

National Bargaining News

August 2017

News from your EIS NJNC negotiators

May 2017 deal—what's happening?

Welcome back!

After a well deserved break EIS FELA members are returning to work to mixed news on national bargaining. To start with the positive—after the EIS suspended strike action in May 2017, management “immediately” implemented the pay elements of section 5 of the March 2016 NJNC Agreement.

‘Immediately’ in this case meant July 2017, and in practice, this means that **unpromoted** lecturers at NJNC signatory colleges should have received the first part of the pay harmonisation uplift.

What should I have been paid?

The March 2016 Agreement sets out the figure of £40,026 as the top scale point for unpromoted lecturers from April 2019.

Subsequent negotiations have set out a five point national pay scale for unpromoted lecturers:

Point 1—£32,000

Point 2—£34,007

Point 3—£36,014

Point 4—£38,020

Point 5—£40,026

If you are not already on £40,026 (the current scale top at NESCol), you will migrate to your new scale point and then receive 25% of the difference on top of your current salary, backdated to April 2017.

To work out your new scale point:

- Take your salary point at April 2017
- Find the nearest upwards point on the national scale
- Add two scale points (if you are not already at the top).

So for example, if you were on scale point 2 at college X in April 2017, earning £31,078, you would migrate to scale point 1 in the

national scale (your nearest upwards point), and then add two scale points—your salary in April 2019 will be £36,014. These two scale points replace any local increment rise you would have had.

The difference in your old salary and new national point is £4,936, with 25% (£1234) of this due from April 2017. This is paid in 12 monthly instalments, so in July 2017 you would receive July's payment of £102.83, plus three months back pay for April, May and June.

The ‘top to top’ rule should only kick in for the lower paid colleges, and means that if you are at the top of your local scale, or would have been by 2019, you automatically migrate to £40,026.

New starts will be placed as per their college's local rules on the old local pay scale, and then the same national migration rules applied.

Terms and conditions: still in dispute

Whilst the *immediate* sections of the May 2017 Agreement have been implemented, we are still seeking to finalise the ‘purple bits’ - this includes sections on annual leave, promoted staff class contact and clarification of teaching staff duties and the 23 + 1 contact hours.

The Agreement stipulates that this should have been done by 1 June. After several meetings into early June, no progress was made. Returning after the summer break, Management has refused to meet in August and insisted we next meet in late September.

At this stage, we are still in dispute with Management and are seeking

meetings as early as possible to resolve these outstanding—and important—details.

This would allow both sides to move to ratification of the May 2017 Agreement, in our case through a ballot of all members, and if accepted, to move to implementation.

Implementation of the May 2017 Agreement would cover many key areas of T&C, including annual leave, salary placement, support for TOFE and class contact hours. A number of important areas of T&C remain outstanding, including family friendly policy, sickness absence and travel/subsistence.

We will continue to negotiate this session with a view to agreeing a complete set of national T&C in the form of a new ‘blue book’.

Progress over the last two years of national bargaining has been painfully slow, with management taking every opportunity to drag their feet. We cannot have another two years of ‘progress’ at this pace.

We didn't want to take strike action in May, but when we were forced to do so, we stood together and we won.

Management must now accept the reality of national bargaining and get on with the job in hand!

What about promoted lecturers?

For promoted staff, the picture was more complicated—the numbers, duties and job titles of promoted staff vary across the colleges, and even establishing this information has been a marathon task.

An NJNC Circular has been issued to cover promoted staff, and training will take place this Friday, 25th August for EIS reps.

For promoted staff above lecturer but below Head of Faculty, three job families have been identified, with three distinct pay points.

Job role profiles have been circulated to branch secretaries and will be shared with members ahead of branch meetings to discuss the position in each branch.

The matching process for promoted staff will be discussed at local JNC meetings; this is a collective activity, and **not** an individual job evaluation.

Each branch will need to consider the promoted jobs that exist in its structure (and which are covered by the RPA), their main duties and responsibilities, and agree upon the 'best fit' to the national pay points.

The local JNC will then seek to reach agreement no later than October 2017, and promoted staff will then migrate on the same basis, with 25% of the salary difference backdated to April 2017.

The new salary points are £43,850, £46,925 and £50,000. However, it's important to note that these are distinct points rather than an incremental pay scale.

In the unlikely event that a branch is unable to reach agreement at a local JNC, the matter will be referred to a sub-committee of the NJNC for resolution.

Pay — got more questions?

Why does it only cover the first three levels of promoted staff?

We asked management—around two years ago now—for their proposals for staff at Head of Faculty level and above, up to and including Principals.

These have not been forthcoming, so we intend to prepare our own proposals based on the agreed salaries for unpromoted and promoted staff.

What about a cost of living pay rise—does this mean lecturers at NESCol face a three year pay freeze?

We will absolutely not accept a situation where some lecturers are 'frozen' while those who have been underpaid in the past 'catch up'. We submitted a detailed cost of living pay claim in December 2016 of £1000 flat rated, highlighting among other factors rising

inflation, the real-terms pay cut that lecturers have experienced in recent years, rising workload and the difficulty in recruiting lecturers in several industry areas.

We have not had an adequate response from management and intend to pursue this at our first meeting after the summer. Management have rejected our claim and although they have entered into negotiations—and now settled—with the support staff, have yet to make a counter offer to our claim.

My college have not signed the nRPA. Will I get the harmonisation payment?

It is our understanding that of the non-nRPA colleges, West Highland, Orkney, Shetland and Newbattle Abbey Colleges will pay the uplift and have had funding from the Scottish Government to do so. We

are currently seeking clarification in relation to payment by Argyll and Sabhal Mor Ostaig.

We believe that national *means* national and that all lecturers in Scotland should benefit from national bargaining. Colleges cannot expect to receive public money but only to opt in and out of national bargaining as it suits!

We will continue to campaign for all of the outstanding colleges to sign the nRPA and have asked for this item to be at the top of the agenda for our next meeting with the Minister.

What about the £100 from 2016?

We are still in dispute with management over the implementation of the 'consolidated and one-off' £100 from 2016/17, and this is now going to tribunal with a test case from City of Glasgow College.

Still got a question? Contact your EIS branch secretary or:

www.eis.org.uk @EISunion

www.facebook.com/honourthedeal