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Pay Latest

Final Offer Made

At the third meeting of the National Joint Forum held on 18 June, the Association of Colleges made an improved and final offer in this year's pay talks.

The offer:

- Deletion of the bottom scale point 4
- 2% increase in scale point 5 to bring it up to living wage
- 1% increase on points above point 5

In response to the joint trade union's claim for safeguarding wages for three years, the AoC considered this too restrictive for colleges to adequately respond to the challenges of government policy, further funding cuts and the ability to adequately meet the needs of students and the communities in which colleges operate. It was suggested that officers of the NJF meet to scope how they may better support the sector in this area of work via a joint working group.

The AoC reaffirmed its commitment to an offer made at the second meeting of the NJF to joint working, lobbying and a joint conference with the trade unions defending the role of further education and making the case for improved funding in the run up to the 2015 general election.

The AoC's offer for 2014/15 is the highest offer the employers have made in the last five years but falls short of the joint trade unions' claim for 3%. UCU's Further Education Committee will be meeting on Friday 27 June to consider the union's response.

UCU Research into Lesson Observations Released

UCU has now released the results of research it commissioned into lesson observations to the sector. The research, conducted by Dr Matthew O'Leary of The University of Wolverhampton, is the first serious piece of research into the subject and provides powerful evidence to support branch officers negotiating for improved observation policies. The report makes ten key recommendations including:

- There should be no direct links between formal lesson observations and capability procedures
- Graded observations should not be relied on as the main source of evidence on which to judge professional competence and performance
- All observers should have received training and a recognised qualification before becoming an observer.

The full report can be found at:

www.ucu.org.uk/lessonobservation

Ofsted to Trial Ungraded Observations Following UCU Research

Ofsted has announced plans to trial ungraded observations in the Autumn following the release of UCU's research which "raises serious questions about the fitness for purpose of prevailing observation assessment systems in FE". For more, see the FE Week report:

<http://feweek.co.uk/2014/06/13/ofsted-to-end-lesson-gradings-in-fe-pilot/>