

FULL AND FINAL OFFER – STRICTLY WITHOUT PREJUDICE

New JNCHES Negotiations 2011-12: UCEA's Approach

On behalf of HEIs participating in the 2011-12 negotiations, UCEA sets out the employers' approach for the year ahead below.

This year's negotiating round takes place against a complex and challenging economic and sector backdrop. HEIs face a difficult funding settlement in 2011/12 and an uncertain future due to significant changes to HE funding in England and austerity measures in the devolved administrations.

UCEA's Approach

We have considered the key elements of the trade unions joint claim as follows:

- **Pay:** Employers offer an increase of £150 on all points on the JNCHES pay spine.*
- **London weighting:** We are able to make a recommendation, in line with previous practice, of an increase equivalent to 0.5%, to Post-92 HEIs which have retained separate London weighting.
- **Equality:** Employers agree that assessing the impact of the final report from the Equality Working Group is important. While the report has only recently been disseminated, we are content to undertake a follow up survey in 6 to 12 months looking at usefulness of the publication and its impact on practice at HEIs.
- **Family friendly issues:** There is existing JNCHES guidance on Work-life balance which we are willing to update to reflect legislative and policy changes relating to, *inter alia*, paternity leave and flexible working.
- **Pay framework concerns:** Employers offer to further update the pay data in the publication (*Pay in Higher Education*) that followed from the joint work in the Pay Framework and Data Research Working Group. UCEA propose that the update will be undertaken by UCEA officers with the data to be scrutinized by a small data group consisting of two employer representatives, a support staff representative and an academic staff representative.
- **Training and development:** The Training and Development Initiative from the 2010/11 negotiations represents a positive way forward in addressing the requests for action in this area by trades unions. Discussions are already underway to form a group to work on developing an enabling framework. Employers have sought more clarity on the specific request for a technical group in the TU claim.

Workforce Change and Job Security

Employers note the conclusion of the Sustainability Issues Working Group and welcome the prospect of publishing the compendium of case studies on workforce planning and organisational change.

Other claim elements

Requests to extend / delete points from the pay spine, nationally determine pay for external examiners, and assimilate hourly paid staff are not supported by the UCEA membership as they are considered matters for local determination.

Concluding comments

We recognise that the employers' response on pay does not meet the request for an offer with reference to RPI as requested in the TU claim. Employers, however, are committed to continuing joint working on key issues during a financially difficult and uncertain climate for HEIs.

We hope our trade union colleagues will now give this final offer fair consideration and that member views are sought at an early stage.

* This is equivalent to a 0.5 per cent increase on the overall pay bill.

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