

Minute of the meeting of the National Joint Negotiating Committee (NJNC) – Side Table (Lecturing) held on Thursday 10 December 2020 at 1400 hours, via Video Conference.

| In Attendance | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Joanna Campbell | Management Side |
| Jillian Cheape | “ “ |
| Sue Clyne | “ “ |
| Alex Linkston | “ “ (Chair) |
| Ross Martin | “ “ |
| Alan Ritchie | “ “ |
| David Watt | “ “ |
| Pam Currie | Staff Side |
| Donny Gluckstein | “ “ |
| Eileen Imlah | “ “ |
| John Kelly | “ “ |
| Jim O’Donovan | “ “ |
| Deborah Shepherd | Staff Side Secretary |
| Heather Stevenson | Management Side Secretary |
| Tina Wynn | Zoom Administrator |

25/20 Welcome and Apologies

The Management Side was in the Chair for this meeting. The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Garry Ross and Charlie Montgomery. It was noted that Eileen Imlah was a substitute for Charlie Montgomery.

The Staff Side wished it to be noted that the Staff Side apologies were due to facilities time issues.

The Management Side sought further clarification on this and following discussion the Staff Side stated that the apologies were not due to facilities time issues.

26/20 Minute of Previous Meeting

Thursday 20 August 2020

The minute of the meeting on Thursday 20 August 2020 was agreed.

Thursday 17 September 2020

The Staff Side wished apologies to be noted from Pam Currie and John Kelly on the minute of the September 2020 meeting. The minute was agreed subject to the inclusion of the apologies.

27/20 Matters Raised by Staff Side

The Management Side reminded the Staff Side of a previously agreed position of preparing papers in advance of meetings setting out concerns/points for discussion for each of the items to allow the Management Side to consider in advance.

The Staff Side advised it has no record of agreeing that agenda items cannot be considered without papers being submitted in advance.

The Management Side advised it would check previous minutes to share with the Staff Side where this discussion took place as in its view, it did not want to negotiate on matters it had not prepared for. If papers are provided in advance, there is an opportunity to gather views from colleges before responding.

GTCS

The Staff Side view is that reducing the number of guaranteed days for facilities time suggests that the employers are not supportive of the GTCS project on Lecturer Registration.

In its view granting facilities time only to attend meetings is not sufficient as time is also required to carry out the work of the groups.

The Management Side advised that facility time granted includes preparation time.

The Staff Side also advised it required time for EIS-FELA negotiators to be available to support its members in those colleges currently taking part in the pilot and requested that Colleges Scotland contact those colleges with national negotiators and ask to grant facilities time based on previous arrangements and not the current employers' position.

The Management Side reminded the Staff Side that requests for facilities time in excess of the agreed set time should be made locally.

The Management Side reiterated the employers' commitment to the Lecturer Registration Project.

Workload

The Staff Side shared its concerns surrounding the impact of COVID-19 and the increased pressures felt by its members, due to the increase in online teaching and blended learning.

The Staff Side requested a joint submission to the Scottish Qualifications Authority on a number of matters including guidance the sector requires and a national approach to rewriting assessments.

The Management Side advised that this work is currently being taken forward within the sector and confirmed that all concerns raised are being addressed.

The Staff Side also requested a temporary reduction in class contact time until the end of this academic year to assist with the increase on workload.

The Management Side advised that this was not a matter that could be discussed without raising it with the Employers' Association and no timeframe was provided on this.

It was noted that this item would have benefitted from a paper setting out the request in advance of the meeting.

Mental Health of Staff

The Staff Side linked this matter primarily to concerns raised about workload and in its view, this has resulted in an increase in absence rates due to mental health illness and workplace stress for its members.

The Staff Side requested that a national position is reached on suspending attendance absence management policies when related to mental health absence.

The Management Side reminded the Staff Side of how appreciative employers were to all staff working through the pandemic and agreed this was an important matter, and as such, colleges already have measures in place to ensure staff are supported. In addition, there was no evidence presented to support the increase in absence rates as presented.

The Staff Side responded by stating that, where practicable, papers would be supplied prior to meetings.

Mental Health of Students

The Staff Side also linked this matter to previous items as its view is that its members are dealing with an increase of students in crisis during this pandemic which in turn is increasing workloads of its members.

The Management Side repeated that this is a matter for colleges to deal with on a case-by-case basis. Colleges already have measures in place to ensure students and staff are supported.

Facility Time

The Staff Side acknowledged this was a Central Committee matter, however, wished it to be noted that EIS-FELA representatives are not comfortable requesting ad-hoc facilities time and stated that they have had to leave classes without a lecturer to attend meetings which they are not prepared to do.

The Staff Side also stated that there may be times they are not teaching, however, this impacts on prep time.

The Staff Side reiterated that it did not accept the employers' position on facilities time and is seeking colleges to revert to previous arrangements.

The Management Side noted the comments.

Outstanding Policies

The Staff Side raised concerns at the lack of progress on National Policies.

The Management Side advised that it had been previously agreed that the Joint Secretaries would meet to discuss to take forward and that following a meeting of the Joint Secretaries with the Support Staff Secretary, a revised Terms of Reference had been drafted. This was currently with the Staff Side Joint Secretary for comment.

National Dispute

The Staff Side advised its indicative ballot, to its members on taking industrial action on the use of instructor/assessor posts in colleges was closing on Tuesday 15 December 2020.

The Staff Side requested a meeting with the Management Side be held immediately after the ballot closes.

The Management Side advised that the employers' position had not changed and reiterated that the employers do not agree that they are breaching any National Agreement and read out the position reached at the second dispute meeting held on Thursday 10 September 2020, "*that the process had been exhausted with no resolution reached.*"

The Staff Side said that the dispute resolution process concluded unsuccessfully and formally requested that the group meet again, at any time or place, to avoid further action being taken. The Staff Side asked for it to be noted that, in its view, this is still a live dispute and their position remains that this is a national issue.

The Staff Side requested that the next meeting, scheduled for **Thursday 18 March 2021**, be brought forward

The Management Side advised it would await the outcome of the indicative ballot before agreeing on further action.

24/20 Indicative Date of Next Meeting

It was acknowledged that this would be Pam Currie's last meeting and Eileen Imlah would be replacing her as a National Negotiator. The chair acknowledged Pam's contribution to the group.

The next scheduled meeting is due to take place on **Thursday 18 March 2021**.