

EDUCATION SECTOR

Our Ref: MJR/VT/HE/03/11

14th January 2010

To: All Workplace Reps and Branches

Colleagues

2010 Pay & conditions

I wrote to you shortly before Christmas to give you an update where the pay and conditions negotiations had got under Circular No. MJR/VT/HE/39/10

As I pointed out Unite negotiators had been seeking some additional items including a training and development agreement, a lump sum payment to underpin salaries for lower paid staff, progress on the 35 hour week, a commitment to the introduction of discounted rates on student fees for the children of staff attending their own HEI and progress on a job security agreement.

UCEA moved on some small but vital areas. However they made it clear they were unable to offer anything further on the 0.4% increase and they could not offer any lump sum for low paid staff. UCEA have confirmed their willingness to sign a training and development agreement and to include work to develop apprenticeships within the sector. They feel the joint trade union draft needs some further discussion but in order to progress the issues and get a draft agreement quickly this matter should be progressed by setting up a training and development forum with the first task to complete the draft agreement.

UCEA offered to assist Unite to survey HEI's on their attitude to the discounted student fee for children of staff. On the 35 hour week UCEA were not prepared to progress this at this stage although they remain interested in the issue and would like to see Unite's collated material when it is ready. Unite will progress this by applying Freedom of Information requests via each HEI and collating the data for a later presentation.

The job security issues made little progress on this item with UCEA. Other unions are also pressing this point via ACAS and all remain hopeful a way forward can be found.

UCEA made some changes to their original offer but as I indicated earlier it did not include any improvement pay. The UCEA offer is contained in a letter from UCEA Chief Executive Jocelyn Prudence dated 6th January and attached to this Circular.

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The Unite National Education Industry Committee met on the 12th January 2011 to consider the outcome of the negotiations and the offer letter of the 16th January. In a full debate the inadequacies of the offer was considered but also the potential improvements especially the training, development and apprentice issues and forum.

The NEIC also recognised that many members were concerned about their own future and to progress the issue to a dispute including the possibility of strike was not high in members minds at this stage. The NEIC remained deeply unhappy about the financial aspects of the offer and agreed UCEA should be advised in no uncertain terms of that deep dissatisfaction. However on the main point on whether to accept or reject the offer and move to a strike ballot the NEIC voted 17 votes to 3 to accept the offer and draw a line under 2010 in the wish to reopen talks on the same issues in 2011.

I have today written back to Jocelyn Prudence in the terms directed by the NEIC and a copy of this letter is attached for your information also.

Unite therefore joins Unison in accepting the offer. GMB meet on the 17th to consider whether to do likewise. UCU and EIS remain in procedures and discussions.

Although Unite has confirmed acceptance I cannot say at this stage when the 0.4% would be paid as technically until matters with GMB, UCU and EIS are resolved the procedures say there should be no settlement or imposition. When the payment is made it should be

I will continue to keep you advised.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Robinson".

Mike Robinson
National Officer
Education