National Negotiating Committees

Minute of the National Negotiating Committee (NNC) – Lecturing Staff – Pay Meeting, held on Thursday 14 May 2026 (0900-1130), via Video Conference

In Attendance	
Robin Ashton	Management Representative
Alan Ritchie	“ “
David Watt	“ “ (Chair)
Chris Boyce	Staff Representative
Thora Hands	“ “
Anne-Marie Harley	“ “
Dan Holland	“ “
Peter Woods	“ “
Steve Farrell	Management Joint Secretary
Sarah Collins	Staff Joint Secretary
Louis Martin	Note Taker

12/25 Welcome and Apologies

The Management Representatives were in the Chair for this meeting. The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Charlie Montgomery, Staff Representative.

13/25 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minute of Thursday 23 April 2026 was not discussed and will therefore be taken to the next pay meeting for agreement.

14/25 Pay Claim 2026-28

The Management Representatives thanked the Staff Representatives for their revised pay claim and noted the movement from the previous position. The Management Representatives advised that they recognised the revised claim was closer to their position, although concerns remained regarding the proposed use of CPIH rather than CPI as the inflation measure.

The Management Representatives responded to the individual elements of the revised claim. In relation to job security and no compulsory redundancies, the Management Representatives advised that they had considered the revised wording proposed by the Staff Representatives and confirmed that they were content to accept the wording on job security, noting that this was the appropriate framing for the issue rather than a no compulsory redundancy guarantee. It was noted that this provided a constructive basis for the ongoing discussions.

In relation to Distant Islands Allowance (DIA), the Management Representatives advised that they recognised the importance of the issue and although they maintained it was not a matter for National Bargaining, notwithstanding this, they were willing to explore how it could be progressed. It was noted that DIA would require engagement with the other recognised trade unions and with the island colleges affected. The Management Representatives advised that, for that reason, DIA would need to be taken forward separately from the pay negotiations.

The Management Representatives then set out a revised pay offer. The offer was presented as a proposed three-year agreement, with the Management Representatives noting the importance of providing stability for the sector.

The revised offer comprised:

- a consolidated 3.4% increase in Year 1;
- a consolidated 3.0% increase in Year 2; and
- a consolidated 3.0% increase in Year 3.

It was noted that the revised offer represented a total consolidated increase of 9.4% over the proposed three-year period.

The Management Representatives confirmed that they were content to include a re-opener in Years 2 and 3, to be triggered when inflation was 0.5% higher than the previous year agreed percentage offer in the relevant year, then a review will be carried out to assess the mean value of CPI over the 12-month period, for e.g. (1 June 2027–31 May 2028). It was noted that, if the re-opener was triggered, the Management Representatives would wish to include discussion on college transformation in Years 2 and 3.

The Staff Representatives sought clarification on whether the inflationary re-opener would apply in both Year 2 and Year 3. The Management Representatives confirmed this was the case and advised that applying the re-opener to both years would provide a consistent approach across the proposed three-year deal.

The Staff Representatives requested an adjournment to consider the revised offer.

<u>Adjournment</u>

Following the adjournment, the Staff Representatives advised that the proposed wording on job security was positive and could be progressed as drafted.

The inclusion of an inflationary re-opener in the revised offer was welcomed. However, the Staff Representatives noted that this represented a departure from the inflationary guarantee sought in the original claim and that concerns remained regarding the scope and certainty of the proposed re-opener.

In relation to DIA, it was noted that if the matter were to be progressed separately from the pay negotiations, there would need to be further discussion on an agreed action plan. The Staff Representatives advised that their preference remained for DIA to be included within the pay deal and that, if this was not to be the case, there should be clarity on the process and timescales for taking the matter forward.

Concern was raised regarding any reference to workforce or college transformation within the pay deal, with the Staff Representatives noting that this would require careful consideration. The Staff Representatives advised that it would be difficult to commit to such wording as part of the pay agreement. However, the Staff Representatives noted that separate discussions on college transformation could be constructive.

Regarding the pay offer, the improvement over the previous offer was welcomed; however, the proposed percentage increases were considered insufficient. It was noted that the claim sought to protect members from rising costs, future-proof the sector, and minimise further drift in lecturing staff salaries.

Concern was also raised regarding the proposed third year of the deal, given the uncertainty around future inflation and the wider sector position. It was noted that, for a three-year deal to be attractive, there would need to be more significant movement in Years 1 and 2. The Staff Representatives advised that there remained an opportunity to explore whether further movement was possible.

The Staff Representatives advised that, in their view, most of the movement to date had come from their position. They invited the Management Representatives to consider whether there was any further flexibility in the revised offer.

The Management Representatives sought clarification on the Staff Representatives' concerns regarding the inflationary guarantee. The Staff Representatives advised that the original claim had sought a stronger guarantee and that, compared with that position, the proposed re-opener did not provide the same level of certainty in Years 2 and 3.

The Management Representatives thanked the Staff Representatives for the clarification and requested a further adjournment.

<u>Adjournment</u>

Following the adjournment, the Management Representatives confirmed that the proposed wording on job security was accepted and could be progressed.

The Management Representatives noted the Staff Representatives' comments regarding the inflationary re-opener and advised that further work would be required to identify acceptable wording for both Management and Staff Representatives. It was noted that there appeared to be a shared position in principle regarding the inclusion of a re-opener, but that the wording would require further consideration.

The Management Representatives clarified that the purpose of the re-opener would be to provide an opportunity for both Management and Staff Representatives to return to discussions on the position in Years 2 and 3. It was noted that this would represent a commitment to discuss the position at that point, rather than a guarantee of agreement on any specific matter, or for either side to be obligated to accept should the reopener be triggered.

The Management Representatives stated that it would be difficult for either side to set out specific written asks at this stage. For example, Management could not say now whether issues such as No Detriment or Annualised Hours would form part of its position if the first re-opener were triggered in 15 or 16 months, as priorities may change. Likewise, the Staff Representatives could not yet know what they might seek at that stage, whether 5% or 10%. The Management Representatives advised that they would draft proposed wording on the re-opener and share this with the Staff Representatives before the next meeting.

In relation to DIA, the Management Representatives noted a commitment from both Management and Staff Representatives to progress the matter. However, the Management Representatives reiterated that they did not consider DIA to sit within the pay claim, as it was not a matter to be dealt with solely through the lecturing staff national bargaining arrangements. It was noted that further discussion would be required to agree on an appropriate form of words setting out a sector commitment to work on DIA.

The Management Representatives then set out a further revised pay offer. The revised offer comprised:

- a consolidated 3.5% increase in Year 1;
- a consolidated 3.1% increase in Year 2; and
- a consolidated 3.0% increase in Year 3.

It was noted that the offer would include an inflationary re-opener in Year 2 and Year 3, subject to further wording being developed and agreed.

The Management Representatives advised that they would put the current offer in writing. It was also agreed that wording on the re-opener would be provided to the Staff Representatives in advance of the next meeting.

The Staff Representatives noted that, if further wording was to be provided, they were content to consider the position further once that wording had been received. The Staff Representatives requested the wording as soon as possible.

It was agreed that a further meeting would be arranged for the following week to continue discussions. It was noted that the meeting would likely take place online on Thursday afternoon, with arrangements to be finalised offline.

15/25 Date of Next Scheduled Meeting

The next scheduled meeting is **Thursday 11 June 2026**; however, it was noted that an earlier meeting would be arranged to continue discussions.

Action Monitoring Log

Thursday 14 May 2026		
Action	**Owner**	**Status and Completion Date**
Issue a revised pay offer to Staff Representatives.	Management Reps	May 2026
Draft and issue proposed wording on the inflationary re-opener to Staff Representatives.	Management Reps	May 2026
Develop proposed wording to allow further consideration of the Distant Islands Allowance.	Management Reps	May 2026
Arrange a further pay meeting to progress discussions.	Secretariat	May 2026
Thursday 30 April 2026		
Action	**Owner**	**Status and Completion Date**
Management Reps to propose wording to issue to the Scottish Government requesting funding for DIA and send to Staff Reps for review/input.	CES Team	Overtaken
Management Reps to propose wording in relation to job security to send to Staff Reps for review/input.	CES Team	Complete
Thursday 23 April 2026		
Action	**Owner**	**Status and Completion Date**
Share further detail on the funding position with Staff Representatives	Management Reps	Complete
Thursday 12 March 2026		
Action	**Owner**	**Status and Completion Date**
Arrange an interim meeting to present initial pay offer.	CES Team	Completed – March 2026