

UCU JOINT NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE (JNC)

Date: 9 January 2020

Venue: Jordanstown Campus. 12G03A.

Present: Paul Davidson, Deputy Director of People and Culture; Lindesay Dawe, President UCU; Linda Moore Vice President UCU; Aisling O'Beirn, Vice President UCU; Paddy Mackel, NI Regional Official UCU; Kelly McBride, Employee Relations Section Leader.

In Attendance: Christine Irwin, Employee Relations Partner; Rhona Reid, Clerical Assistant, Employee Relations; Damian McIlduff, Organisational Design Partner; Michael Shannon, People Development Partner.

20.01 Welcome and Housekeeping

Mr Davidson welcomed all to the meeting.

Agenda Item 4: 'Values' and the 'Engage - Great People Managers Programme', were moved up the agenda, to be addressed as the first item.

20.02 'Values' and the 'Engage- Great People Managers' programme.

Mr Shannon delivered a presentation on the 'Engage – Great People Managers' programme due to commence in March 2020.

Mr Shannon advised that the 'Great People Managers' programme would see 417 People Managers, trained in the next 12 months in a process underpinned by the University values. Anyone with one or more direct report will attend the programme, participating in the modules: 'The Engaging Manager'; Operational Management Skills; Effective Communication; Managing Workplace Wellbeing; Managing Performance; Managing Teams; Managing through Change.

UCU expressed their disappointment at only hearing of the programme at this stage of its development. Mr Mackel asked how UCU could be factored into the programme. UCU asked for an opportunity for the unions to speak at the programme which would demonstrate support for the unions in having an improved relationships with managers.

Mr Davidson suggested that it may be useful to have a discussion outside JNC, between UCU and the People Development section on how best to include a union input to the programme. Mr Davidson advised that People and Culture are keen to ensure that managers across the University develop good and effective relationships with their local departmental trade union representatives and the Great People Managers programme may be an opportunity to promote such relationships.

Mr McIlduff had previously presented to JUCNC on the new organisation values. He advised JNC that the values will be launched on Monday 20 January 2020 and gave some detail on planned launch activities including vlogging from the Deputy Vice-Chancellors.

Dr Moore asked about arrangements for 'whistleblowing' or raising complaints where a person is not acting in accordance with the values. Mr McIlduff advised that this is something that the University is looking at and outlined some examples of good practice in other organisations.

The meeting agreed that the slideshow should be circulated to JNC attendees.

Damian McIlduff and Michael Shannon left the meeting.

20.03 Minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2019

Ms Irwin took the meeting through changes to the circulated minutes. Minutes of the meeting 19 November 2019 to be re-circulated for agreement.

20.04 Matters arising from the Minutes of 19 November 2019

1. Mr Dawe referred to minute **19.47** concerning the **sustainability review**. Mr Dawe advised that he had written to the Chair of Council and was expecting a reply. Mr Dawe advised that at the time of writing to the Chair of Council, UCU had not known about the audit office report on the overspend on the Belfast campus and now that UCU knew about this, a response was even more important.
2. In relation to minute **19.48** UCU asked about **strike pay deductions**. Mr Davidson advised that deduction would be made in the January and February 2020 salary runs with an even distribution of days between the two months. UCU requested that strike pay be paid to the student hardship fund. Mr Davidson advised that funds deducted will be used in support of the student experience and wellbeing. When all deductions have been made the University will advise of how the monies will be used.
3. Minute **19:49 Workload Allocation**. Mr Davidson noted that a Workload Allocation workshop is due to be held on Tuesday the 11th January involving UCU. Mr Davidson advised that it was proposed that the workshop be in 3 parts: 1. Dr Adrian Moore's presentation on the approach taken by the School of Geography; 2. UCU concerns and issues on the approach taken by some schools to workload allocation; and 3. A conversation on how to take the project forward.

UCU raised concerns in relation to Heads of School attending the meeting on Tuesday. They stated that they would prefer that Heads of School do not attend and instead the meeting should be used to develop Terms of Reference. Mr Davidson advised that any review of the model needs to be 'academically led' and it would not be appropriate for the review to be led by People and Culture. Mr Davidson referred to the approach taken in the development of the new Academic Promotion Scheme. After much discussion Mr Davidson advised that he will discuss UCU's concerns about the meeting on Tuesday with the Director of People and Culture and revert to UCU.

4. Minute **19.53**: Mr Davidson provided an update on **restructure** in ISD. He advised that the matching in ISD is almost complete. Dr Moore raised concerns in relation to the three staff protected on the former ALCS 4 scale. Mr Davidson advised that the three employees were matched to a grade 8 posts and direct individual conversations have opened with these individuals.
5. Minute **19.54 (iii) Gender Pay Gap**. Mr Davidson advised that the University is considering how best to take forward work on the Gender Pay Gap. He advised that discussions are ongoing within People and Culture and are keen to involve the unions in progressing this important area of work.

6. Minute **19:54 (v) Academic Promotions** Mr Davidson noted that the new scheme opened for applicants before Christmas and the closing date for receipt of applications is 31 January 2020. Dr Moore asked for confirmation that there is no right of appeal within the scheme. Mr Davidson confirmed that there was no right to appeal however significantly enhanced arrangements for providing feedback have been included. Dr Moore requested that UCU receive information on applicants and success rates by gender and age. Mr Davidson advised that this would be made available after this first cycle of the new scheme.
7. **Accountability related to BRG.** Mr Davidson noted that at JUCNC, UCU had asked Mr McAlister for details of the legislation that prevents the University from releasing information in relation to any action taken by the University against individuals arising from their leadership responsibility in the BRG. Mr Davidson referred to Article 5 of the GDPR, which restricts the sharing of personal data. Substantial discussion following during which UCU indicated that their experience in other organisations was that such information could be shared. UCU indicated that they would take their own advice on Article 5.
8. Minute **19.54 (vi) Climate Emergency.** UCU requested that the University continues to support staff wishing to participate in protests related the climate change emergency.

20.05 Resignation of Vice Chancellor

Mr Dawe requested some clarification on the duration of Professor Bartholomew's appointment as Interim Vice-Chancellor and when the exercise to appoint the new Vice-Chancellor will commence. Mr Davidson advised that the announcement of Professor Nixon's resignation is still very recent, and plans have not yet been made for the recruitment of his replacement. Mr Davidson noted that details of the appointment process for the role of Vice-Chancellor are stipulated in University Statutes and Ordinances.

20.06 GBD Project

UCU expressed their disappointment in not hearing of the Belfast campus overspend, ahead of the publication of the audit report.

Mr Mackel called for a commitment from the University that overspend will not impact staff.

Mr Davidson advised that the Director of People and Culture will be engaging with the unions in relation to the audit office report.

20.07 Scheduling of policy reviews

Recently, monthly policy review meetings have been arranged with the unions. Discussion took place in relation to the volume of policies that the unions are being asked to comment on. Ms McBride suggested that at the next monthly meeting further discussion should take place on scheduling of policy reviews.

20.08 Gender & Equality (standing item)

Dr Moore spoke about issues on the Belfast campus regarding the provision of mixed-use toilets. It was noted that for a short time some of the toilets became gender neutral and then reverted back to single gender use.

Mr Davidson advised that concerns had been raised in relation to the lack of consultation on the initial decision to convert some toilets to gender neutral. In order to facilitate proper consultation on this issue Physical Resources had converted them back to single gender use.

Dr Moore requested mandatory training for staff on LGBTQ+ issues.

20.09 Change to May public holiday

UCU referred to an item that had been raised at JUCNC about the May Bank Holiday in 2020. The UK government have taken the decision to replace Monday 1 May 2020 with VE Day. UCU requested that the University give staff both the traditional May Day plus VE Day. Mr Davidson advised that the University would give consideration to this request.

20.10 Action Short of Strike (ASOS)

UCU reminded JNC that the ASOS on the 'Four Fights' and the pension disputes are still ongoing.

20.11 Casualisation / fixed term contracts

Ms Irwin referred to the request from UCU for further data on casual contracts. She advised that she would continue to work with UCU on the format of the data.

20.12 CAIN

Mr Davidson updated the meeting on the interim review of progress made by CAIN in developing a sustainable income stream. Mr Davidson reminded JNC that in June 2019 a decision was made to move CAIN to a static archive however, the move to a static archive was deferred until 1 May 2020. In June 2019 staff in CAIN were advised that the move to a static archive could only be changed if sustainable income streams are identified which would allow CAIN to become a self-funding unit.

Mr Davidson advised that an interim review has taken place and while two grants have been secured, they are relatively small. Professor Grey has supported the staff in developing to further applications which if successful would create significant income.

20.13 Restructure Update.

See minute 20.04 above. Mr Davidson also noted that scoping work has commenced in preparation for the restructuring of Estates.

20.14 Any Other Business

- i. UCU requested an update on the **Medical School**. Mr Davidson advised that in the absence of a minister, the civil servants have indicated that they are not prepared to sign off on the Medical School.
- ii. UCU expressed thanks to Ms McBride with this being her last attendance at JNC before leaving the University for new employment, at the end of January 2020.

The meeting ended.