



Statement re Acas facilitated discussions between UCEA / joint HE trade unions

**This joint statement has been agreed between UCEA and the HE trade unions:
EIS, GMB, UCU, UNISON and Unite**

1. Both parties agree that some progress at the lower end of the pay spine has been made in Acas discussions on pay as part of the New JNCHES Dispute Resolution Procedure, although an impasse, rather than an agreement, has been reached, and it is agreed that with regard to pay the Dispute Resolution Procedure has been exhausted.

2. Both parties have agreed to proceed to time-limited talks to determine the work necessary on the following issues:

- A joint commitment to time-limited negotiations aimed at agreeing a revised/refreshed pay spine - with detailed aims/terms of reference agreed with the support of Acas in advance. The aims of this review would be to address the pay compression that has developed over recent years.
- A commitment to time-limited negotiations on contract types, workload, and pay gaps - with detailed aims/terms of reference agreed with the support of Acas in advance. With respect to contract type, workload, and pay gaps, the trade unions welcome UCEA's commitment to use its leadership and convening power to identify concrete steps which employers are able to commit to.

When terms of reference and timescales have been agreed, UCEA will consult its members on the substantive points above in order to establish a firm mandate to return to time limited negotiations on each of these.

3. As a positive first step, UCEA has agreed to consult its members, with a positive recommendation to take action on zero hours contracts. While the contractual arrangements offered to employees will be for individual institutions to determine, we would expect indefinite contracts with a fixed or minimal hours to be the general form of employment relationship between employers and employees in HEIs. We accept that there will be specifically defined reasons in any organisation for offering indefinite or fixed term employment arrangements without fixed or minimum hours where it is appropriate. We would expect these reasons to be discussed between HEIs and their local trade unions.

4. Work will continue through Acas conciliation until the end of February 2023 to seek to agree more detailed terms of reference and timescales for these substantive negotiations.

5. In recognition of the above and to allow for a period of calm to facilitate further Acas discussions:

- UCU will pause industrial action and not call any new industrial action in weeks commencing 20 and 27 February on the basis that no pay award will be imposed/implemented by HEIs during that period.

- UNISON will pause industrial action in weeks commencing 20 and 27 February on the basis that no pay award will be imposed/implemented by HEIs during that period.
- Unite will pause any industrial action in weeks commencing 20 and 27 February, on the same basis as UCU and Unison.
- EIS have no industrial action planned before 27 February.
- GMB have no industrial action planned.

17 February 2023

