



UNIVERSITIES & COLLEGES  
EMPLOYERS ASSOCIATION

24 April 2015

Woburn House  
20 Tavistock Square  
London WC1H 9HU

Tel: 020 7383 2444  
Fax: 020 7383 2666  
[www.ucea.ac.uk](http://www.ucea.ac.uk)

## NEWS RELEASE

### **HE employers make a fair and sustainable pay offer with additional uplift for the lower paid**

The third New JNCHES\* negotiating meeting of 2015-16 took place today (Friday 24 April). Further exploration took place on the core components of the trade unions' \*\* pay claim \*\*\* and the challenging context for the HE employers before an above inflation \*\*\*\* 0.9% offer was made. The offer brings additional adjustment for the lower paid during these times of austerity and uncertainty, in the sector and beyond.

This pay uplift offer, made against a backdrop of unprecedented uncertainties and challenging circumstances, seeks to address all elements of the trade unions' joint pay claim. The pay claim itself does not refer to an actual figure but does seek an offer that addresses the cost of living and meets the 'Living Wage Foundation' rate on the lowest point. The employers are emphasising the need for re-familiarisation with the principles in the 2003-04 Framework Agreement \*\*\*\*\* on pay progression and review as appropriate of established procedures.

This offer will be testing for many HE institutions' finances as the 0.9% figure needs to be taken together with the pay progression which around half of employees will be eligible to receive. This will take the average pay increase for the staff covered by these negotiations to 2.4% and more than this in many HE institutions, with up to 3.9% for some individuals.

The 'pay equality matters' section of the claim seeks further work on the gender pay gap and on HEIs' approaches to casual staff employment. The two pieces of joint work agreed as part of the 2014-15 HE pay settlement consider gender pay gap and on hourly-paid and casual employment issues, and this work is still ongoing.

Professor Paul Curran, Chair of UCEA, said: "Today's New JNCHES negotiating meeting was constructive, with both sides discussing all the options for a realistic outcome. We believe the HE institutions and trade unions wish to arrive at a settlement that is both fair for staff and sustainable for their institutions. The employers have made a substantial pay uplift offer of 0.9% on all pay points alongside further movements to address concerns around the lower paid. This offer is against a backdrop of unprecedented uncertainties and challenging circumstances for HE institutions and the sector as a whole. We look to trade union colleagues to consider carefully the real value of the offer being made."

The dialogue is set to continue at the final negotiating meeting on Tuesday 12 May.

\* Joint Negotiating Committee for Higher Education Staff

\*\* EIS, GMB, UCU, UNISON and Unite

\*\*\* UCEA's 'Current pay negotiations' website page includes details of the trade unions' joint claim: [www.ucea.ac.uk/en/empres/paynegs/current/index.cfm](http://www.ucea.ac.uk/en/empres/paynegs/current/index.cfm)

\*\*\*\* Annual inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), was 0.0% in the 12 months to March 2015. There was a 0.3% increase in alternative inflation indices CPIH and RPIJ. The Retail Prices Index (RPI) is no longer a National Statistic, but it increased by 0.9%.

\*\*\*\*\* Details of the Framework Agreement: [www.ucea.ac.uk/en/empres/paynegs/fagree/index.cfm](http://www.ucea.ac.uk/en/empres/paynegs/fagree/index.cfm)

## **ENDS**

For further information: Please contact Andy Fryer, Head of Communications and Membership ([a.fryer@ucea.ac.uk](mailto:a.fryer@ucea.ac.uk)) or Marc Whittaker, Communications and Events Officer ([m.whittaker@ucea.ac.uk](mailto:m.whittaker@ucea.ac.uk)). Call 020 7383 2444.

## **Notes to Editors**

The New JNCHES negotiating timetable is a process that usually runs across meetings in March, April and May. This forum allows for three negotiating meetings, and more if required. The set dates are 26 March, 14 April (additional), 24 April and 12 May.