community organisations, opposition political parties at Westminster, the Scottish Government and Scottish political parties, local authorities, and many public and private sector employers – to fight the Trade Union Reform Bill and its damaging implications. Here, the SEJ looks at some of the threats contained within the Bill and highlights how members can play their part in opposing and defeating this attack on workers' rights.

## What are the main elements of the government's Trade Union Bill?

### Agency workers

The government plans to allow agency workers to replace striking workers. And by requiring 14 days' notice of strike action (rather than 7 as at present), employers will have more time to arrange agency workers to cover for strikes. This has been banned in the UK since 1973.

#### The EIS view

This fundamentally undermines the right to strike, as it reduces the impact of strike action, and upsets the power balance between workers and employers.

There are health and safety concerns about inexperienced replacement workers taking on the roles of the permanent workforce.

Inexperienced agency workers replacing strikers might lead to poorer quality services.

### Picketing and protests

Unions will have to appoint picket supervisors. They will be required to carry a letter of authorisation which must be presented upon request to the police or "to any other person who reasonably asks to see it." The supervisor's details must be given to the police and they must be identifiable by an armband or badge.

Unions may have to report protest plans publicly to employers and regulators 14 days in advance of any action (and will have to give 14 days' notice of any industrial action). Details required would include timings, location, the number of participants and even whether protesters plan to use "loudspeakers, props, banners, etc." If unions don't report their plans then they face significant fines.

#### The EIS view

Existing law already requires union members to comply with tough picketing rules. The new regulations are overly bureaucratic and the penalties are disproportionate.

Unions are currently required to give 7 days' notice before industrial action takes place. Doubling the notice period for strike action to 14 days as well as requiring unions to publish details of protest activities will undermine negotiations and allow employers to recruit agency workers to cover for strikers.

This level of scrutiny and monitoring is excessive, undermining freedom of speech and threatening the civil liberties of working people who should be free to defend their rights.

### Thresholds

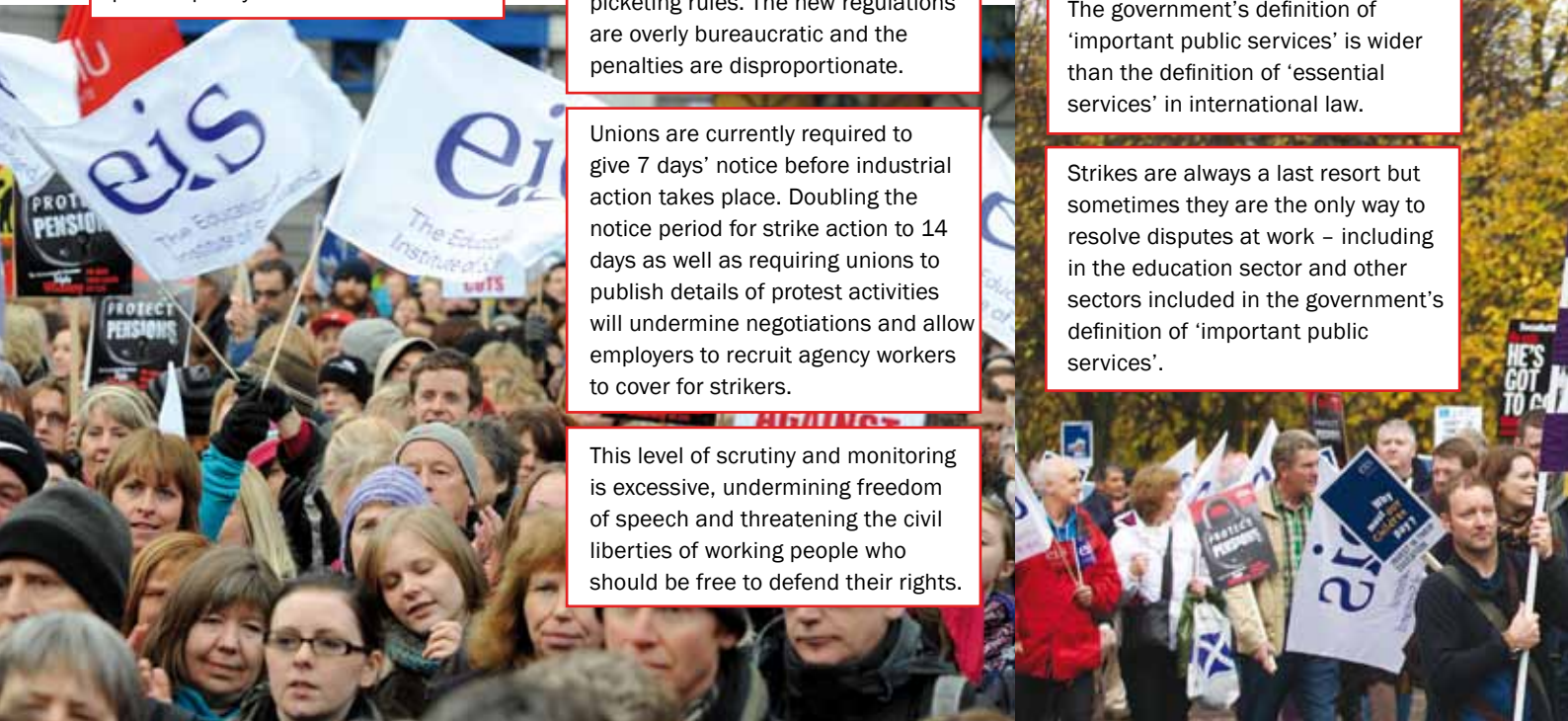
In 'important public services' (education, fire, health, transport, border security and nuclear decommissioning), 50% of members must turn out to vote and 40% of the entire membership must vote in favour for a ballot to be valid. This would essentially mean that members who do not vote are counted as voting "No" – contrary to all internationally recognised procedures for ballots. The government argues these thresholds are aimed at boosting democracy in the workplace.

#### The EIS view

If the government was committed to increasing democracy it would allow secure electronic and workplace strike ballots instead of arbitrary thresholds. Online voting is already used by several national membership organisations and is regularly used by political parties.

The government's definition of 'important public services' is wider than the definition of 'essential services' in international law.

Strikes are always a last resort but sometimes they are the only way to resolve disputes at work – including in the education sector and other sectors included in the government's definition of 'important public services'.





“Despite repeated assaults on trade union rights, big changes in industry and the constant attacks on us in some sections of the media, over 6 million people are members of unions, making us the largest democratic organisation in the UK.

This strength allows us to represent members individually when they have a problem at work; to work collectively

together to improve pay and conditions; and to campaign more widely in society for equality, against poverty and for a strong but fair economy in which no-one is left behind.”

**Grahame Smith**  
General Secretary, Scottish Trades Union Congress

## Regulating unions

The Certification Officer (who regulates unions) will be given powers to investigate unions and access membership lists even if no-one has complained about a union’s activities. The regulator will also be able to impose fines of up to £20,000 on unions. The government will be able to charge unions to cover the running costs of the Certification Officer. Costs are likely to increase as the regulator has new responsibilities.

### The EIS view

There is no reason why the trade union regulator needs new powers now.

Giving the Certification Officer the power to confiscate copies of membership records and other documents is an intrusion on union members’ privacy and their right to have an independent relationship with their union.

Significant new costs will be placed on unions to pay for this red tape – money that could be better spent protecting and promoting the rights of workers.

## Public sector facility time

All public sector employers will have to publish information on the cost of time off for union reps, plus a breakdown of what facility time is used for – collective bargaining, representing members in grievances or disciplinary action, or running training programmes.

Public sector employers won’t be able to offer the option of paying for union membership direct through salaries anymore (“check-off”).

The government will be able to cap the time public sector employers allow union Reps to spend representing members.

### The EIS view

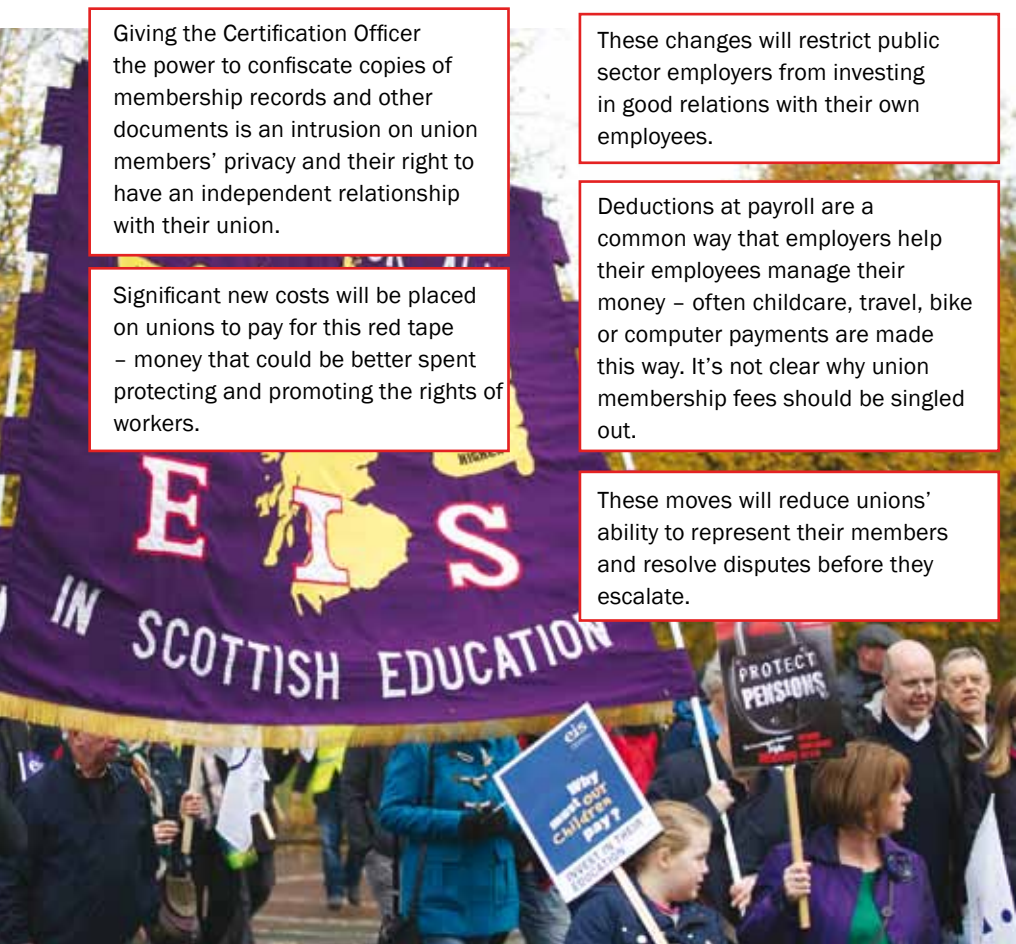
These changes will restrict public sector employers from investing in good relations with their own employees.

Deductions at payroll are a common way that employers help their employees manage their money – often childcare, travel, bike or computer payments are made this way. It’s not clear why union membership fees should be singled out.

These moves will reduce unions’ ability to represent their members and resolve disputes before they escalate.

# What is being done to oppose the Trade Union Bill?

- The EIS is working with sister unions through the TUC and STUC in a co-ordinated campaign to beat the Bill. We welcome the support of the many organisations, individuals and politicians of all parties who have spoken out against this attack on trade unions and workers. The Scottish Government and a number of Scottish local authorities have indicated that they will oppose the Bill or that they intend to refuse to implement it should it become law.
- Joint work is ongoing to raise awareness of the Trade Union Bill and the danger that it represents. EIS Executive and Council member Helen Connor, also the Vice-President of the STUC, recently chaired an STUC-organised public meeting in Glasgow focusing on the threats contained within the Bill. Further meetings and rallies are planned, including the TUC demonstration which coincided with the Conservative Party Conference in early October. **A major STUC event is being planned for Glasgow next month, and a mass lobby of the Westminster parliament is also being planned for November.**
- Further information on future events will be distributed to members via the SEJ, and via Representatives’ Bulletins and the members’ eBulletin. EIS materials to support local action against the Bill are in production and will be distributed as soon as possible.
- Further information is also available on the TUC and STUC campaigns via their websites: [www.tuc.org.uk](http://www.tuc.org.uk) and [www.stuc.org.uk](http://www.stuc.org.uk)



# FACE UP TO CHILD POVERTY

**The EIS has issued new advice to schools and colleges on how to 'poverty-proof' learning and teaching in the classroom. The advice, contained in a new booklet entitled Face up to Child Poverty, is available in all schools and colleges and on the EIS website - [www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk)**

Copies of the newly produced 'Face Up to Child Poverty' booklet should now have been received by EIS Reps in schools and colleges across the country. The booklet contains guidance which the EIS believes will be useful to members in establishments, within every postcode area in Scotland, in their day to day work with children and young people whose educational success is challenged by the fact that they and their families are poor.

Currently the lives of one in five children in Scotland's classrooms are blighted by poverty. In some parts of the country, that alarming statistic rises to one in three. In effect, this amounts to almost a quarter of a million children and young people – a figure which we, as teachers

and lecturers in Scotland's schools and colleges, simply cannot ignore. Nor can we be blind to the likelihood, as predicted by the Institute of Fiscal Studies, that the number of children living in poverty will see an increase of 50% to 330,000 by 2020 if the politics of austerity remain in force.

Not only is the incidence of poverty increasing, the nature of poverty is changing. According to Scottish Government statistics, more than half (59%) of children living in poverty are from families in which at least one adult is employed. However, low wages and cuts to benefits such as Working Tax Credits render those families impoverished. Recently, Scotland has seen a 400% increase in the use of food-banks and organisers such as the Trussel Trust report that a significant proportion of their clients are in work. In effect, many of the children and young people that we teach, and whose parents work in low-paid jobs, eat meals at home which have been prepared using donations supplied by local foodbanks.

Besides what is known as 'low-income poverty', changes to the benefits system and the system of benefit sanctioning which can amount to the complete withdrawal of income as a penalty for failure to comply with the conditions attached to receipt of benefits, has resulted in 'no-income poverty' for many families. There are frequent reports of social security claimants having their benefits sanctioned because they were fifteen minutes late for an appointment at

the job centre. Consequently, children's charities such as Barnardo's Scotland are reporting that their caseworkers, who are deployed to intervene when things are going wrong for children and young people at school, regularly find families with literally no food in the house. Often the family has been without food in the cupboards for days at a time as a consequence of benefit sanctions and income having been stopped.

Inevitably, these factors have implications for 20% of children's and young people's experiences, participation and achievement at school and college. Lack of food erodes health and wellbeing, as does the stress of living in houses that are cold and where parents face the relentless struggle to feed, clothe and heat the family. Increasingly EIS members are reporting evidence of this and that families are struggling to provide their children with basic equipment for school, to meet the cost of uniform and to pay for even the most modestly priced of school trips.

While the EIS is clear that education and schools are not the panacea to poverty, and that teachers and lecturers cannot be expected to banish its effects from the lives of their pupils and students, we are determined that education policy and practice at establishment level must realistically address it. 'Face Up to Child Poverty' is a valuable resource containing advice on how EIS members can continue to play their part in making this happen.

**"The fact that food poverty now affects such a large, and growing, section of society should shame those in government and elsewhere who continue to push the damaging and divisive austerity-above-all agenda. The poverty-proofing measures in this guide can assist teaching professionals in trying to mitigate, as far as possible, the impact of low incomes on young people's educational experience."**

Larry Flanagan  
EIS General Secretary

**"The EIS is absolutely committed to taking all realistic practical steps to reduce the impact of poverty on the young people in our classrooms. The guide addresses key issues such as uniform policies, educational excursions and access to information technology and examines the financial pressure that can be placed on families as a result."**

Bill Ramsay  
EIS Equality Convener





# Poverty in Education - Key issues

Child poverty in Scotland is an area of increasing concern. In the new EIS guide, we consider some of the causes, detail some of the problems that arise in classrooms as a consequence of poverty, and advise members of possible steps they may wish to take when they become aware of issues that impact on the experiences of children and young people in school.

## Hunger

The effect of hunger may manifest itself in the classroom in a number of ways: pupils may appear pale, fatigued, irritable or lacking in concentration, or complain of headaches or feeling unwell. While there can be other reasons underlying such signs, for a growing number of children and young people in our schools and colleges today, the reason will be hunger.



## School Uniform

School uniform can be costly, and disproportionately so for families struggling on low incomes. While clothing grants are available to some families for the purchase of school uniform, these do not always sufficiently cover the cost of uniform expenses throughout the year. Children and young people grow out of shoes and clothes, sometimes within months, leaving parents with the burden of the additional cost of replacement items.



## Equipment and Resources

In light of the fact that thousands of families in Scotland are currently living in poverty, often unable to ensure that basic needs in relation to food, fuel and clothing are met, it is not surprising that many children and young people will be solely reliant on the school/college for the provision of equipment and resources. Colouring pencils, paper, books, smart phones and tablets are items to which many family budgets simply cannot extend.

## School Trips

Even when the cost of a school trip is relatively low - only a few pounds - many families are unable to make the weekly income stretch to this, particularly at short notice. Families with more than one child at school may be being asked to pay for multiple outings at a time, either causing real financial hardship to the family or resulting in the non-participation of the pupil(s)/ student(s) in the outing(s).

## Homework and out of school learning

As with access to equipment and resources, the effects of poverty can weigh heavily on the ability of a pupil/ student to complete homework and other less traditional out of school learning activities. Careful consideration of any barriers to participation should be given by EIS members when setting/encouraging independent out of school learning in its various forms: traditional homework tasks, research, library visits, cultural activities, even personal reading.

## Charity & Fundraising Activities

No assumption should be made that all children and young people can afford to make even small donations to well-intentioned charity initiatives organised by the school or college. Many families simply do not have any additional funds to spare; some families have no funds at all when they are subject to benefit sanctions.



Extracted from the EIS guide Face up to Child Poverty. Please refer to the full document for further information and practical advice. Speak to your Rep/Branch Secretary or download the guide from [www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk)



# Supporting Young People From Refugee and Migrant Families

**T**HIS year's Scottish Refugee Festival saw the launch of a new e-resource focused on the highly topical theme of asylum. Entitled 'Sanctuary Schools' and suitable for S1 to S3, the aim of the resource is to impact positively on young people's attitudes and to promote equality and diversity by supporting learning about asylum and refugee issues.

'Sanctuary Schools' was designed by a working group which was formed between English as an Additional Language (EAL) staff within St Mungo's and Springburn Academies and the North East Health Improvement Team in Glasgow. Questionnaire responses from all Glasgow Secondary schools had identified that 73% of staff felt that there were limited resources to support teaching on asylum and refugee issues and that 37% of staff felt that they lacked knowledge to teach about asylum and refugee issues. The team got to work.

The challenge was around how to develop a resource which would be inexpensive, creative and cross curricular. A gem of a stimulus was uncovered in Roddy Doyle's short story 'New Boy' which had been developed into an award winning short film by the Northern Ireland Film Board. The film focuses on a young refugee as he struggles in his new school and has flash backs to his home country. The film lends itself to a cross-curricular exploration of why people seek refuge in other countries and how displacement affects wellbeing.

Informed by research into the stigma and discrimination experienced by asylum seekers and refugees the team designed a series of activities looking at definitions of terms related to asylum such as asylum seeker, refugee, internally displaced person, migrant; reasons for fleeing; countries of origin; and the asylum process and its impact on mental health.

Accompanying resources were developed to support Literacy and English,

Religious Education and Social Studies.

Piloted within St Mungo's and Springburn Academies over a 12 month period, young people's responses confirmed their greater understanding of the similarities and differences in the cultures of those who become refugees, increased empathy in relation to the journey to sanctuary and some pupils linked the impact to their own experiences, particularly around dispersal and moving area within Glasgow several times.

The launch event was attended by EIS Equality Convener Bill Ramsay who said of it, "What I saw was a level of commitment by all involved that was a real pleasure to witness - committed staff of course, but in particular pupils comfortable in expressing their identity and confident in their ability to communicate to a wide audience. The central purpose was to showcase actual resources which in my view have real utility within citizenship and anti-racist education."

**“For those who would like to find out how best to teach about this important and topical theme, there are both training opportunities available and teaching resources. You can find both at the IDEAS website [www.ideas-forum.org.uk/news/item/54-refugee-crisis](http://www.ideas-forum.org.uk/news/item/54-refugee-crisis)**

# EIS to Donate £10,000 in Support of Refugees From Syria Conflict



THE EIS is to make a donation of £10,000 to projects providing support to refugees from Syria and other countries devastated by conflict. The donation follows a decision of the EIS Executive Committee to allocate funding for humanitarian relief efforts. EIS Council gave its formal approval to the £10,000 donation at its September meeting.

Commenting on the decision, EIS President Pat Flanagan said, "People across the country have been horrified by recent media coverage which has highlighted the desperate experiences of people fleeing conflict in countries such as Syria. This has prompted action by governments, voluntary organisations and communities across Europe in

offering assistance to these innocent victims of conflict and persecution. The EIS contribution will help to provide vital, targeted humanitarian support for refugees from Syria and other affected countries. Our hope is that this will be followed by additional donations from our EIS Local Associations as well as from individual teachers and lecturers and from schools, colleges and universities across the country."

The EIS is circulating details to each of its 32 Local Associations in the hope of encouraging further donations, and also included information in the members' e-Bulletin which was issued recently. Please visit [www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk) for further updates.



**Pat Flanagan**  
EIS President

**"People across the country have been horrified by recent media coverage which has highlighted the desperate experiences of people fleeing conflict"**



# No Return to National Testing

## The EIS view on the National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education.

THE Scottish Government has set out its intention to develop a National Improvement Framework (NIF) with a declared objective to improve outcomes for every learner. Within the debate surrounding this proposal, a particular focus has developed around the issue of standardised testing, and the role that these might play within an improvement framework.

Part of the drive from the Scottish Government for additional hard data, particularly in the primary sector, would appear to be driven by a frustration on its part that local authorities seem unable or unwilling to furnish such information to national government. The EIS would support system wide information being shared but is concerned that schools and pupils should not be made to suffer fallout from a political struggle, between two arms of government, about who runs Scottish education.

In truth, Scottish education is rich with data. Within the Tackling Bureaucracy Working Group comment was made about IT systems which seek to track, excessively, pupil performance across the Experiences and Outcomes. Now it seems that all of that information is worthless, despite the workload generated.

The EIS recognises that data is important and it can be useful, but primarily, in our view, when it is concentrated at classroom and individual pupil level and supports teaching and learning. There is a world of difference between a data rich educational environment and a data driven system.

### Does testing raise attainment?

The EIS refutes the disingenuous argument that crude standardised testing is the key to improving education,

including that of Scotland's poorest children. Time and again, high stakes standardised testing has been shown to cement the disadvantage experienced by children and young people disadvantaged by poverty. It crushes creativity both for learners and for teachers, does not take full account of pupil progress and causes unnecessary stress for the children and young people who are subjected to it.

### What works

The First Minister has made reference to being concerned with "what works." In that respect it is instructive to consider the views of Pasi Sahlberg in relation to the much lauded Finnish education system:

"At the national level sample-based student assessments ... that have no stakes for students, teachers, or schools are the main means to inform policy-makers and the public on how Finland's school system is performing. Teachers and principals in Finland have a strong sense of professional responsibility to teach their children well but also to judge how well children have learned what they are supposed to learn according to a curriculum designed by teachers." (Washington Post, 25 March 2014)

It is also worth noting that whilst a collective angst developed recently around a headline drop in SSLN statistics from 92% to 90% in P7, an equivalent figure for England which showed an improvement in SAT scores at the end of primary from 80% to 82% was greeted with acclaim. Which system is performing better?

### Is the Scottish Government abandoning CfE?

On the surface, the Scottish Government


has repeatedly stated its support for CfE. The EIS view, however, is that the proposals around standardised testing run the very real risk of undermining everything that has been achieved over the past decade. Unintended consequences such as damaging league tables cannot be lightly dismissed as an unfortunate consequence beyond the control of government; if it can be foreseen it can and should be prevented.

CfE promotes the design of bespoke curricula and accompanying assessment packages, which may include summative tests as a component part of a varied toolkit of assessment, firmly focussed on the child and her/his progress as a learner. Such a model generates a wealth of data that is crucial to the success of the learning process and, importantly, is accessible and useful to learners themselves.

### Aren't tests important?

As a professional association the EIS is clear that assessment is absolutely central to teaching and learning. Teachers are assessing all the time in a whole range of ways and what is observed is fed back to the learner to aid her or his progress.

Within the CfE framework considerable effort has been made to support the concept of teacher professional judgement in relation to student assessment and this should not be undermined. Whilst tests can support that judgement, particularly where they are diagnostic in nature, the fact that 30 out of 32 local authorities already make use of such tests points clearly to the fact that standardised tests do not offer an instant solution to any of the challenges facing Scottish education.



## “proposals around standardised testing run the very real risk of undermining everything that has been achieved over the past decade”

No single assessment instrument should be allowed to trump teacher judgement or over a short period of time we will see the re-emergence of teaching to the test and the narrowing of experience with broad general education. A system where test data is publically published will take us back to where we were pre-CfE.

It is assessment for learning which has to be central, not assessment to feed the statistics machine which politicians seem to love so much, primarily because it's easier to understand what appears as a shorthand summary than to trust the professional judgement and practice of teachers and schools.

Considerable time and energy was spent developing the National Assessment Resource to support a new approach to assessment whilst also ensuring a degree of rigour through “kite-marked” assessment instruments. Has the National Assessment Resource simply been abandoned?

### **Hasn't the Scottish Government rejected “high stakes” testing?**

The Scottish Government has said that it does not support the type of “high stakes testing” which we see in England. Whilst that is to be welcomed, if what is being proposed ends up achieving the same outcome, questions need to be asked. The proposal, for example, that all P1, P4, P7 and S3 pupils are “tested” over a short “diet” period in May/June of each session could not have been designed more effectively to create a “high stakes” regime. It's madness, frankly. What is the point of diagnostic “testing” at that stage in the school year when classes are about to move on to a new set of teachers? In S3 the “test” will be about 5 months

behind the pupil choice of pathways for the senior phase!

The existence of nationally collected data does rather beg the question as to what response the data might trigger from both national and local government, particularly in relation to closing the attainment gap. Crunching the numbers is unlikely to tell us anything new about the impact of poverty on educational attainment, for example.

It is the view of the EIS, developed over many years of deep engagement with this agenda, that genuine commitment to tackling educational inequality and ensuring improved outcomes in literacy, numeracy, and every other curricular area, requires solid support for schools in their endeavour, as well as the necessary resources.

If the Scottish Government wishes to close the attainment gap then it should deliver on its promise of reducing class sizes. It's no coincidence that under the 5-14 regime, despite its flaws, the best S2 national test results were produced when class sizes in Maths and English were reduced to an average of 20 in S1/S2. If it's what works that is important – smaller class sizes work!

### **Conclusion**

The EIS continues to engage with the Scottish Government on the National Improvement Framework and we will seek to bring our expertise to the table in terms of the role of assessment data within that discussion. At this stage, however, we are unconvinced that the Scottish Government can design an assessment which does not undermine CfE or have the perverse impact of taking us back to a testing, target setting, league table approach to Education.

## The more things change...

The SEJ looks back at the repeating cycle of the over-use of testing in recent years

“Events in the 1990s led many teachers to be suspicious of developments in assessment policy. Governments imposed policies which focused on recording a very limited range of learning outcomes in order to extend ‘accountability’. These policies included using assessment results to create league tables, the imposition of target-setting regimes, the stress on National Testing and attacks on the reliability of teachers’ professional judgement” – **Assessment to meet the needs of schools and teachers, SEJ, December 2002**

“The National Assessment Bank must not be allowed to become a new form of National Testing. Local authorities must not set up local arrangements for the collection of attainment statistics and the creation of associated league tables” – **Towards a Brighter Educational Future, SEJ, December 2004**

“Despite the end of National Tests some five years ago, many authorities seem unable to cure their addiction to excessive testing and continue to favour the flawed ‘league-table’ approach to measuring school success” – **Turning the Tables on Testing, SEJ, February 2008**

“The existence of data from national tests has been seized on by national and local government, and also by the Inspectorate, as a benchmarking tool for evaluating progress within schools” – **EIS Submission to the Scottish Government calling for the cessation of use of the 5-14 Assessment Bank, reported in the SEJ, December 2008.**

# Standardised Tests will not Close the Gap

**NO** one should doubt Nicola Sturgeon's determination to improve education for children growing up in poverty. There is enormous irony, however, in a pro-Independence politician moving towards English-style testing, argues academic and education editor Terry Wrigley.

As editor of the international journal *Improving Schools*, I receive abundant evidence of the perverse side-effects of test-driven school systems – particularly in England, the USA and, increasingly, Australia. England is one of the most test-driven education systems in the world. This is often referred to as 'high-stakes' testing in the sense that it goes well beyond an evaluation of children's learning to form stark judgements on teachers and heads.

Testing is deliberately designed to set school against school. Below average scores justify removing schools from local authorities and placing them under the control of commercial businesses. Parents compare raw scores of different schools believing these to be an indicator of quality. Even the pupils lose faith in their school when they find the statistics on the internet.

Teachers are judged against absurd expectations, and condemned for below-average attainment or insufficient "value added." They are assumed to be ineffective if children have made less than the required stages of progress each year, though such measures are arbitrary and narrowly focused. Far from helping disadvantaged children, this drives good teachers away from challenging schools.

The pressure to raise test scores leads to curriculum narrowing: in the final year of primary school, it is common for parents to be informed that there will be no art or music and little PE or geography for the next six months in order to prepare for the tests.

## Testing, child poverty and educational disadvantage

This regime is frequently rationalised in terms of 'closing the gap'. It hasn't worked. The data shows a chronic failure to narrow the attainment gap related to child poverty.

Blanket testing, it is argued, is required to provide data for targeted interventions. The information it generates is likely to be seriously misleading.

The London Challenge identified the most inspiring teachers and helped share their expertise, but this cannot be done simply by comparing school results, for several reasons. There are hidden differences between local communities even where schools have statistically similar populations; there can be large variations between teachers within a school; the outstanding P7 results can be largely the consequence of highly successful P1 teaching.

Test scores for English schools are now provided not just for the school as a whole, but separately for free-meal pupils and the rest. Schools are supposed to use such data to help close the gap. Unfortunately this crudely misidentifies educational need. Many children in poverty are not entitled to free lunches, whilst many others who receive free meals are not educationally disadvantaged - they may have well educated single mothers not currently able to work, or dedicated grandparents, or simply low-paid parents who take a keen interest in their children's progress.

Across England, the simplistic targeting of free-meal pupils is leading schools and teachers to generalise and stereotype pupils. It has become normal to walk into an English staffroom and see the photos of all the free meal children on display. We would be horrified to see such a display of children with overseas-born parents, unmarried mothers or gay dads! Heads

are constantly demanding written records of interventions for each free-meal pupil, whether educationally needed or not.

## Is there an alternative?

Blanket tests which enable league-table comparisons are unhelpful and unnecessary. A more useful alternative would be diagnostic assessment using a mixture of tests and observation by teachers. This could be designed so as **not** to generate an aggregate score.

Consider reading in the upper reaches of primary school. It would be helpful to distinguish:

- which pupils still struggle with more complex phonics, or irregular words;
- which pupils read accurately but slowly;
- pupils who read fiction comfortably but have a limited vocabulary;
- those who have not learnt strategies needed for extracting information from more complex reference sources;
- those who are developing good skills of critical literacy.

Once you aggregate such complexity into a single score for each child, and then the school, you have lost the information you need to act upon. Diagnostic assessment would provide richer information but without false comparisons between schools.

As an example, such diagnostic assessment might reveal that the children in one school are not very good at reading for information, suggesting the need for CPD on the differences between reading linear narratives and factual explanations, and strategies for making sense of reference materials. This would not be apparent by looking at the average score in a P7 reading test.



#### Author details

**Dr Terry Wrigley**, formerly a Senior Lecturer in Edinburgh, is editor of the international journal *Improving Schools* and a Visiting Professor at Northumbria University. His most recent book is *Living on the edge: rethinking poverty, class and schooling*.



#### Understanding the 'gap'

The introduction of blanket tests is a moral panic resulting from the latest Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy, with more heat than light generated by the Westminster-style point-scoring of some opposition party leaders. The data needs more careful consideration. A two percent increase in unsatisfactory reading at P7 may be a consequence of Conservative austerity politics on families, not to mention constant denigration of benefit claimants. Knee-jerk responses and moral panics do not make good policy.

There is a desperate need for a broad professional debate about the relationship between poverty and educational disadvantage. This might be uncomfortable for some teachers, but it is the only professional way forward: an English-style test regime will only infantilise teachers. Common practices

such as segregating children onto 'low ability' tables may come under scrutiny, or even the way S1-2 is typically organised with too many different specialists knowing little about children's lives and problems. Teachers might need to work more closely with youth workers and health professionals, for example, to help relate to the local community. Disengaged pupils need activities which re-engage their interest and commitment, not simply more pressure.

Such a debate may also raise challenges for government and local authorities, including demands that cut into special needs budgets must stop. Scottish education has suffered from too many short-lived government initiatives (new community schools, literacy hubs etc).

The extent of low achievement linked to child poverty is the greatest challenge now facing our schools, and the Scottish

Government's initiative is too important to fail. It requires far-sighted and coherent thinking, however, rather than a step backwards towards crude test outcomes and judgements.

Measures which scapegoat teachers for a failure of social policy are doomed to failure. Schools can make a difference but not all the difference: an essential step towards closing the attainment gap is to end child poverty.

#### Have your say

The next edition of the SEJ (December) will include an article from Cabinet Secretary Angela Constance on the National Improvement Framework and the Scottish Government's view on national testing.

Have your say - email us your views at [sej@eis.org.uk](mailto:sej@eis.org.uk) or tweet us @eisunion

**“Knee-jerk responses and moral panics do not make good policy”**



# CPD

Learning Reps



## Professional Update

A new MyGTCS support system for Professional Update will be launched in November 2015. The upgraded system will offer improved layout and enhanced functionality; an upgraded Professional Reflective Learning Record (formerly the Professional Learning Record); new search and share functions and better links to the Standards. The GTCS has requested that we thank all the teachers who have helped shape these improvements. Their input has been very important to ensure that the needs of those using the system are met.

Further details will be published on the MyGTCS message board, the GTCS website and in future e-newsletters. For more information email [pld@gtcs.org.uk](mailto:pld@gtcs.org.uk)

The EIS has been organising many successful events to support colleagues with the Professional Update process. The two most recent events were held in Ayrshire and South Lanarkshire. The event in Ayrshire featured workshops on Using the Standards, Leadership Framework, YOUR Professional Learning and Hands on Support – a practical workshop where EIS Learning Reps assisted participants with inputting information about their Professional Learning and demonstrating impact.

The event in South Lanarkshire featured workshops presented by EIS Learning Reps from across Scotland. The three themes covered were; Coaching and Mentoring, Professional Learning and PRD and Evidence and Impact. One of the items which is mentioned at every event

we hold is around evidence and impact. We have been keen to make colleagues aware that the evidence required is not a huge amount of paperwork. It is about being able to demonstrate the impact of the professional learning you undertake and should not be an onerous task. Evidence can be drawn from a range of resources, it should be relevant and meaningful and should be analysed and reflected on.

We also remind all of those attending events and within SEJ articles that

### **Professional Learning is something you need to be undertaking on an on-going basis**

PRD interview and not just in the year of your Professional Update sign off. Professional Learning can take many forms – it can be courses but there are a lot of other different types of professional learning. Professional dialogue is one of these, reading and reflecting on a topic is another – it is about being able to concisely demonstrate the effect this has had on your teaching.

EIS Learning Reps are classroom based teachers who have undertaken the high level of training required to be able to effectively advise and support colleagues on CPD/Professional Learning. This CPD/Professional Learning should be what is most appropriate to you – this is fundamental to the Professional Update process which gives teachers ownership

of their learning. This should not be dictated by anyone – EIS Learning Reps are there to talk to you about where you are and where you want to be in terms of your professional life and guide you on how to get there.

The Learning Reps have been involved in organising joint CPD events with local authorities throughout Scotland for ten years

### **EIS Learning Reps have the expertise to assist you with all aspects of your CPD/ Professional Learning, PRD and Professional Update**

and have been instrumental in ensuring that the Professional Update events have covered all areas within Scotland. Events will be organised and held in different areas from February next year – details will be sent out by email, posters to schools, member e-bulletin, SEJ and on the EIS website under the Events section. Some comments from participants include: “Super, now have a better understanding how to update evidence; great ideas for Professional Learning and how to use this to take forward my learning; Great getting to explore and ask questions regarding the GTCS website; very informative and reassuring.”

EIS Learning Reps have the expertise to assist you with all aspects of your CPD/Professional Learning, PRD and Professional Update. They provide a unique and confidential service and should be contacted to give you the information, guidance and support you require. Their email details appear on the EIS web-site [www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk) The Learning Reps can speak to you on the telephone, email you or meet face-to-face if this is preferable. They are there to help you, please take advantage of this excellent service.

# Beginning Your Professional Learning

**Date:** Saturday 31 October 2015

**Venue:** Stirling Court Hotel, University of Stirling

**Time:** 10am - 3.30pm

The EIS organised and ran a very successful and well attended Beginning Professional Learning Conference last year.

Due to this success another Conference is being held on Saturday 31 October 2015 in the Stirling Court Hotel. The Conference will feature short keynote presentations and participants will also be able to attend workshops provided by the Open University, Show Racism the Red Card, Scottish Association of Physical Education, University of the West of Scotland, Scottish Outdoor Education and others. This will be a high quality Professional Learning event aimed at teachers who are within the first few years of their teaching. It will be of assistance to teachers in the Professional Update process too.

If you are interested in registering for this event please email Ashley Gray [Ashley@eis.org.uk](mailto:Ashley@eis.org.uk) for further information about the workshops and the event. Demand for places will be high so please register as soon as possible but no later than **Friday 16 October 2015**.



## New Framework for Educational Leadership Launched

The Scottish College for Educational Leadership recently launched its Framework for Educational Leadership at the Scottish Learning Festival in Glasgow.

A key recommendation from Teaching Scotland's Future, the online Framework offers a wide range of high quality professional learning activities, research and resources to support the self-directed career-long leadership development of all teachers across Scotland.

As the Framework grows, it will include programmes and courses designed or endorsed by SCEL and mapped to relevant GTCS Standards, so teachers can reflect on their own leadership development and

evaluate the impact on their practice.

Over the coming months it will also be extended to include information and support for early years leaders and practitioners.

Accessible from anywhere, anytime, the Framework is for educational professionals at all career stages. This self directed website will help teachers identify their own strengths, shape their own development and direct their own learning journey by selecting and engaging in different types of professional learning opportunities as and when they want and need them.

Gillian Hamilton, Chief Executive at SCEL, said: "We are delighted to launch the new Framework today and I'd like to thank all those across the education sector at every level who shared their ideas and expectations as to what it could and should deliver."

"We all know that powerful leadership is vital to school and learner success, and every teacher is a leader in the classroom,

school and beyond. High quality career-long professional learning in leadership is central to achieving this and we hope that people will engage regularly with the Framework and share their feedback so it continues to evolve to meet their needs."

"This is just the beginning of our journey. As more and more professionals engage with the Framework, and we increase the resources and opportunities available through it, the Framework will get bigger and better."

"We want the best for teachers and learners in Scotland and this requires high quality professional learning that fully equips educational professionals for the different challenges and changes they face throughout their career. My own hope is that teachers see the Framework as key to providing this, and through engagement with the Framework we show real impact for Scotland's young people."

Further info: [www.scelscotland.org.uk](http://www.scelscotland.org.uk)

# Equipping Lecturers to Manage Work-Related Stress



**The EIS - ULA, has launched a new toolkit for university lecturers to help combat work-related stress.**

The new guide, entitled the EIS-ULA Stress Toolkit, is currently being sent out to members and university HR departments.

The toolkit has been produced in response to some worrying issues identified in a Health & Wellbeing survey commissioned by the EIS. The results of the survey showed that 93% of EIS-ULA members reported experiencing some level of work-related stress and 33% of lecturers stated that they felt stressed all the time.

Workload has significantly increased in the university sector in recent years with serious implications for members' work-life balance. Many lecturers are increasingly working during evenings,

**93% of EIS-ULA members reported experiencing some level of work-related stress**

weekends and holiday periods.

Commenting on the launch, EIS-ULA President, Dr Vaughan Ellis, said; "This toolkit is a valuable resource which will allow University lecturers to be more aware of potential hazards and how best to manage their workload to ensure they have a healthy work-life balance."

Dr Ellis went on to say; "Reducing workplace stress will not only improve members' health and wellbeing, but will also help foster a sound environment for learning and teaching, which is in the best interests of staff and students alike."

The guide is split in two halves; the first half seeks to define workplace stress, to set out employers' responsibilities

protecting their employees from workplace stress and the Health & Safety Executive approach to work-related stress.

The Second half of the document sets out a workplace stress toolkit for members to identify the potential hazards causing stress and ways in which the risk of these hazards may be reduced - thereby hopefully reducing the risk of work related stress.

The guide highlights that the design of the workplace (including organisation, roles, structures, communications etc) are key in reducing stress and stress-related illness with the principles of openness and transparency underpinning all activity in the workplace.

**Workload has significantly increased in the university sector in recent years with serious implications for members' work-life balance**



The EIS-ULA Stress Toolkit has been sent to all Higher Education Institutions, and is available on the EIS website at [www.eis.org.uk/ULA\\_Publications/Stress\\_Toolkit.htm](http://www.eis.org.uk/ULA_Publications/Stress_Toolkit.htm)

# False Economy of Cuts in Home Economics Provision

Morag Mackinnon, a Principal Teacher of Food Technology from Argyll & Bute, explores the national difficulty in securing teaching staff for Home Economics departments and outlines possible strategies to address the challenge.



For the past 34 years I have believed passionately that teaching Home Economics make lives better and healthier and yes even longer, and the Scottish Government's emphasis on Health and Wellbeing within CfE confirms this belief.

Learning in Home Economics enables pupils to make informed decisions in order to improve their physical wellbeing, through practical activity they experience positive aspects of healthy living and establish healthy habits and attitudes which can be sustained into adult life. All of these experiences promote the health and wellbeing of the next generation of Scottish children. However, over decades there has been a steady decline and marginalisation of this subject witnessed in many schools across Scotland.

One of the key contributory factors is the chronic shortage of Home Economics graduates and further to this the even smaller numbers of these graduates entering the PGDE.

The undergraduate programmes available fail to provide the broad base of knowledge needed to teach the diverse and complex subject that is Home Economics and graduates find themselves short of credits to enter the PDGE. As a solution graduates have to "tack on" a series of qualifications by attending night classes or summer courses on: Food Hygiene; Practical Cookery and Sewing.

These courses are often at the same basic level at which they will subsequently teach their pupils, hardly an adequate solution or training.

Abertay University provides the most acceptable qualification (Human Nutrition degree) for PGDE with Strathclyde University but even then students require additional units.

Graduates have expertise in their chosen area but many face difficulty when asked to teach another aspect of the

subject area beyond S3.

All of this has led to a shrinking workforce and an alarming number of vacancies, the true number of which is hard to determine due to vacancy management. Many schools have worked with vacancies for three years or more, leading to unrealistic workloads and illness for the remaining staff members. In other establishments courses have been reduced and even cut providing only a cursory nod to Health & Wellbeing Experiences and Outcomes and a worrying lack of progression. More alarmingly, many departments have been closed. The common misconception that PE can cover and "tick the boxes" for many of the significant aspects of learning for health and wellbeing compounds the problem. PE does not and cannot provide experience of diet and health through practical food activities as required.

The Scottish Government has placed Home Economics at the heart of CfE;

delivering Health & Wellbeing and also Technologies. At the 2014 British Nutrition Foundation conference in Glasgow and again at the Education Scotland Lead Officer event for Home Economics May 2015, home economists heard about the "Eat Better, Learn Better" initiative. We were encouraged to provide after school cookery clubs, and to offer specialist knowledge and to work collaboratively in delivering Health and Wellbeing in associated primaries. How is this realistic given the challenges faced to deliver within our own departments? I began looking for help while facing the potential reduction of staff in my own department. Anticipating being a lone Home Economics teacher in a comprehensive of 1000 was daunting and prompted me to look closely at my small authority- the picture is bleak. Two departments are closed, by 2019 as few as six Home Economics teachers could remain in our ten secondary schools and all of them in their fifties.

Home Economics, as a subject and a profession, is in the grip of a national crisis and no one appears to care. The Agencies responsible for the various aspects of educational provision are aware of these problems however, there appears to be no one person or body with an overview. Local authorities, Headteachers and parent bodies must recognise the detrimental effect a continuation of this situation will have on our children's education and work to bring about a review of the Under Graduate and PGDE provision for Home Economics.

# Instrumental Music

## A Shared Vision for the Future



**A MAJOR joint instrumental music conference was recently held in Glasgow - a first of its kind organised jointly by the EIS, Creative Scotland, HITS and the Scottish Government. The conference brought together music organisations and educators to discuss instrumental music education in Scotland. Here, the SEJ looks back at some of the conference highlights.**

The *A Shared Vision* conference brought together a wide range of people who believe that music has an important and a far greater role to play in education, life and culture. Throughout the day delegates were given the opportunity to share knowledge and expertise on the challenges that instrumental music teaching currently faces. With the help of four thought provoking presentations and seminar discussions, delegates were encouraged to share views, opinions and questions on how best to support the delivery of instrumental music education.

Opening the event, Mark Traynor, the convener of the EIS Instrumental Music Teachers' Network, said "This conference

is the result of a two-year long journey with the Scottish Government. We will explore how we can take instrumental music forward further through partnership working."

Paul Wood, the outgoing chair of HITS, announced the publication of new national guidance on instrumental music. "For the first time ever, Instrumental Music has an agreed set of guidelines written by those involved in music education in Scottish schools."

David Green, chair of the Scottish Government's music strategy group, lauded the publication of the new guidance and highlighted the strong belief within the Scottish Government of the importance of music education. Outlining the need for space within CfE for music education, Mr Green said, "Music has to move from a 'nice to have' to an essential part of the arts curriculum."

Stephen Broad of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland outlined new research by his colleague, Dr Rachel Drury, which explores the wider benefits of instrumental music in childhood - including increased confidence, enhanced reading skills, and improved integration

into wider groups and society generally.

Aileen Monaghan of Education Scotland urged delegates, "If you are doing something new or cutting edge, please share it with us so we can help to disseminate good practice across the country."

Keynote speaker Professor Nigel Osborne (University of Edinburgh) based his presentation on Albert Einstein's love of music and the wider benefits that it brought. Quoting Einstein, Professor Osborne said, "I often think in music. I live my daydreams in music. I see my life in terms of music." He went on to explore the 'Einstein Effect' - the positive impact of music on maths, communications, memory, intelligence and language.

"Music is powerful", added Professor Osborne. "It is incredibly valuable. It is the ultimate educational experience, generally with one person passing on knowledge to another person (or small group of people) through music and voice."

A full report of the event is available via the EIS website [www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk)



## An Individual View on a Shared Vision

"I'd like to thank the EIS for the opportunity to attend the 'Shared Vision for the Future' Conference and share my thoughts on the event.

The key presentations came from four angles – policy, curriculum, research, and practice. It was exciting to see representatives from all areas and levels of music education among the delegates: independent organisations, national companies, funders, every type of educator, policy-makers and more – practitioners of all kinds. It is so important to have everyone together in one place, to connect and share.

A recurring theme across the day was the importance of research in demonstrating the benefits of music. In his opening presentation, Stephen Broad highlighted the need for better

dissemination of research findings to practitioners. My question is: what do practitioners think researchers should be doing to bridge the gap? How can we shape research and knowledge exchange practice to make our findings accessible?

The focus on extra-musical benefits was quite overwhelming, overshadowing the argument for learning music because it is a part of human culture, and has intrinsic benefit. What makes music different from other subjects? Music has the potential to be the most creative part of school learning, the most flexible, the most inclusive, the most pupil-led, and of the most benefit to personal and social development. We need to step away from justifying music education because it improves other learning outcomes – music has its own unique learning

outcomes, let's focus on them.

It was really positive to hear of the good practice that is happening in many parts of Scotland, being led by so many delegates, but also stories of barriers to participation in musical learning. We need to continue to share our good practice, so that it reaches those who need it.

Professor Nigel Osborne's keynote lecture was charismatic, full of insight into his experiences working across the globe. Leaving us with a strong message, Nigel reminded us that in Scotland we have a chance to be responsible and create positive change, in an irresponsible world."

**Diljeet Bhachu**, University of Edinburgh

## EIS Instrumental Music Teachers' Network

### GTCS Registration

Since 2012 the EIS Instrumental Music Teachers' Network has been engaged in discussion with the General Teaching Council for Scotland regarding registration of instrumental music practitioners. Registration must be seen as a progressive step forward in the development of the profession. It is about status, identity and parity of standing with our classroom colleagues but more importantly, it is about professional recognition and regulation and at the same time, an acknowledgement of our professionalism and the important contribution we make to Scottish education and a young person's learning.

In April 2015, the GTCS established a small working group comprising of the EIS, Heads of Instrumental Teaching Scotland (HITS), Local Authorities, GTCS and other stakeholders to look at the mechanics of how registration would be delivered.

Initially, registration will be voluntary but longer term this could be mandatory – however this would require a change of legislation.

Discussions are progressing positively and we will continue to update and engage with members throughout the process. Returns from a recent EIS instrumental music survey demonstrate a desire from the profession for registration. If you are an IMT please take the opportunity to have your say by returning your survey.

At our 2015 conference, "A Shared Vision" organised jointly by the EIS, Creative Scotland, HITS and Scottish Government, the topic of registration was part of discussions by those involved in the delivery of instrumental music. For more information and to access the report of this excellent event please go to [www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk)

### SQA Visiting Assessors

As part of its continuing work, the EIS Instrumental Music Teachers' Network has been in discussion with the Scottish Qualifications Authority regarding the role of instrumental music teachers (IMTs) as Visiting Assessors (VAs) within the performance element of SQA music examinations. Following a successful pilot in the 2014-2015 exam diet, we are now pleased to inform members that the role of VA is now be open to IMTs.

For more information:

[www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/66384.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/66384.html)

To apply: [www.appointeeopportunities.sqa.org.uk/vacancy/visiting-assessor-music-national-5-higher-229033.html](http://www.appointeeopportunities.sqa.org.uk/vacancy/visiting-assessor-music-national-5-higher-229033.html)

- Mark Traynor

# CONTACTS

## Headquarters

### Edinburgh

Tel: 0131 225 6244 - Fax: 0131 220 3151  
e-mail: [sej@eis.org.uk](mailto:sej@eis.org.uk) - [enquiries@eis.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@eis.org.uk)  
Membership Tel: 0131 220 2268  
Membership e-mail: [membership@eis.org.uk](mailto:membership@eis.org.uk)  
[www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk)

### General Secretary

Larry Flanagan

### Assistant Secretaries

Drew Morrice  
Louise Wilson  
Andrea Bradley

### Accountant

Colin Mackenzie

### Employment, Health & Safety Officer

Dave McGinty

### Further & Higher Education Officer

David Belsey

### Head of Communications

Brian Cooper

### EIS Organisers

Annie McCrae  
Louise O'Hara

## Area Offices

### Dundee

310 Broughty Ferry Road, Dundee, DD4 7NJ  
Tel: 0138 245 8270 - Fax: 0138 244 3144

### Officer: Clare Stephen / Pat Fallow

e-mail: [cstephen@eis.org.uk](mailto:cstephen@eis.org.uk)  
e-mail: [pfallow@eis.org.uk](mailto:pfallow@eis.org.uk)  
Aberdeen, Dundee, Fife, Perth & Kinross,  
**FELA Colleges:** , Fife College, Perth

### Officer: Karen Barclay

e-mail: [kbarclay@eis.org.uk](mailto:kbarclay@eis.org.uk)  
Aberdeenshire, Angus, Highland, Moray, Orkney, Shetland  
**FELA Colleges:** Dundee & Angus, North East Scotland, Inverness, Moray, North Highland, Sabhal Mor Ostaig, Shetland

### Edinburgh

46 Moray Place, Edinburgh EH3 6BH  
Tel: 0131 225 3155 - Fax: 0131 220 3151

### Officer: Leah Franchetti

e-mail: [lfranchetti@eis.org.uk](mailto:lfranchetti@eis.org.uk)  
Scottish Borders, Clackmannanshire, Falkirk, North Lanarkshire, Stirling  
**FELA Colleges:** Borders, New College Lanarkshire, Forth Valley

### Officer: Terry Gray

e-mail: [tgray@eis.org.uk](mailto:tgray@eis.org.uk)  
East Lothian, Edinburgh, Midlothian, West Lothian  
**FELA Colleges:** Edinburgh College, Newbattle Abbey, West Lothian

### Glasgow

6 Clairmont Gardens, Glasgow G3 7LW  
Tel: 0141 353 3595 - Fax: 0141 332 2778

### Officer: Stephen McCrossan

e-mail: [smccrossan@eis.org.uk](mailto:smccrossan@eis.org.uk)  
East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde, Renfrewshire, West Dunbartonshire.  
**FELA Colleges:** West College Scotland

### Officer: Frank Healy

e-mail: [fhealy@eis.org.uk](mailto:fhealy@eis.org.uk)  
Argyll & Bute, Glasgow, Western Isles.  
**FELA Colleges:** Glasgow Clyde College, Lews Castle, Glasgow Kelvin, City of Glasgow

### Officer: Alan Scott

e-mail: [ascott@eis.org.uk](mailto:ascott@eis.org.uk)  
Dumfries & Galloway, East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire, South Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire  
**FELA Colleges:** Ayrshire College, Dumfries & Galloway, South Lanarkshire

## Learning Representatives

For all your CPD questions and information find your nearest Learning Rep online at [www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk) or e-mail: [lmclintock@eis.org.uk](mailto:lmclintock@eis.org.uk)

## EIS telephone Helpline

Legal Helpline: **0141 332 2887**

## Local Association Secretaries - full contact details can be found at [www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk)

### Aberdeen City

Heather Collie & Susan Talboys  
01224 522 468  
[aberdeencity@eis.org.uk](mailto:aberdeencity@eis.org.uk)

### Aberdeenshire

David Smith  
07931 838 417  
[aberdeenshire@eis.org.uk](mailto:aberdeenshire@eis.org.uk)

### Angus

John Pratti  
01382458270  
[angus@eis.org.uk](mailto:angus@eis.org.uk)

### Argyll & Bute

Billy Marshall  
01369 705 010  
07807 639011  
[argyllandbute@eis.org.uk](mailto:argyllandbute@eis.org.uk)

### Clackmannanshire

Gavin Hunter  
07515 985596  
[clackmannan@eis.org.uk](mailto:clackmannan@eis.org.uk)

### Dumfries & Galloway

John Dennis  
01387 261 590  
[dumfries@eis.org.uk](mailto:dumfries@eis.org.uk)

### Dundee

David Baxter  
01382 458 270  
07811 156299  
[dundeela@eis.org.uk](mailto:dundeela@eis.org.uk)

### East Ayrshire

Nicola Dasgupta  
07970 489558  
[eastayrshire@eis.org.uk](mailto:eastayrshire@eis.org.uk)

### East Dunbartonshire

Kenneth Brown  
0141 237 1757  
[eastdunbarton@eis.org.uk](mailto:eastdunbarton@eis.org.uk)

### East Lothian

Gael Gillan  
01620 829 010  
[eastlothian@eis.org.uk](mailto:eastlothian@eis.org.uk)

### East Renfrewshire

Alan Munro  
0141 881 8219  
[eastrenfrew@eis.org.uk](mailto:eastrenfrew@eis.org.uk)

### Edinburgh

Alison Thornton  
0131 225 3474  
07773 234752  
[edinburghla@eis.org.uk](mailto:edinburghla@eis.org.uk)

### Falkirk

Margaret Smith  
01324 506698  
[falkirk@eis.org.uk](mailto:falkirk@eis.org.uk)

### Fife

Cathy Grant  
01592 657 710  
[fife@eis.org.uk](mailto:fife@eis.org.uk)

### Glasgow

Susan Quinn  
0141 572 0550  
[glasgowla@eis.org.uk](mailto:glasgowla@eis.org.uk)

### Highland

Bob Colman  
01397 698 080  
07477 795 454  
[highland@eis.org.uk](mailto:highland@eis.org.uk)

### Inverclyde

Thomas Tracey  
01475 725 124  
[inverclyde@eis.org.uk](mailto:inverclyde@eis.org.uk)

### Midlothian

Sonia Kordiak  
07973 394715  
[midlothian@eis.org.uk](mailto:midlothian@eis.org.uk)

### Moray

Susan Slater  
01343 557 942  
07811 347905  
[moray@eis.org.uk](mailto:moray@eis.org.uk)

### North Ayrshire

Gordon Smith  
01563 574 090  
[northayrshire@eis.org.uk](mailto:northayrshire@eis.org.uk)

### North Lanarkshire

Ricky Cullen  
0141 332 3202  
[northlanark@eis.org.uk](mailto:northlanark@eis.org.uk)

### Orkney Islands

Jim Lawson  
01856 850 660  
[orkney@eis.org.uk](mailto:orkney@eis.org.uk)

### Perth & Kinross

Patricia Duncan  
01738 450 467  
[perthandkinross@eis.org.uk](mailto:perthandkinross@eis.org.uk)

### Renfrewshire

Kenny Fella  
0141 889 9022  
[renfrewshire@eis.org.uk](mailto:renfrewshire@eis.org.uk)

### Scottish Borders

Angela Cumming  
07904 835054  
[borders@eis.org.uk](mailto:borders@eis.org.uk)

### Shetland Islands

Matthew Moss  
07979 781996  
[shetland@eis.org.uk](mailto:shetland@eis.org.uk)

### South Ayrshire

Tom Robinson  
07907 022830  
[southayrshire@eis.org.uk](mailto:southayrshire@eis.org.uk)

### South Lanarkshire

Bill Ramsay  
01698 527 109  
[southlanark@eis.org.uk](mailto:southlanark@eis.org.uk)

### Stirling

Ann Skillen  
07432 133 280  
[stirling@eis.org.uk](mailto:stirling@eis.org.uk)

### West Dunbartonshire

Michael Dolan: 07981 208 795  
Jim Halfpenny: 07847 428 902  
[westdunbartonshire@eis.org.uk](mailto:westdunbartonshire@eis.org.uk)

### West Lothian

John Mackinnon  
07562 950 563  
[westlothian@eis.org.uk](mailto:westlothian@eis.org.uk)

### Western Isles

Richard Fraser  
01851 707 000  
[westernisles@eis.org.uk](mailto:westernisles@eis.org.uk)

## EIS Financial Services

If you would like to arrange to speak to your EIS-FS consultant, please tel: 0141 332 8004  
email: [enquiries@eisfs.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@eisfs.co.uk) - [www.eisfs.co.uk](http://www.eisfs.co.uk)



# How much are you owed?

**69% of taxpayers in the education sector** have been given the wrong tax code by HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) in the last 4 years and as a result they've all paid too much tax without realising. Many are still paying too much even now!

These are the results from 162,812 teachers and education sector employees that had their tax codes checked by the UK's leading tax code experts at The Tax Refund Company.

Your employer must use the code HMRC sends them to work out how much tax to take off your pay, so it's important they have the right code. But under HMRC rules, it's your responsibility to ensure the code your employer has used is correct.

Luckily, if you've had the wrong tax code in the last 4 years and paid too much tax, you can still get your money back from HMRC. Unfortunately, very few taxpayers know enough about income tax rules to spot errors in their tax codes, or want to try and speak directly with HMRC.

That's where **The Tax Refund Company** comes in. As the UK's leading experts in PAYE tax codes and recommended by Trade Unions, employers and professional bodies across Britain, our confidential and comprehensive tax code review will detect any errors, no matter how small, and take the appropriate action to correct them and get your money back.

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- **Refunds for EIS members average £179.57 each**
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the box that applies to you

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Civil Partnership  Separated/  
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If applicable please specify date of  
marriage, separation or widowed

(Date of marriage/civil partnership)

(Date of separation)

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# Saint Andrew

## A new book by EIS member Michael TRB Turnbull explores the history of Scotland's patron Saint.

The Saltire is the flag every Scot can fly. It goes back to Constantine the Great who faced death in 312 CE at the Battle of Athelstaneford outside Rome. As a worshipper of the sun god he turned to the sky for inspiration and, in its blinding light, saw the shape of the Greek letters Chi (X) and Rho (R) which, superimposed, formed the figure of a crucified man.

The earliest descriptions of the Battle of Athelstaneford are of a bright light in the sky. It was this sign of confidence in the struggle of life which became the shining white on blue which denotes Scotland.

The Saltire is a multiplication-sign, symbolising not only economic ambition but recalling the biblical story of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, the feeding of the five thousand.

As a fisherman and a good communicator, Saint Andrew was a

networker in both senses. He understood tides and winds and how to survive in the water.

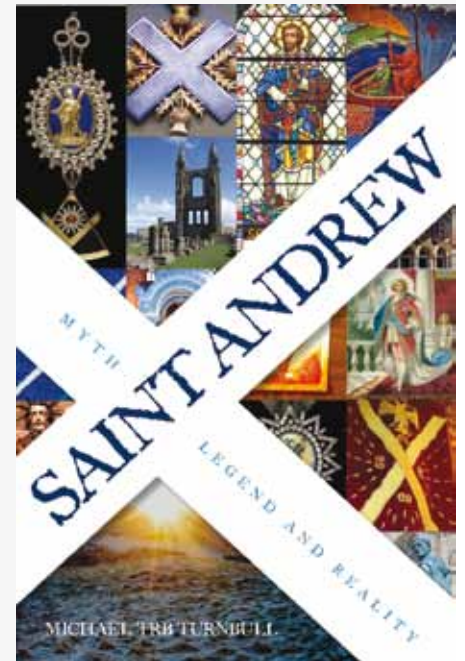
Saint Andrew gives Scotland an international orientation, not only because he worked in Greece and in the Ukraine but because of the many St Andrew societies worldwide, originally set up to help Scots abroad who had fallen on hard times.

The story of the Saltire has curricular possibilities, not only in history or art, but in the study of language, in music, in science and mathematics, in business and technology.

And, as a hard-working fisherman, perhaps Saint Andrew even reminds us that physical exercise and a healthy diet can be within the grasp of any Scot!

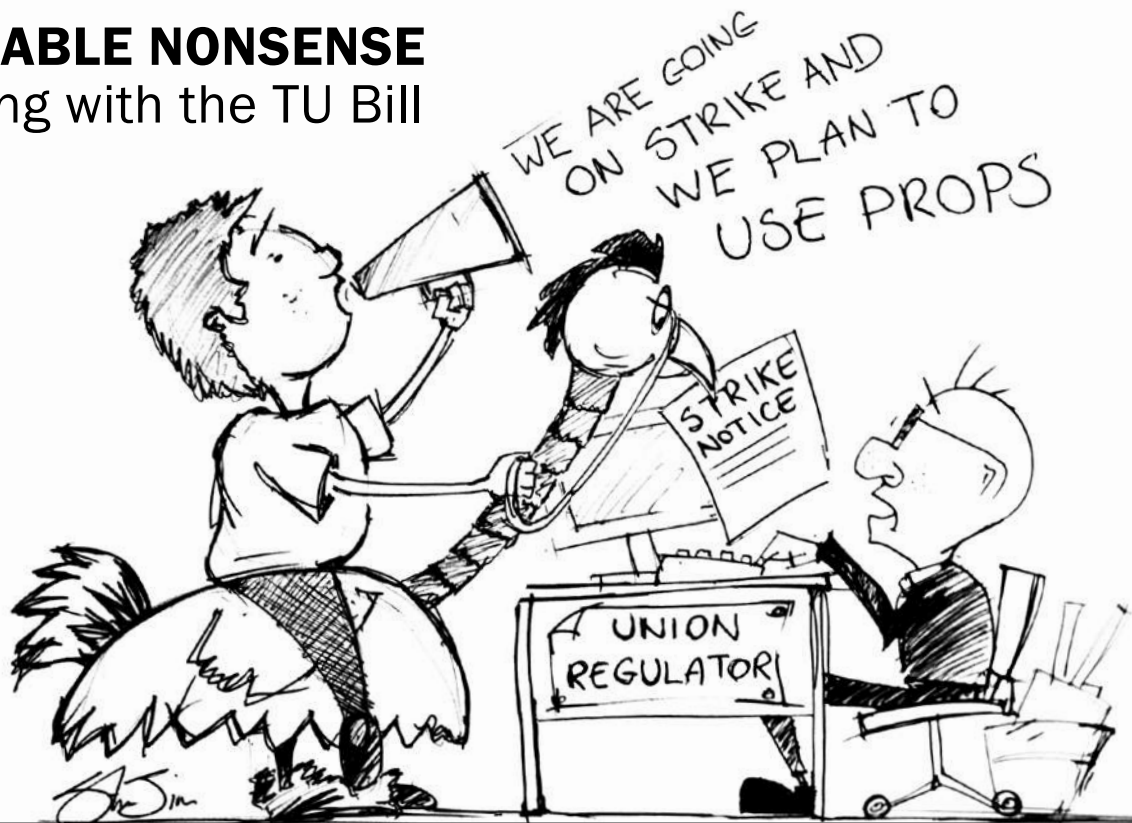
Michael T R B Turnbull has worked as a teacher in the primary and secondary sectors and in further education. He is a committee member of the Scottish Flag Trust which manages the Flag Heritage Centre at Athelstaneford and supplies School Packs, can arrange visits. The Trust website provides a video presentation at:

[www.scottishflagtrust.com](http://www.scottishflagtrust.com)



Saint Andrew: Myth, Legend and Reality. Paperback: 186 pages Publisher: Neil Wilson Publishing (14 Nov 2014) ISBN-10: 1906000786 ISBN-13: 978-1906000783

## CERTIFIABLE NONSENSE Complying with the TU Bill



## Dozing in the Closet

I was outed 15 years ago by technology. A google search of my name would come up with the description “lesbian mother” and “teacher”. It was during the debates over the repeal of section 2a (the Scottish version of section 28) and I hadn’t realised that speaking to the Scottish Parliament would leave such a digital footprint.

Now my notoriety has been buried by the silt of the internet. Staff move on, the common knowledge and friendly gossip stops. I refuse to “confess” to being queer and I rarely find a way to drop the information into passing conversation. I’d need a partner or better still a wife to mention casually when asked about the weekend, rather than a son, a daughter and two ex partners who both identify as male. No one assumes, when I talk about homophobia and transphobia or lead a staff training on gender equality, that I must be queer. It has now become “everyone’s responsibility to challenge discrimination.” (CfE H&W introduction to the E&Os). Who cares anyway in 2015? Why would it matter to anyone?

This spring I was working with a fourth year teaching student. Towards the end of her final placement, we were talking about why some of her peers have not made it to the end of the course. She observed that it seemed to have been the outsiders – trans, gay and other ‘others’ who had left without gaining their teaching qualification. She felt that, while

her university was a welcoming place for diverse students, her friends’ experiences on placement in schools had not been good. She only knew some of their reasons for giving up. However, she felt there was a pattern where students whose identity included a significant difference from the perceived norm for primary teachers had been dissuaded by what happened during their placements from pursuing a career in teaching.

Not long after that conversation, where I did confess to both a personal and a professional interest in the matter, I was sitting in the family room of a London hospital and I saw a Stonewall poster “Different Families. Same Love” on the noticeboard. I know that the same poster is in an information box in our staffroom. Not on the wall, because I haven’t put it up. I have been sleeping on the job. I have fallen back, into my closet, onto some old dungarees, and dozed off.

It has been comfortable, well at least safe. I still feel wary years after my sexual orientation became the issue that sunk an equalities project. I don’t want to provoke more headlines and help sell more nasty newspapers – there really were no “lesbian sex dolls to be given to primary schools”, honest (Daily Mail Sept 23 2003).

Times are changing. At the Pride March in Edinburgh this summer, leaders from many political parties spoke for LGBTI equality (in fact only a couple included Intersex – but that is coming) and the Tory leader, Ruth Davison, talked about Gay and

Lesbian teachers needing support and the Scouts were there and Craigmount High School and 62 of voters had just said yes to gay marriage in Ireland.

And still I am not ready to be out to all the pupils and their families. Our school community includes folk who are afraid to let their children visit a mosque in case it gets bombed. I worry that their children being taught by a lesbian may be as frightening. But it is time to be visible in the staffroom at least.

I could wear a badge. I could choose Stonewall’s somewhat belligerent “Some People Are Gay. Get Over It!” or the gentler and delightful Scouting Association’s “Some People Are Gay and Scouts, We’re Fine With It” or the LGBT Healthy Living Centre’s colloquial “Well Proud!” But none are quite me, and I hate labels and boxes and I don’t want to be in your face about this one aspect. And... endless excuses to mask the fact that I am scared of the people who might treat me badly because for them different means worth less.

However I can’t leave this to the next generation whose peers accept them, whose studies include equality and discrimination, but who may never make it to join us as colleagues if they cannot see allies and support in their future workplaces. So for a start, I will put up the poster, wear a badge and write this to you to ask if there is anything you can do to actively welcome diversity into your staffroom.

**Judith Mackinlay**

## Sudoku

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## SELMAS Annual Conference: Equity and Aspiration

Following the highly successful Brains Trust on 9 September, when speakers discussed the challenges of achieving equity and narrowing the achievement gap, the SELMAS annual conference, on Friday, 13 November, explores a similar theme in greater depth: Equity and Aspiration - How can education contribute to the creation of a more equitable society?

Speakers include Professor Walter Humes, University of Stirling; Carol Craig, Centre for Confidence and Wellbeing; Gerry Lyons, Headteacher; Jim McColl, businessman and entrepreneur; and Angela Constance, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning.

The venue is The Caves in Edinburgh, an iconic venue where Adam Smith and David Hume inspired the Scottish Enlightenment in the 18th century.

For more information and to sign up, go to: [www.welcometoselmas.wordpress.com/2015/09/14/selmas-annual-conference-2015-equity-and-aspiration-in-education/](http://www.welcometoselmas.wordpress.com/2015/09/14/selmas-annual-conference-2015-equity-and-aspiration-in-education/)

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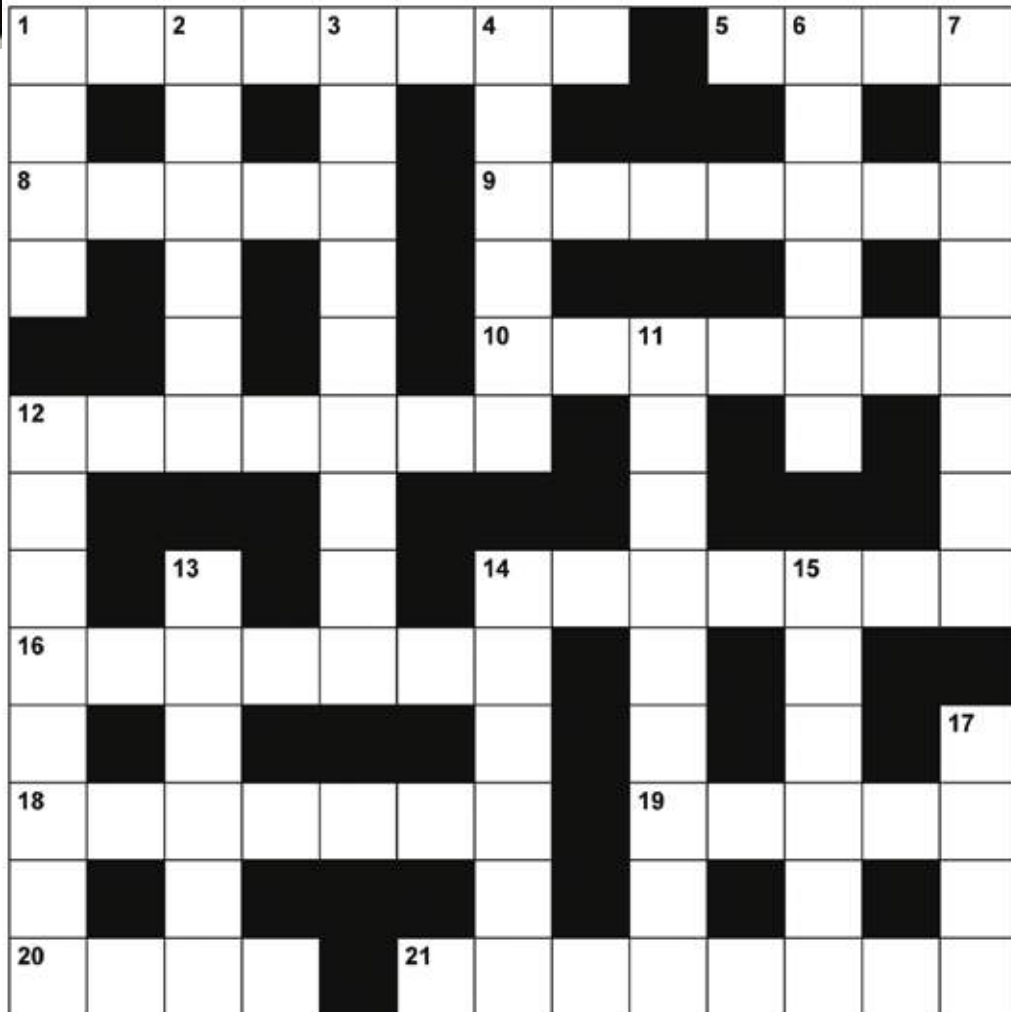
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The first all correct entry picked at random will win. Details of the winner, together with the solution to this month's puzzle will be published in the next edition of the SEJ. Employees of the EIS and their families are not eligible to take part in this competition.



## across

- 1 Wicked people set norms terribly (8)
- 5 Fixed period tenancy duration (4)
- 8 Command alternative deer (lacking energy) (5)
- 9 Pine, perhaps, as deception leads to one confused ref (7)
- 10 Rip cult to pieces to reveal the guilty party (7)
- 12 Distinguished figure found nothing after a choppy stream (7)
- 14 Floridean snow leopard to move exaggeratedly (7)
- 16 Garden to grow old measurement (7)
- 18 Initially I talk a lot in a new language (7)
- 19 Animal a Greek character found after satisfactory beginning (5)
- 20 Retain backwards glance (4)
- 21 Council member male found after a tree (8)

## down

- 1 Titan, say, found day to be about nothing (4)
- 2 No shambolic duel leads to a swelling (6)
- 3 Two girls separated by Northern spider (9)
- 4 Excessively ornate mythical bird making a confused dove sound (6)
- 6 Consecutive notes for square attempt (6)
- 7 Send out a sheep backwards near the sea (8)
- 11 Classic fish accompaniment before one and only fish (5,4)
- 12 Novel gang, unknown, found by Richard (4-4)
- 13 Musical oil (6)
- 14 Sense found around noon and November plant (6)
- 15 Flammable jelly made from sodium tree (6)
- 17 Furnace broke a connection (4)

### Crossword 86 answers:

**Across:** 8 Oceanica, 9 Forres, 10 Cullen, 11 Grantown, 12 Aerodyne, 13 Israel, 14 Elephant grass, 17 Buckie, 19 Cleavage, 22 Vena cava, 23 Should, 24 Big toe, 25 Executor.

**Down:** 1 Accuse, 2 Tail bone, 3 Kidney, 4 Maggiecknocker, 5 Effacing, 6 Ureter, 7 Seaweeds, 14 Ecumenic, 15 Heehawed, 16 Alveolus, 18 Kraits, 20 Eisner, 21 Gallon.





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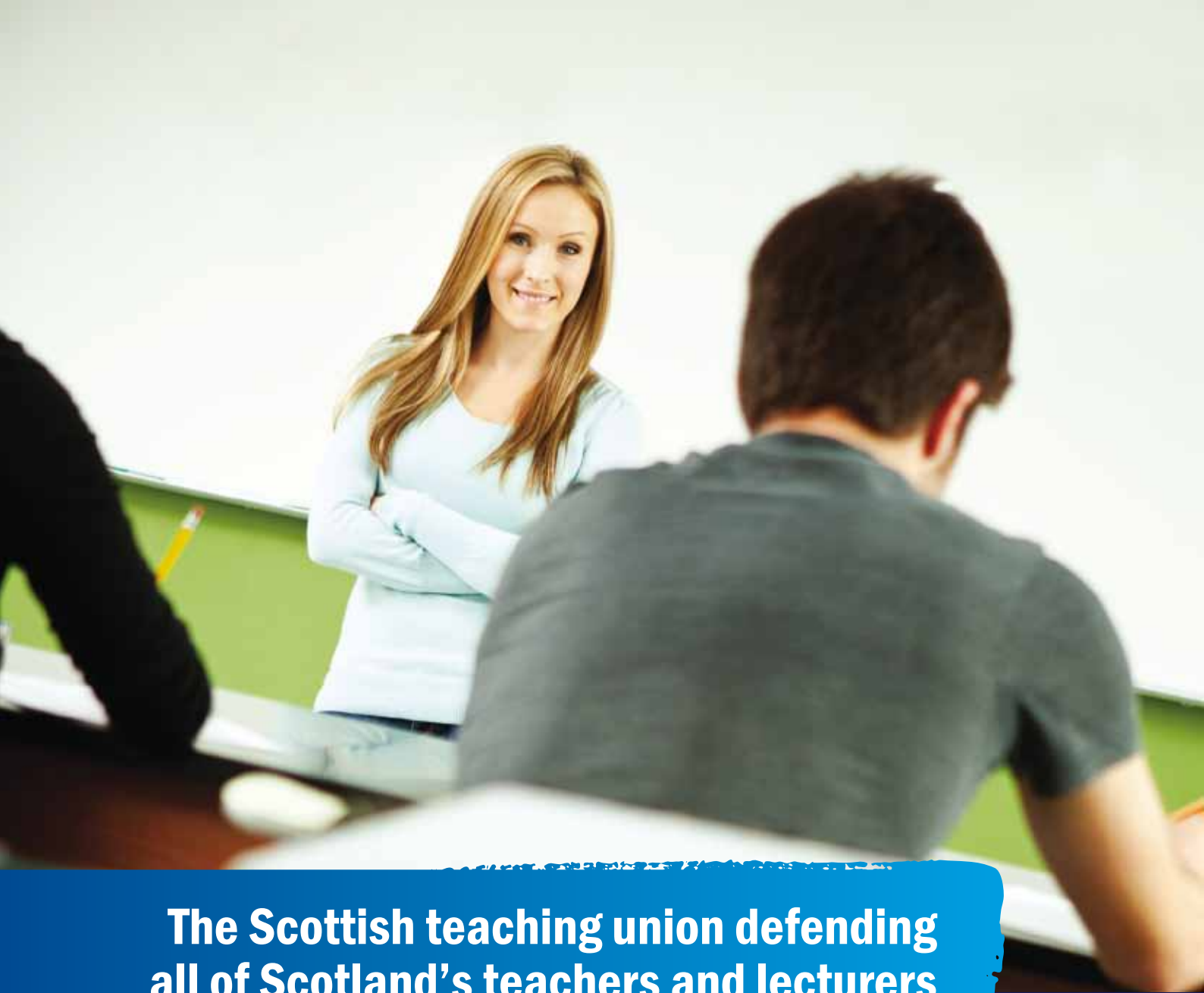
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