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March 2013

All Wales Contract Negotiations Update

Your negotiators have spent the best part of three years trying to agree a new national contract for all Further Education Staff with ColegauCymru. ColegauCymru have now informed us in writing that they are no longer prepared to negotiate. The majority of the hard work has been done on the contract clauses and we are very nearly there in terms of an agreed contract. There are however some significant differences in the two positions and these are outlined below.

Issues yet to be resolved	Joint Trade Union Position	ColegauCymru Position
Holidays:- 1.Support staff 2. Lecturing Staff 3. Management Spine staff	1. Willing to agree to entitlement based on length of service to ensure no detriment. 2. 49 + 8 bank holidays willing to negotiate on this figure. 3. Willing to accept 37 proving a national agreement on toil can be agreed as a part of the final agreement	1. 30 +8 bank holidays 2. 44+8 bank holidays 3. 37 +8 bank holidays
Maximum Required Annual Teaching Hours- Lecturers	Willing to negotiate on position of 828	835
Maximum Required weekly teaching hours- Lecturers	Willing to negotiate on 23 and arrangements for cover	24 weekly with up to 2 hours for a seven week period, normally in first term
Delivery of HE in FE- Lecturers	Willing to negotiate to find acceptable compromise	an increase in directed scholarly activity linked to the proportion of HE teaching - no extra days for those teaching

		<p>up to 20% HE; 2½ additional days for those teaching from 20% -40%, 5 additional days for those teaching from 40% to 60%; 7½ additional days for those teaching from 60% to 80%, 10 additional days for those teaching from 80% to 100%, these additional scholarly activity being taken from class contact hours.</p>
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We wrote to the Minister on your behalf in December outlining the differences in relation to the two positions and his response is copied below:-

Thank you for your letter of 14 December concerning the common contract for FE.

From the spreadsheet you sent, it seems that you are not that far away from agreement on weekly and annualised taught hours, but that there seems to be a bigger issue around holiday entitlement. I note that you are not in a position to supply the financial information that we discussed.

Given that all parties agree to the sense of a common contract, I would urge you to continue negotiations with CollegesWales, and I know that is your preferred option. My officials have been in touch with CollegesWales to see whether they can supply the financial information that we discussed. Also, I am meeting representatives from CollegeWales early next month. At that meeting I will again stress the desirability of a common contract and I will urge them to return to the negotiating table, despite them having issued a 'final offer'.

Your negotiators met on 19 February to discuss how to progress matters and we agreed that our next step should be to encourage ColegauCymru back to the negotiating table to finalise the new national contract for all staff. To that end we have written to ColegauCymru requesting further meetings.

Can we remind all branch officers of the Joint Trade Union group that there should be **No Local negotiations on the contract**. The following statement was issued by the joint trade unions in August 2012 and you are reminded to contact you full time officer if the college approach you to enter into local negotiations.

“The original decision to instruct branches not to negotiate on matters which were under discussion in the national contract negotiations was taken to ensure that individual

branches did not unwittingly undermine the national negotiators and their bargaining strategy to achieve the national contract”.

Guidance

If you are approached through your recognition structures to negotiate or re-negotiate a policy or procedure, the questions that you need to ask and answer are:-

1. Is this an issue that is currently being negotiated nationally?’
2. Is it something that could be referred to in the national contract or workload agreement?

You should also encourage your employer to insert a clause at the start of any new or re-negotiated agreement which states that:-

“This agreement will remain in force until such time as the Wales Negotiations Committee Further Education (WNCFE) recommends an agreement to colleges which will replace this local agreement.”

If you are unsure then please contact the regional office of your union and ask for clarification.

Make sure that your non union colleagues know what the trade unions are doing and the benefits that will provide for all employees. Encourage them to join the appropriate union for their staff group and college.