

UNITE NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE (JNC)

Minutes of the meeting held 29 May 2019.

PRESENT

Judith Hough (UNITE), Richard Young (UNITE), Paul Agnew (UNITE), Ivor McAleese (UNITE), Paul Davidson (People & Culture), Kelly McBride (People & Culture)

APOLOGIES

Craig Shilliday, Rhonda Black, John Mulholland, Gareth Scott, Damian McAlister

IN ATTENDANCE

Rhona Reid, Trish Small

19.09 Mr Davidson opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance and apologised for the use of video-conferencing on this occasion. Mrs McBride confirmed that future meetings would be face-to-face except where senior officers needed to Skype in for specific agenda items.

19.10 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 12 FEBUARY 2019

The minutes of the meeting were approved.

19.11 MATTERS ARISING

- (a) PS5&50 will be covered as an agenda item.
- (b) Proposed amendments to redundancy compensation arrangement and 'exclusion clause' in compromise agreements will be taken forward at the next JUCNC.

19.12 THE STRUCTURE OF FUTURE JNCs

Given that there are relatively few agenda items for the meeting, Mr Davidson suggested that we use this final JNC of the academic year to discuss how we would like JNC to operate in the incoming academic year.

The discussion centred mainly on JNCs role in policy development. Mr Davidson advised that he has been working with the Office of the University Secretary to help refine our approach to policy development. Mr Davidson re-affirmed the University's commitment to engagement with staff and the trade unions in policy development. The University believes that policies that are informed by meaningful consultation will be better policies.

Mr Davidson suggested that the format of the consultation may vary depending on the nature of the policy and suggested that it may be useful to consider policies in the following categories.

1. Policies that impact on the main terms and conditions of employment.
2. Policies that impact on the working practices of employees.

3. Strategies and policies relating to core business of the University.
4. Policies relating to regulatory or legislative requirements.
5. Policies relating to Health, Safety and Wellbeing.

Mr Davidson suggested that for policies in categories one and two above, consultation with the unions should take place at JNCs and JUCNCs. Mr Young suggested that only items relating to individual TUs should be discussed at JNCs and any items involving more than one union should be discussed at JUCNC.

In relation to strategies and policies in category three above, Mr Davidson suggested that consultation with the unions could take place either at JNC or at single item agenda meeting between the Policy Lead and the trade unions.

For policies at category four above, Mr Davidson suggested that consultation should take place at a single item agenda meetings between the Policy Lead and the trade unions. People and Culture will help to facilitate these meeting.

There was broad agreement on the approach to policies in categories 1-4.

Mr Young stated that it is not appropriate to discuss grievances or individual cases at a JNC, that these should be discussed at separate meetings. He went on to express his concern regarding the delay in processing informal grievances, and indicated that in some cases staff felt they had no alternative but to initiate the formal process. Mr Davidson stated that if there are any particular cases that UNITE wanted to bring to his attention, he would ensure that they are progressed.

There was wide-ranging discussion in regard to policies relating to Health, Safety and Wellbeing. Mr Young indicated that UNITE strongly believe that such policies must be considered through the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee. Mr Davidson noted that there are some policies that impact on both main terms and conditions of employment and Health, Safety and Wellbeing and suggested that it is important that we don't duplicate effort, with the same policy going to multiple committees.

19.13 PS5 & 50 UPDATE

Mr Davidson updated the meeting on progress with the following restructuring exercises.

Campus Life: – matching is completed and work is underway on the recruitment stage.

ISD: – The recruitment for Grade 9s is complete. When the Grade 9s take up post they will work on the Job Descriptions for other posts and following this the next phase of formal consultations with staff and the unions will take place.

Student Administration: – A proposal was presented to SLT and they are currently considering a way forward.

19.14 ISSUES RAISED BY UNITE

(i) Facilities Time - Prior to the JNC Mr Davidson had met with UNITE to discuss the University's offer of 0.5FTE as backfill for a senior trade union rep from UNITE. Mr Davidson confirmed that this will be available from 1 August 2019.

Mr Young indicated that UNITE are considering how best to use the back-fill. Mr Young stated that UNITE feel that although they do not have as many members as UCU their workload is the same and therefore they should have the same allocation of back-fill. Mr Young ask if UNITE did not use its allocation this year could it roll forward to next year's allocation i.e. next year they would have 1 FTE. Mr Davidson advised that this is not possible, if the budget is not used this year it will be lost.

(ii) Trade Union Rooms – Mrs McBride agreed to explore the possibility of relocating the trade union rooms to more accessible locations on each campus.

19.15 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Young raised the issue of funding in the HE sector and noted that if there is any change to the funding situation it is important that the unions are advised as soon as possible.

Mr Young noted that the Director of People and Culture had written to by Mr Mulholland regarding the issue of iPads in the DWU. Mr Davidson advised that any further issues in relation to the iPads should be handled a local level with managers in Estates.

The meeting ended.