Minute of the National Negotiating Committee (NNC) – Lecturing Staff – Pay Meeting, held on Thursday 30 April 2026 (1230-1430), at Colleges Scotland Offices, Argyll Court Stirling – Reconvened from Thursday 23 April 2026.

In Attendance	
Chris Boyce	Staff Rep
Thora Hands	“ “
Anne-Marie Harley	“ “
Dan Holland	“ “
Pete Woods	“ “
Robin Ashton	Management Rep
Sue Clyne	“ “
Susan Elston	“ “ (Chair)
Alan Ritchie	“ “
Sarah Collins	Staff Joint Secretary
Steve Farrell	Management Joint Secretary
Jillian Cheape	Secretariat
Anne Davidson	Note Taker

08/25 Welcome and Apologies

The Staff Reps were in the Chair for this meeting. The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Jon Vincent, Management Representative and Charlie Montgomery, Staff Representative.

09/25 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minute of Thursday 19 March 2026 was agreed.

10/25 Pay Offer

The Staff Representatives (Reps) gave their response to the pay offer submitted at the previous meeting on Thursday 23 April 2026. They stated their view that the relative complexity of the claim compared to previous years created an opportunity for productive negotiation. They noted the claim incorporated inflation protection, distant islands allowance (DIA), among other variables. They noted that other sectors have agreed some form of inflation protection for members and stated that it is essential for EIS-FELA, that the deal gives some protection against inflation and their hope is that the complexity of the claim affords productive negotiation instead of both sides having fixed positions. They requested suggestions from the Management Reps regarding the capacity to provide this protection for trade union members.

The Staff Reps also noted that the offer was lower than comparative sectors and lower than that made to PSS unions.

The Management Reps requested an adjournment to consider the response.

<u>Adjournment</u>

Following an adjournment, the Management Reps stated they also believe that the structure of the claim creates opportunity and advised willingness to conduct positive negotiations. In relation to the variables noted, the Management Reps reiterated their view that DIA is outwith the scope of National Bargaining, but that they remain committed to further discussion to jointly move this forward.

In terms of a no compulsory redundancy, the Management Reps reiterated that its fixed position remains that this is not possible, however they are willing to have further discussion around job security.

With regard to the inflationary guarantee, the Management Reps advised that their mandate from CES is that they are unable to provide an inflationary guarantee, however there is flexibility and willingness to have a discussion on alternatives.

The Staff Reps queried the reasoning for not including DIA within National Bargaining given that it is included within other sectors such as NHS and Local Authorities, and stated their position is that it should form part of National Bargaining.

The Management Reps explained that DIA is excluded because it has never been part of National Bargaining historically, and also because there was a clear position from CES that it would not be included. However, there is willingness and acceptance of a need to address the issue in some other way outwith negotiations. The final reason advised by the Management Reps for excluding DIA from National Bargaining is that it is clear from research that the government position on DIA is fragmented and inconsistent, with no clear government support in relation to colleges. Collectively, this makes it impossible to have a clear discussion within the machinery of National Bargaining.

The Staff Reps view is that the reasons given should not result in DIA being excluded. The Management Reps view is that an attempt to bring DIA into National Bargaining would result in discussions becoming protracted and the best approach to reach a resolution is to do it jointly within a different forum.

The Staff Reps advised their position on DIA remains unchanged but asked for proposed wording from the Management Reps to go to the government with a joint request for funding.

In relation to no compulsory redundancy, the Staff Reps welcomed the willingness to discuss job security further and acknowledged the Management Reps position. They advised their view that the wording in the counteroffer isn't sufficient and requested a strong form of words that would protect EIS-FELA Members jobs.

The Staff Reps requested an Adjournment

<u>Adjournment</u>

Following an adjournment, the Staff Reps confirmed that the 3.2% offer is insufficient on the basis that it did not offer protection from rising inflation for its members now or going forward and made reference to the 3.9% real terms increase afforded by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). They welcomed the openness to look at options to address concerns around inflation and noted that they were keen to take this forward quickly and look at the various options.

The Management Reps noted that the 3.9% funding uplift from the SFC covers other financial elements across the sector and doesn't relate purely to pay. Their view is that, at the point when the 3.2% offer was made, this was in line with inflation and represents a fair offer to members.

The Management Reps stated that they do not have any remit from CES to make a decision on an inflationary guarantee or an alternative, noting that the remit from CES is clear that there is no support for an inflationary guarantee. They confirmed that what they are committing to today is to have a discussion and float some flexible positions in relation to inflationary guarantee.

The Management Reps further confirmed that they would, subject to agreement from CES, look at a reopener in the second year only, so effectively, the current figure of 3.2% would be the uplift from September 2026, and as of September 2027, when the 3% comes into effect, they would be willing to discuss a reopener around what inflation is looking like in the second year portion of the pay offer.

They asserted that there is no commitment or guarantee, only a commitment to reopen should inflation get to a level that is agreed between both parties.

The Management Reps proposed the timing of the reopener could be on the anniversary of the second year or possibly 3/4 months from the anniversary of the second year, noting again that this would be for discussion between both parties and subject to consultation.

The Staff Reps reiterated their position that the 3.2% offer will be rejected and that their members will expect something meaningful in relation to addressing concerns around inflation levels in the first years as well as the second.

The Staff Reps requested written confirmation on the proposals discussed, however the Managements Reps advised they cannot do this without agreement from the wider CES, as it goes beyond the current mandate.

The Management Reps confirmed that, subject to agreement being reached between the Joint Secretaries, they will present to CES a reopener for the second year, subject to agreement from CES, three months from the anniversary date of September 2027, should the level of inflation exceed a specific figure to be agreed by both parties.

The Staff Reps requested an adjournment.

<u>Adjournment</u>

Following an adjournment, the Staff Reps acknowledged that the Management Reps did not have the requisite authority to progress without consultation with CES and confirmed acceptance to conduct offline discussions to facilitate developing a meaningful proposal that could be taken to the CES meeting on 13 May 2026.

The Management Reps requested an adjournment

<u>Adjournment</u>

Following an adjournment, the Management Reps confirmed commitment to offline discussions between the Joint Secretaries, but noted a pre-requisite to taking a proposal to the CES meeting in May is that an agreement is reached beforehand between the Joint Secretaries in relation to the inflationary guarantee reopener. If this can be achieved, the Management Reps confirmed they could include a recommendation to an increase on the 3.2% proposed for the first year of the offer.

The Management Reps proposed a further meeting be held on Thursday 14 May 2026 following the CES Meeting Scheduled for Wednesday 13 May 2026.

For clarity, the Management Reps reiterated the agreed actions were for Management Reps to look at a form of words around DIA that could be issued to the Scottish Government, along with proposals as to how to make a joint approach for requesting funding. Also, the Management Reps will propose a form of words in relation to job security.

It was agreed that the Joint Secretaries will continue discussions offline on these matters in order to make progress in advance of the upcoming CES Meeting.

11/25 Date of Next Scheduled Meeting

The date of the next scheduled meeting is **Thursday 11 June 2026** although a intermediate meeting is to be held on Thursday 14 May 2026.

Action Monitoring Log

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	May 2026
Management Reps to propose wording in relation to job security to send to Staff Reps for review/input.	CES Team	May 2026
Thursday 23 April 2026		
Action	**Owner**	**Status and Completion Date**
Share further detail on the funding position with Staff Representatives	Management Reps	April 2026
Thursday 12 March 2026		
Action	**Owner**	**Status and Completion Date**
Arrange an interim meeting to present initial pay offer.	CES Team	Completed – March 2026